

The Evolution of Messageries Maritimes Paquebots

Purpose of Exhibit: The purpose of this frame display is to present in-depth coverage of the company Messageries Maritimes Paquebots during 1843-1951 with postcards.

Background: The Compagnie des Messageries Maritimes was a French shipping company crucial in developing postal services in the 19th century. The company operated a fleet of advanced and luxurious ships that transported mail, passengers, and cargo across the oceans. These ships were equipped with the latest navigation, communication, and transportation technologies and helped establish a reliable and efficient system for delivering mail worldwide.

The steamship was one of the most important ships in the Messageries Maritimes fleet. These ships were powered by steam engines, which allowed them to travel faster and more efficiently than traditional sailing ships. The company's focus on mail delivery had a significant impact on global communication in the 19th century.

The company was created in 1851 as Messageries Nationales, later called Messageries Imperial's, and from 1871, Compagnie des Messageries Maritimes, casually known as "MesMar" or by its initials "MM." The company's two partners, M. Rostand and Ernest Simons, purchased the shipbuilding yards of La Ciotat in 1849, and from there, their first ships would set off operating routes in the Middle East. In the Middle East, the ports of call were Malta, Alexandria, Port-Saïd, Beyrouth Syria, Smyrna, Constantinopolis, and the Black Sea.

From 1871 to 1914, the Compagnie des Messageries Maritimes saw its golden age. This was the period of French colonial expansion and intervention in the Middle and the Far East. The Marseille liners continuously served the Mediterranean Sea, the Black Sea, then the Red Sea, the Indian Ocean, the China Sea, and finally, the Pacific Ocean. Cyprus was never officially on the Messageries Maritimes steamers' stopover list. Yet, some often stopped at Larnaca or Famagusta. In Larnaca, M. Celestin Beraud was their agent from 1880 – 1915. He would look after the needs of the steamers, which stopped for replenishments, but on 25 March 1885, a first long stopover took place by the ship l'Alpee or Alpha, built-in 1843. This was a real treat as the ship was big, 1847 tons, and luxurious. More such ships came to the ports for a few hours, allowing passengers to disembark or embark. Great personalities traveled with the French lines, such as the archaeologist Edmond Duthoit, Count de Luynes, and Camille Enlart. The Lotus brought to Cyprus Pierre Loti and the 8th Duke de Richelieu. The Messageries Maritimes continued serving people but also armies during the World Wars.


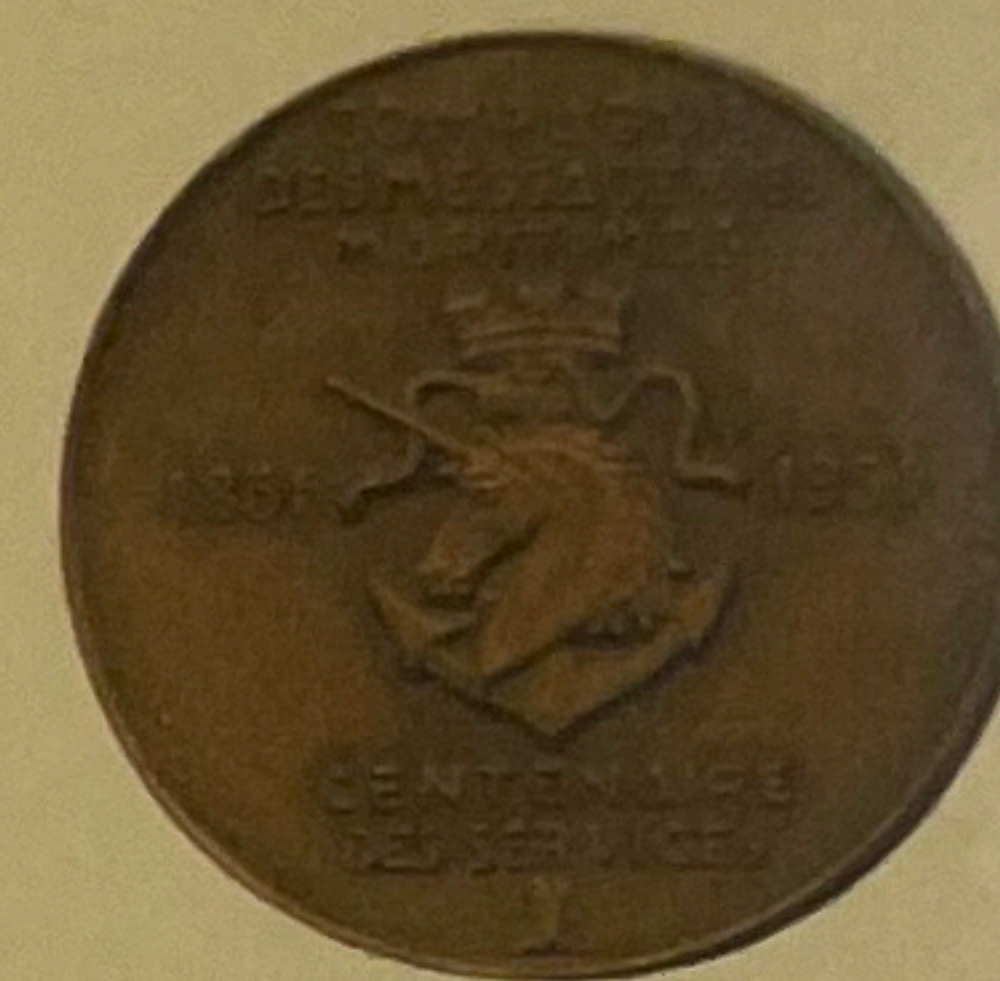
What is Presented: Items of interest are highlighted with  **Red Circle**. Page #4 Le Balkan paquebot, most probably unique. Page #5 L'Orenique, page #6 Le Cordouan, page #7 S.S Dumbéa one of kind.

