



Ship Fact Sheet



ADEN (1856)

Base data at 23 August 1856. Last amended November 2008

* indicates entries changed during P&O Group service.

Type	Passenger liner
P&O Group service	1856-1872
P&O Group status	Owned by parent company
Former name(s)	Launched as <i>Delta</i>
Registered owners, managers and operators	The Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company
Builders	Summers, Day & Co
Yard	Northam, Southampton
Country	UK
Yard number	
Registry	London, UK
Official number	16379
Signal letters	MBGV
Classification society	Lloyd's Register
Gross tonnage	812 grt
Net tonnage	507 nrt
Deadweight	
Length	78.49m (257.6ft)
Breadth	9.08m (29.8ft)
Depth	5.63m (18.5ft)
Draught	
Construction (if not steel)	Iron
Engines	Direct-acting trunk steam engines
Engine builders	Summers, Day & Co
Works	Northam, Southampton
Country	UK
Power	210 ihp
Propulsion	Single screw
Speed	12 knots (service); 14.5 knots (trials)
Passenger capacity*	112 first class, 22 second class
Cargo capacity	590 tons
Crew	
Employment	Employed on Far East services

Career

- 21.05.1856: Launched as *Delta*. Her name was changed in anticipation of P&O taking over the Suez/Bombay mail service from the East India Company, which involved increased use of the port of Aden in south-western Arabia near the mouth of the Red Sea.
- 21.08.1856: Registered.
- 23.08.1856: Ran trials and delivered as *Aden* for The Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company.
- 27.08.1856: Maiden voyage Southampton/Gibraltar.
- 01.10.1856: Sailed from Southampton to Bombay (arrived 27th December).
- 08.03.1857: Trooping voyage to the Gulf.
- 12.03.1858: Moved to Hong Kong station for most of the rest of her career.
- 28.02.1863: Broke shaft and lost screw off Amoy, returning to Hong Kong under sail.
- 02.03.1863: Towed into Hong Kong by *Cadiz*.
- 12.03.1863: Re-entered service after repairs at Whampoa.
- 02/08.1864: Fitted with new boilers at Bombay. At the same time all her deckhouses, bulwarks, forecastle, spars and rigging were renewed. Passenger capacity now 33 first class.
- 14.08.1864: Returned to Hong Kong station.
- 11.1872: Sold for £15,000 to Prefect Chu, Shanghai and immediately resold to China Merchants Steam Navigation Co, Shanghai.
- 1875: Reduced to a hulk.

TRIAL TRIP OF THE P & O "ADEN"

"Bombay Gazette" 8 August 1864

There is nothing probably in the history of Bombay that goes to show more clearly how great and how increasing is its prosperity than the vast additions made within the past few years to its steam fleet. Formerly three or four crazy old tubs were all that private enterprise could boast of for the conveyance of passengers to Surat and elsewhere, and we were dependent on the Indian navy vessels for a passage up or down the coast, or a trip to Suez. Now we have the British India Steam Navigation numbering some twenty vessels in all; the Coast and River Steam Navigation Company, a purely local service, as its name implies; the China Merchant Steam Navigation Company; the Bombay and Calcutta Steam Company; and last and most important, the great P&O. In addition to these there are several of the aforesaid tubs still in existence for the use of those who still feel inclined to use them; and there cannot be less than fifty first class steamers running to and from the port of Bombay.

With so vast an accession to the steam marine a good fitting and repairing yard has become not only a necessity but a crying need of the day. All these companies, with one exception, are dependent on the Government Dockyard for the execution of their repairs; and however large that well ordered establishment is capable of achieving -

and it does achieve a great deal - delays, as vexatious as they are unavoidable, are of frequent occurrence. The P & O with that foresight so characteristic of its management throughout its multifarious details, saw a good deal of what was looming in the future, and made arrangements accordingly. Their new dockyard, one of the finest in the world, when finished, will be capable of docking the largest steamer afloat, always excepting the *Great Eastern*. In their old yard they have accomplished wonders and have wholly renewed no less than seven steamers, the *Bombay*, *Madras*, *Singapore*, *Ganges*, *Azof*, *Simla* and *Aden* besides effecting important repairs to almost every important vessel the Company has in these seas.

The renewal of the *Aden* differs but little from that which the before-named steamers underwent. Her machinery has been thoroughly overhauled and she has received new boilers, fitted with super-heaters. The whole of the woodwork is new deck houses, bulwarks, fo'c'sle, new spars, rigging etc. Every plate of her hull has been carefully looked to and she is now as sound and staunch a boat as on the day she was launched.

