



Ship Fact Sheet



INDIA (1896)

Base data at 12 September 1896. Last amended November 2008

* indicates entries changed during P&O Group service.

Type	Passenger liner
P&O Group service	1896-1915
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	281
Registry	Greenock, UK
Official number	105572
Signal letters	PLCR
Classification society	Lloyd's Register
Gross tonnage	7,911 grt
Net tonnage	4,185 nrt
Deadweight*	5,515 tons
Length	152.32m (499.9ft)
Breadth	16.54m (54.3ft)
Depth	7.65m (25.1ft)
Draught	8.151m (26ft 9in)
Engines	Triple-expansion steam engine
Engine builders	Caird & Co Ltd
Works	Greenock
Country	UK
Power	11,000 ihp
Propulsion	Single screw
Speed	18 knots
Passenger capacity	317 first class and 152 second class, or 2,500 troops
Cargo capacity *	5,176 cubic metres (182,982 cubic feet)
Crew [1914]	282 (114 Europeans, 168 Asians). Deck 23 Europeans, 45 Asians; engineroom 11 Europeans, 82 Asians; purser's department 97 Europeans, 41 Asians
Employment	UK/India and UK/Australia services

Career

- 15.04.1896: Launched by Mary Anne Kendall, daughter of a manager of P&O.
- 03.09.1896: Registered.
- 12.09.1896: Ran trials and handed over as *India* for The Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company. The first of five sisters, (followed by *Persia*, *China*, *Egypt* and *Arabia*), she was the largest P&O vessel to date. The class were the last single-screw mail steamers built for the Company. Her equipment included a new type of insulated speaking tube 124m (408ft) long.
- 28.01.1898: First Australian sailing.
- 20.08.1900: First P&O ship to use the new harbour at Fremantle, replacing Albany.
- 1903: Beat Norddeutscher Lloyd's *Freidrich der Grosse* from the Red Sea to Australia by no less than 24 hours.
- 03.1908: Deadweight 5,245 tons. Cargo capacity 4,777 cubic metres (168,740 cubic feet) including 2,229 cubic metres (78,729 cubic feet) insulated.
- 29.09.1911: Last Australian sailing from the UK. After her return, transferred to UK/Far East service.
- 1912: Insulated cargo capacity removed.
- 1914: Left in P&O service at the outbreak of war. Carried Admiral Sturdee home from Gibraltar after the Battle of the Falklands.
- 13.03.1915: Hired by the Admiralty for service as an armed merchant cruiser, and served in the 10th Cruiser Squadron.
- 08.08.1915: Torpedoed and sunk by the German submarine U22 off the island of Helligvaer, near Bodo, Norway, with the loss of 10 officers and 150 ratings. *India* had stopped to investigate a suspected blockade-runner. The surviving 22 officers and 119 men were taken to Narvik by the steamer *Gotaland* and HM armed trawler *Saxon*.

FREMANTLE AND THE P&O: ARRIVAL OF THE P&O STEAMER "INDIA"

"West Australian", 21 August 1900

Forty-five or forty-six years ago the first Peninsular & Oriental steamer called at Fremantle, but yesterday the first vessel of that now magnificent line entered the harbour within the mouth of the Swan. The P&O steamer *Chusan* put in at Fremantle in 1853 or 1854 and was followed by two other vessels of the same line. Then the chief port was left to itself so far as mailboats were concerned. It was allowed to remain around the corner that the Premier has so often referred to. Some two years ago, thanks to the energy of Mr A J Diamond, of Fremantle, the North German Lloyd piloted their first mail steamer into the new Fremantle Harbour, and such was the success that greeted the venture, that it was felt that the two big British mail companies could not long delay following suit. Monday, August 13th saw the first Orient Company's steamer, the *Ormuz*, berth at the Fremantle wharves and yesterday the P&O *India* also came into the Harbour.

After a quick passage across the Australian Bight from Adelaide which was left on Thursday afternoon last, the *India* was reported to have passed Breaksea Island at noon on Sunday. She was therefore expected at Fremantle about twelve hours later but somewhat contrary weather about Cape Leeuwin threw her back a bit and it was not until half past twelve o'clock that she was sighted from Rottneest. Gradually *India* crept into view of hundreds of people who were collected on the high vantage grounds to witness her approach and at 3 o'clock she entered between the moles, the tug *Penguin* showing her the way in.

During the morning the wind was gusty, but it had moderated in the afternoon, (and) a breeze was blowing from the west, which helped the *India* to swing into her berth. The big steamer at first managed to knock some splinters off the wharf with her nose, but she was then nicely manoeuvred into her berth, and about 4 o'clock the gangway was lowered. When the *India* entered the harbour, she was drawing about 25 ft. of water on an even keel. A large crowd which had been collecting all the afternoon had by this time assembled, and an eager rush was made to get on board. Sir George Shenton, Sir A Onslow and Sir John Forrest were the first three to proceed up the ladderway, and then the crowd, with or without tickets of admission, surged on board. The splendid liner was speedily over-run in all parts, the many notices such as "Do Not Enter this Cabin" and "Keep off the Bridge" only served as incentives to do exactly the contrary. On one side of the spacious First Class Dining Saloon, a few guests from Perth and Adelaide were entertained by the representatives of the Company, but for the bulk of the company, the fact that such a fine British mailboat was alongside the Fremantle Wharf, and the opportunity of inspecting her were quite sufficient.

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