Exhibit Plan: This exhibit is arranged in chronological order of year of entry into the fleet.

- The Legacy of The Sea History of The Company
- Navigating The Sea From the origins to 1870
- The Golden Age From 1871 to 1914
- From Shipwrecks to Restoration From 1915 to 1945
- Retired but Not Forgotten From 1946 to 1951

Knowledge of Subject: The exhibitor has accumulated and researched this material for more than 3 years before forming an exhibit. At the request of the owners of Centre Visual Arts & Research and ENCYCLOPEDIA DES MESSAGERIES MARITIMES, the exhibitor contributed to, reviewed, edited, and commented on drafts of articles and research on the history of Messageries Maritimes.



Commemorative medal 100th anniversary Compagnie des Messageries Maritimes – Exhibitor Collection.

The Evolution of Messageries Maritimes Paquebots

The ships left Marseille and the harbor of La Joliette, the embankment wharf of the company. Afterward rounding Sicilia, Crete, and the port of call Port-Saïd, they passed through the Suez Canal and sailed to the Extreme East and Saïgon (the second great home port of the company) or went down along the east coast of Africa to link the Reunion Island or Madagascar. In the beginning, the company operated the middle-east routes. Its ships were the troop carriers of the Crimea War and were so helpful for the army that the Emperor gave it thanks to the workings of the Bordeaux-Brail line. This was the first French transatlantic line equipped with steamers.

The first ships of the company, bought to the french government and to the Rostand Company were small paddle steamers built in 1836, quickly old fashioned. Immediately in 1851, the Messageries Nationales (until 1852, then Messageries Imperiales from 1852 to 1870 and finally Messageries Maritimes after 1871) Drive a policy of new ships building during all of the second Empire. So for the inauguration of the Suez Canal in 1870 the Company were in perfect economical conditions for a big expansion, even on the traditional british lines. Unfortunately the defeat against Prussia's in 1871 will stop this expansion for at least 15 years.



Alexandria Pier of De La Messageries Maritimes

Real Picture postcard, Divided and printed 24 Dec 1868 from Cairo, Egypt to Montrouge, France. No photographer information provided



In the Middle-East, the ports of call are Malta, Alexandria, Port-Saïd, Beyrouth, Syria, Smyrna, Constantinopolis, and the Black sea. In the Indian Ocean, the line serves Mahé des Seychelles, La Réunion, Maurice, Zanzibar and of course Madagascar.

Map of the city of Saigon. The red arrow indicates the Messageries building and the dock where the couriers of France land.

LE MEROVEE 1846

Ship launched Sep. 10, 1846 for BAZIN&PERIER's Algerian line. MI took over in 1852, bought it Jan. 10, 1854. First MI-flagged departure from Marseille to Algiers May 9, 1854. In Constantinople in 1858-60.

In 1861 provided annex line St Vincent du Cap Vert-Gorée, TELEMAQUE replaced it. In 1862-63, back in Constantinople, then resumed direct service Nice-Genoa until demolition 1868.

Characteristics:

Length: 60.40 meters
Width: 6.90 meters
Gross gauge: 630
Displacement: 691 tons
Propulsion: 2 cylinder
Power: 300 HP
Speed: 9 knots
2 Dawn wheels
2 Fireplaces