Although a goodly number of invitations were issued for the trip, there was a very small muster on board on Saturday. This was no doubt owing to the boisterous weather. It blew very spitefully early in the morning and a dread of sea-sickness probably kept many away. Twelve was the time named for starting and shortly after that hour we went ahead full speed, down the Harbour, with a strong head-wind and a short choppy sea right in our teeth. A total absence of conviviality was the only marked feature of this trip and which in any way distinguished it from those which your correspondent had the honour of attending before. All on board appeared afraid of what they were pleased to term the sporting proceedings of the day, and any number of bets were made that any number of cats would be shot, before we reached the Outward Light. Strange to say we were all disappointed, and many of us most agreeably. By the time we had reached the Inner Light the vessel had begun to be lively, and before we reached the Outer Light, which we did in precisely thirty minutes, she pitched and rolled about in gallant style and "holding on" became the order of the day. In turning, the little *Aden* gave us taste of her rolling qualities we little expected, and that sumptuous tiffin which is always provided on these festive occasions, so cunningly and artistically arranged in the pretty saloon, to the consternation of all and everyone of the stewards, suddenly got adrift. A pigeon pie consorted with the ham; cold beef and chickens flew at each other like mad; a general crash among the crockery ensued, and a wild cry arose from below calling all hands aft "to hold on". Once her head got fairly round she pitched rather than rolled to the intense relief of all, and to none more than the perspiring stewards.

With the wind and sea with us, the run from the Outer to the Inner Light occupied exactly 24 minutes, giving a mean speed of 10½ knots. This although less than anticipated, was considered very satisfactory and as we had braved Father Neptune once, it struck us as desirable to let well alone and not do it again in the then state of the elements, but rather proceed under easy steam to the Mazagon, in order that we might get a comfortable tiffin. We did justice to the tiffin of course, and I am bound, for the justice of the stewards, to say it appeared none the worse for its mishap.

The engines worked admirably throughout the trip averaging $54\frac{1}{2}$ revs. with a pressure of $13\frac{1}{2}$ lbs. steam; and a vacuum of $25\frac{1}{2}$. The temperature of the steam heated was 250; temperature of sea water 87, and of the stoke hole 107 degrees. Some difficulty was experienced in raising steam owing to the firemen being new men and evidently not up to their work. Twenty pounds to the sq. inch instead of $13\frac{1}{2}$ would have made a vast difference in the vessel's speed but under the circumstances it became an impossibility to raise more than the latter quantity, to the great disgust of the engineers.

The *Aden* is one of the prettiest boats ever launched and, when in good order, one of the fastest, 13 knots an hour being very moderate work indeed for her. She has seen as much service probably as any vessel the Company ever had and has the honour of having made the quickest passage from Bombay to Aden ever recorded. On that occasion she averaged $12\frac{1}{2}$ knots the whole was across, reaching Aden in 5 days and some odd hours. Latterly she has been engaged in the China Coast trade, running between Hong Kong, Shanghai &c. and while there had the satisfaction of beating the three fastest American boats plying between Canton and Hong Kong. This was about two years ago and on the glorious 4th of June. Some heavy bets were laid and our cousins were sure they would give the British a tarnation licking. The result proved a very unfortunate one for them for the *Aden* walked clean away from the three and reached Hong Kong thirteen hours in advance of any of them.

The *Aden* is 812 tons burthen, driven by a splendid pair of direct-acting engines of 210 nominal horse power and berths 33 first class passengers. She takes the China mail of the 14th. inst. (owing to the *Jeddo* having a broken shaft) and on arrival at Hong Kong will again be stationed on the China coast line. She has been renewed with marvellous celerity, the first boiler not having been put on board before the 11th May last and is another instance of what the employees of the much abused P & O are capable of accomplishing. The *Ottawa*, now in harbour, is to be renewed in a similar manner; on her completion the *Nubia* and then the *Candia* will be similarly treated.

A singular feature of these trial trips is that one always sees a number of familiar faces, just as if the Company kept a lot of servants for this particular work. They don't do this, I know, but tile fact is a fact, nevertheless. For instance, I go into Mr. Dunbrown's cabin, the Chief Engineer, and there I find the identical 'boy' who has been in every other Chief Engineer's cabin on every other trial trip of the Company's vessels. There can be no mistake about the matter, for this mysterious individual calls to my mind how carefully he looked after my hat, when my head was over the bulwarks on one occasion; and how he plied me with champagne in the saloon on another; and how, he, himself, got dreadfully drunk with his master's brandy, and was found asleep in that master's bed. To be sure, I recollect it all. He can't explain it. He has no idea how it comes to pass, but here he is, and that's all he knows. An ancient looking 'boy' is he, with a very small head and curly hair, and as he audibly chuckles at my amazement, reminds me very strongly of the representation of Mr. Samuel Weller as portrayed by "Phiz" in the immortal "Pickwick Papers". Again the careful, careworn and industrious steward with the pale face. He too is always at these trips. How does he manage it? Perhaps he can explain.

Of course we would not run outside the Harbour without a discussion of the "lights". I

will not weary your readers with that discussion, merely remarking that it was the oft-told tale - a condemnation of screw pile lights for Bombay. One gentleman who joined the group as we were finishing the discussion, mistaking the nature of the argument and thinking we were speaking of a well-known bodily ailment, recommended Holloway's Pills and Ointment as a certain specific for that complaint. He apologised of course, on the error he had made being pointed out; but if the suggestion was at any time of service we were quite welcome to it.

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