



Ship Fact Sheet



CHITRAL (1925)

Base data at 12 June 1925. Last amended April 2009

* indicates entries changed during P&O Group service.

Type	Passenger liner
P&O Group service	1925-1953
P&O Group status	Owned by parent company
Former name(s)	
Registered owners, managers and operators	The Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company
Builders	Alexander Stephen & Sons Ltd
Yard	Glasgow
Country	UK
Yard number	504
Registry	Glasgow, UK
Official number	148861
Signal letters	KSQP
Call sign	GLKN
Classification society	Lloyd's Register
Gross tonnage	15,248 grt
Net tonnage	8,756 nrt
Deadweight	10,300 tons
Length	166.67m (547.0ft) loa, 159.87m (524.7ft) b/p
Breadth	21.42m (70.3ft)
Depth	14.02m (46.0ft)
Draught	9.217m (30ft 3in)
Engines	Quadruple-expansion steam engines
Engine builders	Alexander Stephen & Sons Ltd
Works	Glasgow
Country	UK
Power	13,000 shp
Propulsion	Twin screw
Speed	16 knots
Passenger capacity*	203 first class, 103 second class
Cargo capacity	12,173 cubic metres (429,960 cubic feet)
Crew*	270
Employment*	UK/Australia service

Career

- 10.1923: Ordered.
- 27.01.1925: Launched by the Hon. Elsie Mackay, daughter of P&O Chairman Lord Inchcape.
- 12.06.1925: Ran trials and delivered as *Chitral* for The Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company at a cost of £771,759. Her name came from a town, river and region on the Northwest Frontier of India. Her sisters *Cathay* and *Comorin* were designed for the Australian run, and their delivery enabled P&O to restore the fortnightly Australian mail schedule, but they were also used on other routes and lacked the reserves of speed really required by a mail steamer.
- 1930: Fitted with Bauer-Wach low-pressure exhaust turbines and Wyndham heaters to augment her speed and improve fuel efficiency.
- 1933: Carried the (dismantled) gunboat HMS *Sandpiper* from Southampton to Shanghai for service on the Yangtze.
- 1935: Transferred full-time to UK/Far East service.
- 30.08.1939: Requisitioned by the Admiralty for service as an Armed Merchant Cruiser and converted in Glasgow by her builders. Her after funnel was removed and seven 6-inch and two 3-inch guns were fitted.
- 14.10.1939: 'Working up' at Scapa Flow when HMS *Royal Oak* was torpedoed.
- 20.11.1939: While serving on the Northern Patrol received news from the captured German merchantman *Bertha Fisser* of the approach of the battle cruisers *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau*.
- 23.11.1939: Rescued 10 survivors from P&O's *Rawalpindi*, also serving as an Armed Merchant Cruiser, which had been sunk by *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau*.
- 09.1940: Made three trooping voyages to Reykjavik as part of the reinforcement of the garrison in Iceland.
- 11.11.1940: Sent to search for survivors of the Armed Merchant Cruiser *Jervis Bay* sunk by the German warship *Admiral Scheer*.
- 09.1941: Transferred to the East Indies Fleet and remained in the Indian Ocean until the end of 1943 escorting troop convoys up the east coast of Africa.
- 10.04.1944: Redelivered from the Admiralty. Converted to a troopship by the Maryland Dry Dock Company, Baltimore, USA, during which her second funnel was replaced.
- 14.09.1944: Left Baltimore for voyage New York/Clyde with US troops.
- 17.09.1947: Returned to her owners and reconditioned in London by R&H Green and Silley Weir Ltd. She returned to her pre-war black hull and funnels, not adopting P&O's newer white livery. Her mainmast was removed and her forward well was plated in.
- 30.12.1948: Re-entered the Australian trade carrying 740 emigrants on outward journeys in extremely spartan conditions.
- 1950: Assisted with the repatriation of Dutch nationals from Indonesia.
- 02.1953: Last sailing for Australia beset by mechanical problems including enforced conversion from quadruple to triple-expansion in 36 hours.
- 22.03.1953: Arrived in London for the last time.
- 02.04.1953: Sold for £167,500 to British Iron and Steel Corporation (Salvage) Ltd.

Handed over for demolition to W H Arnott Young & Co Ltd., Dalmuir.

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