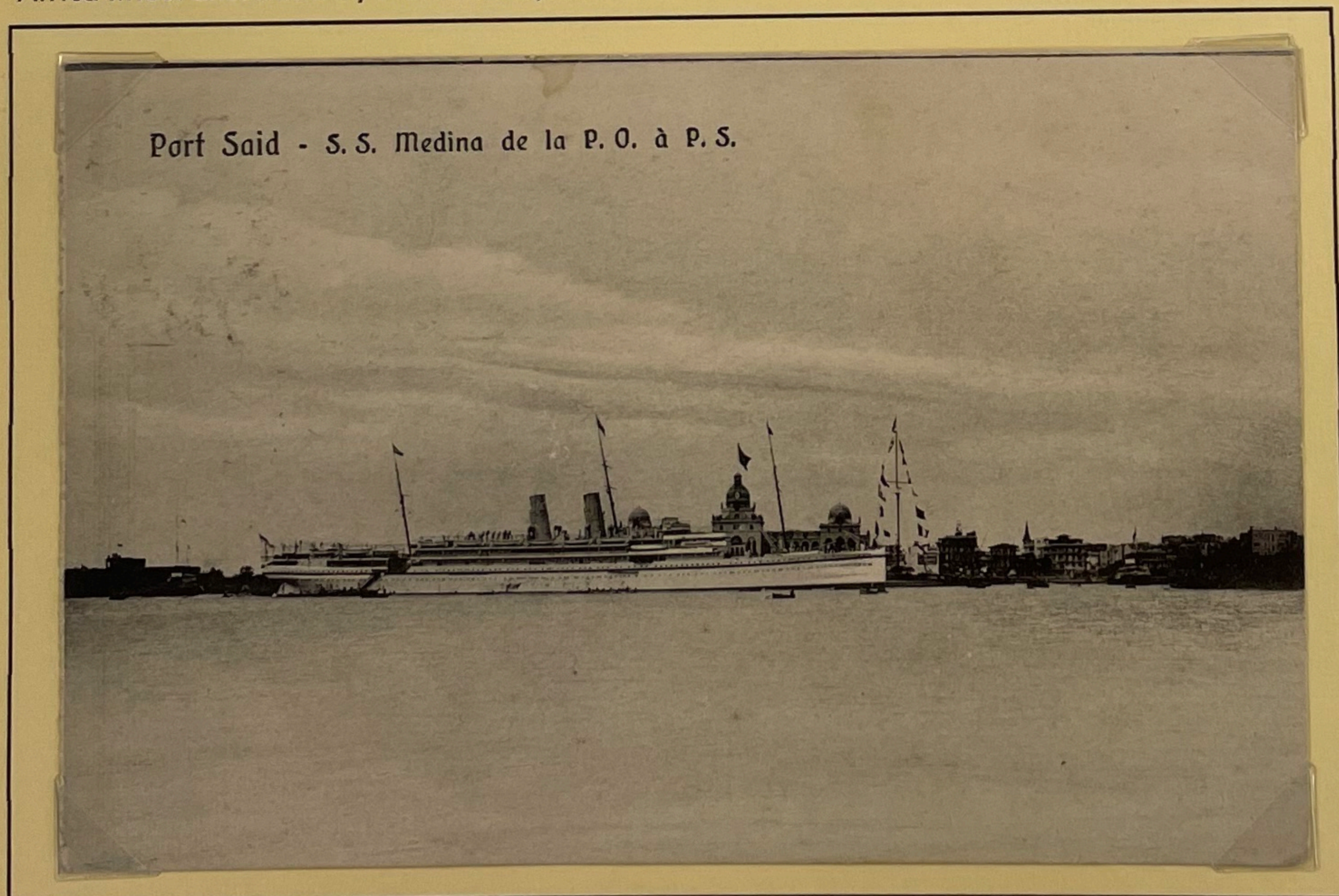


ORENOQUE paquebot entrance Suez Canal via Port-Saïd

Early Postcard published by Postcard Trust, Egypt No/66
Canceled: 21 Aug 1911. Sea Post, Port-Saïd and TPO Port-Taoufiq Ismailia.

LE SINAI 1859

Launched Feb 15, 1854 with THABOR, LEBANON, and CARMEL. Served Levant lines from 1854, then alternated with North Africa lines. Extended by 9.5 m in Sep 1859.



Characteristics:

Length: 76.5 m
Width: 9.5 m
Gross Gauge: 883
Displacement: 1438 tons
Propulsion: 2 cylinder
Power: 1000CV
Speed: 11.5 knots
2 Dawn wheels
2 Fireplaces

Sinai in Le Havre, entering the Eure basin, before 1906

Real photo of postcard, Published by The Cairo Postcard Trust. No/530.
Canceled: Feld Post Office N.M.Y sent to England. Passed Censor No3649

LE BALKAN 1858

Launched Feb. 25, 1858 for Danube line, quasi sister-ship to TAURUS. First departure to Constantinople Mar. 30, 1858, where it stayed almost all its career. Repatriated French troops from Italian campaign in 1859-60. Demolished in La Ciotat in 1874.

Characteristics:

Length: 60.40 meters
Width: 6.90 meters
Gross Gauge: 630
Displacement: 691 tons
Propulsion: 2 cylinder
Power: 300 HP
Speed: 9 knots
2 Dawn wheels
2 Fireplaces



Port Said. Arrival of a Steamer.

Le Balkan paquebot entrance Suez Canal via Port-Said

Postcard, published by Lehnert & Landrock, Cairo, Egypt No/127
Canceled: 20 Jul 1923 Port-Said Traveler CDS. Sent to France. *Most probably unique.*

L'AMAZONE 1869

Launched May 17, 1869 for Far East line. Renamed AMAZONE for South American line. First of five liners built by Suez for Indochina lines. Transferred to Far East lines, first departure Oct. 27, 1872. Hospital ship, ran aground twice in 1889.



26. - "L'Amazone", Paquebot des Messageries Maritimes

Collection Gorce, phot.-edit., Talence (Gironde)

L'Amazone entering the port of La Ciotat in the spring of 1894

Postcard, published by Gorce, Edited by Talence (Gironde) No/26
Canceled: 23 Aug 1907 Alexandria, Egypt Cancellation Date-stamp Sent to France.

Rimbaud repatriated May 20, 1891. Ensured line of Constantinople and Black Sea in 1897-98 before demolition in Marseille Apr 1898.

Characteristics:

Length: 117 meters
Width: 12.6 meters
Gross Gauge: 3396
Heavy Port: 1858 tons
Displacement: 4420 tons
Passengers: about 300
Propulsion: 3 cylinder
Compound machine, 4
boilers until 1883, then 2
Power: 2300 HP
Speed 14 knots
1 Propeller
3 masts, Two chimneys until
1883, then only one.

L'ORENOQUE 1874

Navigation The Sea From The Origins to 1870

Launched Feb 22, 1874 in La Ciotat for South American line. Repatriated Marchand mission in 1899. Troop transport from 1915-1920, cannon fight against German submarine Apr 22, 1917, collision with BOUVET Sep 12, 1917.

Returned to Saigon in 1920, demolished 1925 after 50 years.

