



Ship Fact Sheet



EGYPT (1897)

Data at 18 September 1897. Last amended November 2008

* indicates entries changed during P&O Group service.

Type	Passenger liner
P&O Group service	1897-1922
P&O Group status	Owned by parent company
Former name(s)	
Registered owners, managers and operators	The Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company
Builders	Caird & Co Ltd
Yard	Greenock
Country	UK
Yard number	285
Registry	Greenock, UK
Official number	105581
Signal letters	PTGD
Call sign	
Classification society	Lloyd's Register
Gross tonnage	7,912 grt
Net tonnage	4,179 nrt
Deadweight	5,494 tons
Length	152.29m (499.8ft)
Breadth	16.54m (54.3ft)
Depth	7.46m (24.5ft)
Draught	8.151m (26ft 9in)
Engines	Triple-expansion steam engines
Engine builders	Caird & Co Ltd
Works	Greenock
Country	UK
Power	11,000 ihp
Propulsion	Single screw
Speed	16 knots
Passenger capacity	312 first class and 212 second class
Cargo capacity	4,850 cubic metres (171,303 cubic feet)
Crew	283 (116 European, 167 Asian). Deck 23 European, 45 Asian; engine room 11 European, 81 Asian; purser's department 99 European, 41 Asian
Employment	UK/Australia and UK/India services

Career

- 15.05.1897: Launched.
- 13.08.1897: Registered.
- 27.08.1897: Ran trials.
- 18.09.1897: Left the yard as *Egypt* for The Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company at a cost of £239,492. Made her maiden voyage to Bombay, but spent most of her early years in the Australian run. She also cruised in the Mediterranean. On Eastern services she developed a reputation for minor collisions and unlucky groundings. She was the third of the 5-strong *India* class, P&O's last single-screw passenger liners.
- 1910: Brought the Princess Royal home from Egypt.
- 02.08.1915: Hired by the Admiralty as *Hospital Ship No. 52* with P&O officers and crew and serving mostly in the Mediterranean.
- 01.02.1916: Attacked by a Zeppelin when in Salonika Bay. Although not hit, she suffered blast damage to some boats and her forward funnel.
- 10.1921: Returned to commercial service. She was one of the last two P&O ships released from Government service (*Macedonia* was the other), and had needed a lengthy refit.
- 19.05.1922: Left Tilbury for Marseilles and Bombay with 44 passengers and 294 crew, and gold and silver bars and coin valued at £1,054,000.
- 20.05.1922: Foundered in thick fog (visibility about 30 metres) off Ushant after being rammed at 1900hrs between the funnels on the port side by the French cargo steamer *Seine* en route La Pallice/Le Havre, whose bows were strengthened to deal with Baltic ice. *Egypt* heeled over after the impact and sank in about 20 minutes with the loss of 15 passengers and 71 crew. Only six boats got away, but *Seine* picked up the survivors and landed them at Brest. The Master of *Egypt* was suspended for six months, and resigned on a full pension, but the Court of Enquiry found *Seine* responsible. The Salvage Association at once began to consider recovery of the bullion which, owing to the depth, posed problems never before overcome.
- 1923: Swedish salvors fail to locate the wreck.
- 1926: French salvors fail to locate the wreck.
- 1928: Italian company SORIMA began search with salvage vessel *Artiglio*.
- 30.08.1930: Wreck discovered.
- 1931/1932: Nine months work culminating in breaking into the strong room with explosive.
- 07.1935: At the conclusion of operations, 98% of the gold bars, 97% of the silver ingots and 91% of the sovereigns had been recovered. The wreck had been located at a depth of 60 fathoms (about 110 metres) and the work involved the use of much new and experimental salvage equipment, including remote grabs controlled by an observer in a diving shell passing orders to the surface by telephone.

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