Characteristics:

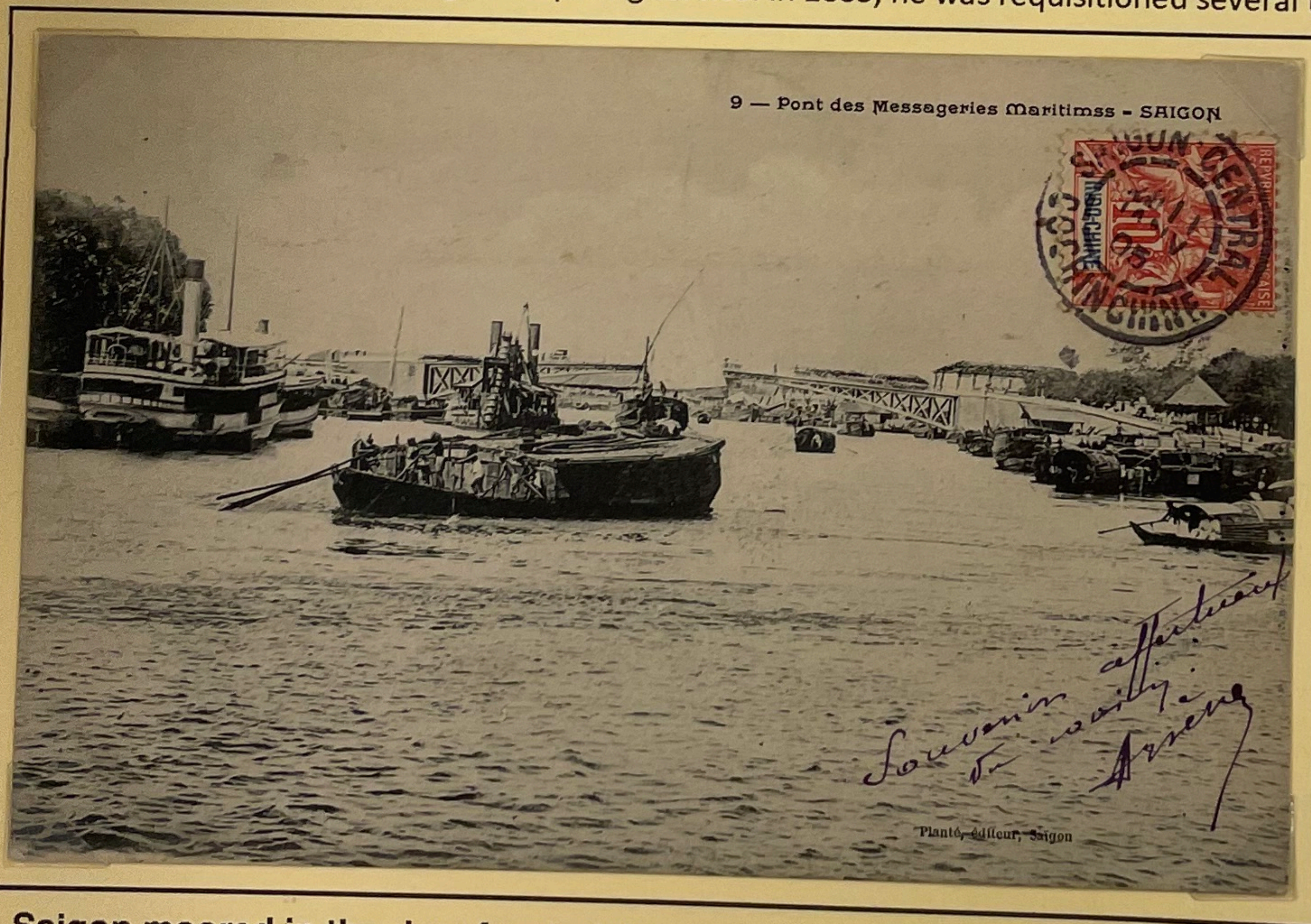
Length: 124.9 meters
Width: 12.07 meters
Gross Gauge: 3816
Heavy Port: 3190 tons
Displacement: 5410 tons
Passengers: 124 first class, 66 second, 54 third, 500 emigrants in the undercarriage
Propulsion: 3 cylinder
Power: 2900 HP
Speed: 14.5 knots
1 Propeller
1 Single Chimney



The Orénoque, on the move back to the Joliette basin, between 1895 and 1907
Postcard divided back, published by J. Lyon propriétaire, design by R. Dumont Dupay.
One of kind postcard for "Orénoque" M. M. paquebot.

LE SAIGON 1881

Launched on 27 Oct 1881, in Greenock by Caird & Cie. Purchased for the annex lines of Indochina. Delivered at the end of 1881. Mainly provides the Saigon-Haiphong service. In 1885, he was requisitioned several times for troop transport.



It was lost by stranding on 27 Feb 1894, on Polo Condore. It was, anyway, very degraded by twenty years of service under a tropical climate only.

Characteristics:

Length: 75 m
Width: 9.63 m
Gross Gauge: 1275
Displacement: 2250 tons
Propulsion: 1 machine compound
Power: 700 HP
Speed: 11.5 knots
1 Propeller
1 Fireplace

Saigon moored in the river front of the company's buildings in August 1882.

Postcard, Published by Planté, Éditeur, Saigon. Pont M. M.
Canceled: 05 Jan 1905 Saigon Central to Servan, Italy arrive 12 Feb 1905

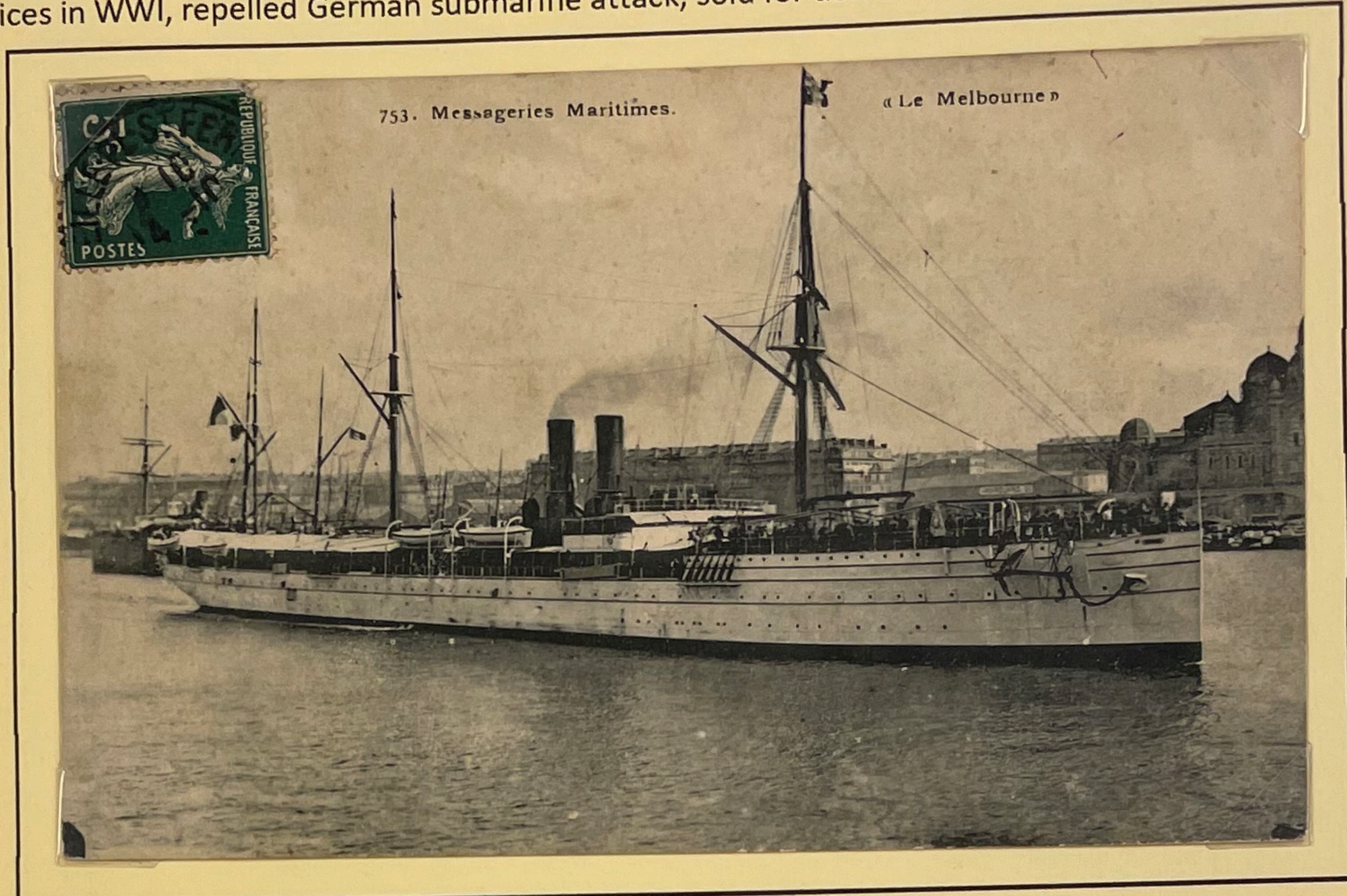
The Golden Age From 1871 to 1914

LE MELBOURNE 1881

Ship launched in 24 Dec 1881, sailed on various lines, won a race in 1885, chartered as troop carrier in 1900, ran aground in 1909, requisitioned for postal services in WWI, repelled German submarine attack, sold for demolition in 1921.

Characteristics:

Length: 130.75 m
Width: 12.07 m
Gross Gauge: 4099
Heavy Port: 1568 tons
Displacement: 6150 tons
Passengers: first 90, 44
seconds, 75 thirds
Propulsion: 3 cylinder
Power: 3400 hp then 4000 hp
after 1895
Speed: 15 knots then 16 knots
after 1895
1 Propeller
2 Fireplaces



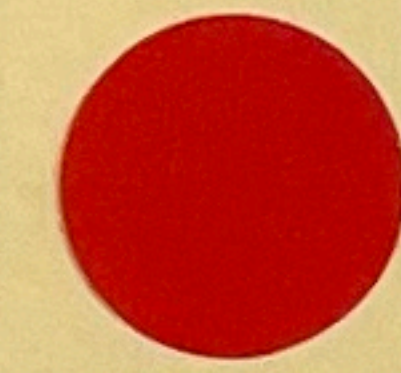
Melbourne in Port said, in the early 1880s
Postcard divided back, published by J. G. L. R. Marseille

LE CORDOUAN 1884

Ship launched in 1884, sailed London-Le Havre-Marseille line until 1887, modified in 1886, sailed Bordeaux-La Plata line until 1902, approached by cargo ship in 1898, later sailed London-Levant and Marseille-London lines, demolished in Italy in 1911.



Le Cordouan leaving the port of Marseille
Postcard, Published by Messageries Maritimes *One of Kind.*
Canceled: 18 Dec 1907 Bacos & Alexandria E Egypt sent to France.



Characteristics:

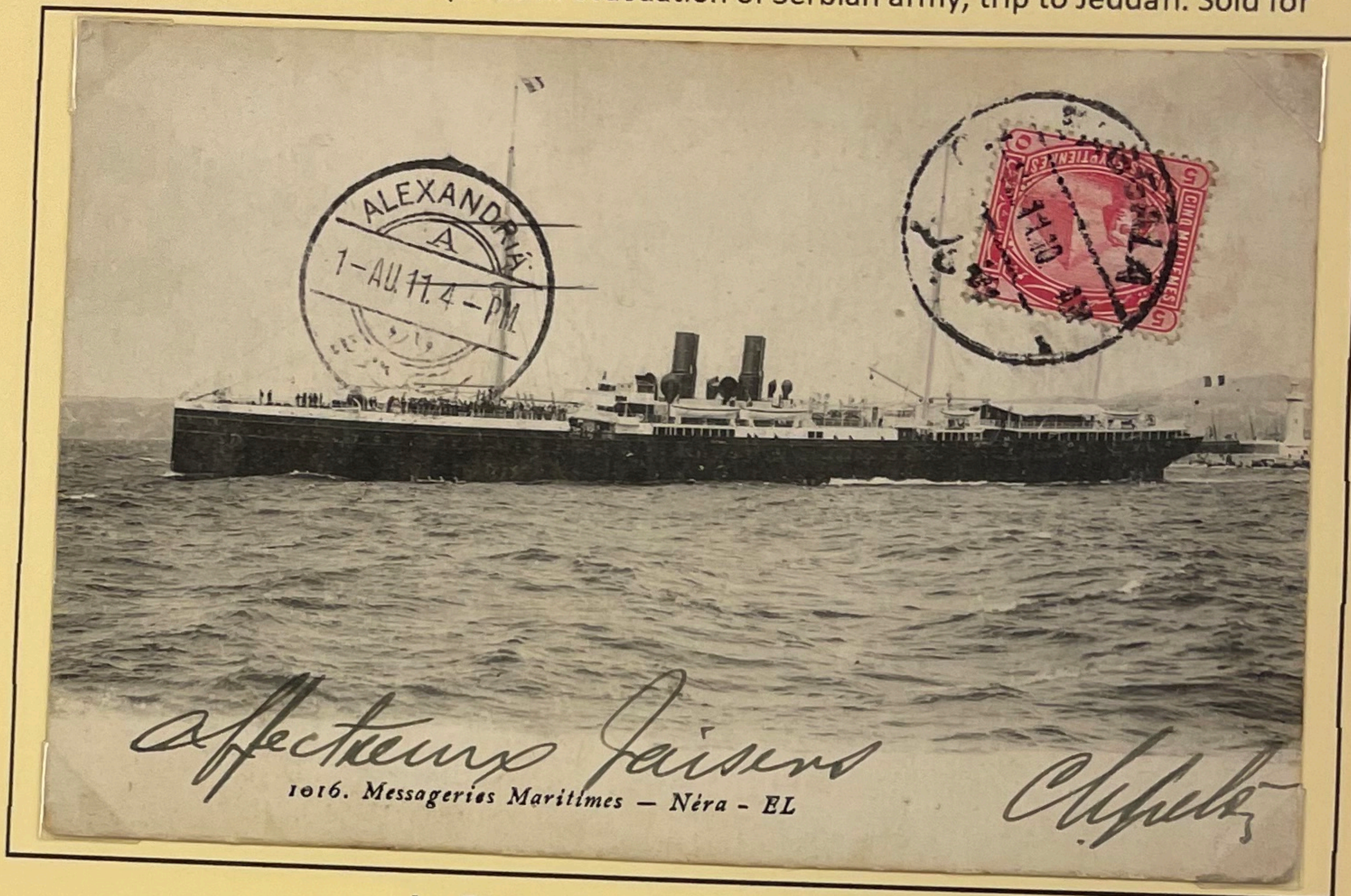
Length: 103 m
Width: 13.86 m
Gross Gauge: 3683
Heavy Port: 4200 tons
Displacement: 5270 tons
Propulsion: 2 cylinder
Power: 1900 HP
Speed: 12.5 knots
1 Propeller
3 Mats
1 Fireplace

THE NERA Ex-LA PLATA 1888

The Golden Age From 1871 to 1914

Ship LA PLATA launched in 1888 in La Ciotat. Sailed South American line until 1903. Changed name to NERA in 1903, sailed Australia and New Caledonia line. Requisitioned in WWI, participated in evacuation of Serbian army, trip to Jeddah. Sold for demolition in Italy in 1923.

Characteristics:
Length: 146.25 meters
Width: 14 meters
Gross Gauge: 5807
Heavy Port: 4690 tons
Displacement: 8056 tons
Passengers: 132 first, 90
seconds, 745 third
Power: 5400 HP
Speed: 17 knots
1 Propeller
2 Fireplaces



La Plata in La Ciotat around 1895

Postcard divided back, 1016, published by Messageries Maritimes, Marseille.
Canceled: Alexandria A, 1 Aug 1911. Arrive from Al Faggala same date.

S.S. DUMBÉA 1888

Ship launched in 1888 by Emperor Dom Pedro of Brazil. Sailed La Plata line from 1889-1902, renamed DUMBÉA in 1903, sailed Australia line. Participated in WWI, survived submarine attack, assigned to Madagascar line.



S.S. Dumbéa between 1889 and 1903

Early 1900 Postcard, Published by Messageries Maritimes *One of Kind*.
No designer information provided.

Characteristics:

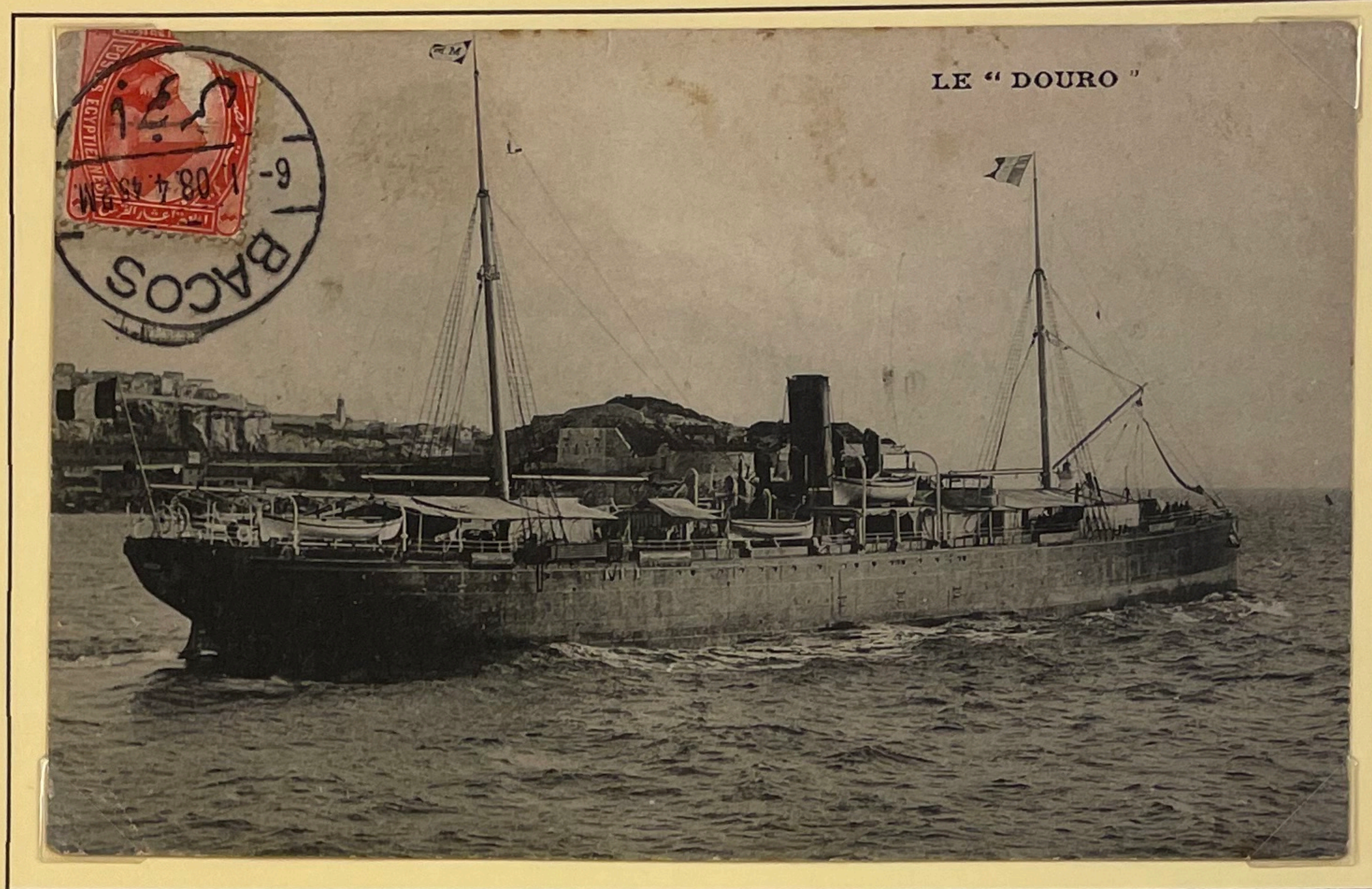
Length: 146.25 m
Gross Gauge: 5867 tons
Displacement: 8056 tons
Passengers: 127 first, 110
seconds, 777 third, then,
after 1903: 142 first, 73
Seconds, 95 third, possibility
of 1200 ration's
Propulsion: 1 triple
expansion alternative,
heated by 6 coal-fired boilers
Power: 5400 HP
Speed: 17 knots
1 Propeller
2 Fireplaces

LE DOURO 1889

Ship launched in 1889 in La Ciotat. Assigned to London-Le Havre-Marseille line, but boarded English ship in 1889. Rescued Norwegian crew in 1890. Participated in Madagascar expedition in 1895. Sailed Mediterranean, Black Sea, Indochina lines. Ran aground in Madagascar in 1910.

Characteristics:

- Length: 111 m
- Width: 11.4 m
- Gross Gauge: 2700
- Heavy Port: 2570 tons
- Displacement: 4690 tons
- Passengers: 31 to 36 (mixed cargo)
- Propulsion: a triple expansion machine heated by two coal boilers
- Power: 1500 HP
- Speed: 12.5 knots
- 1 Fireplace

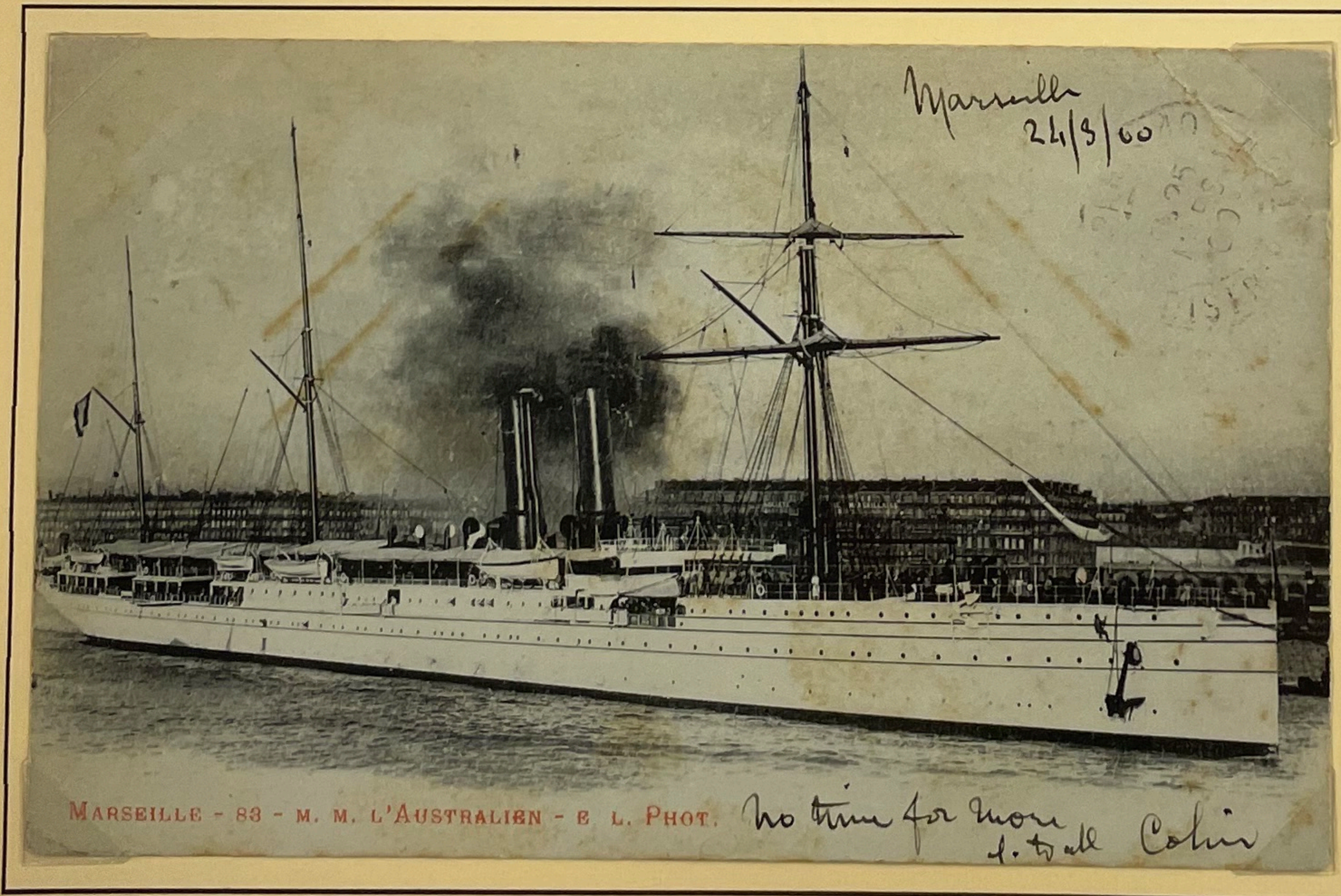


The Douro in the port of Marseille

Postcard, Published by Messageries Maritimes. Send to France from Egypt.
Canceled: 6 Jan 1908, Bacos Arrive to Alexandria same day.

L'AUSTRALIEN 1889

Launched on May 26, 1889, the "sistership" of POLYNESIAN, ARMAND BEHIC, and VILLE DE LA CIOTAT was assigned to the Pacific lines. Later transferred to the Far East lines, it was torpedoed in 1918, killing 19 people.



Characteristics:

- Length: 152.6 meters
- Width: 15 meters
- Gross Gauge: 6376
- Heavy Port: 5000 tons
- Displacement: 10300 tons
- Passengers: 172 1st class, 71 2nd, 109 3rd and 234 berths in the inter-carriage
- Propulsion: an alternative machine heated by 12 Belleville coal boilers
- Power: 7000 HP
- Speed: 17.5 knots
- 1 Propeller
- 3 Mats-boat
- Double chimney

Australian, leaving the Joliette before 1895

Divided back Postcard, Published at Marseille, E. L. Phot No/83.
Canceled: 24 Mar 1900, Marseille. sent to Paris.

LA CIOTAT 1892

The Golden Age From 1871 to 1914

Put on hold under the name of MAURICIEN, then renamed before its launch on 10 Apr 1892 in La Ciotat. Fourth in its series, sistership of ARMAND BEHIC, and little different from AUSTRALIAN and POLYNESIAN. Assigned to the Australia line until 1903, first departure 3 Dec 1892. It then served the Far East lines alternating with Australia between 1902 and 1912, and the Levant in 1912-1914.

Ensuring the Black Sea line, on September 9, 1914, it was one of the Company's last ships to escape before the closure of the Straits. He even crosses in the port of Constantinople the GOEBEN and the BRESLAU, moored there since August 4. He then makes several trips to the Far East. He was torpedoed on December 24, 1915 off Crete by the U 34 while returning from a trip to Japan. The survivors are repatriated to Malta by the English ship MEROE of the James Moss & Co.

The City of La Ciotat moored at the dock in the La Joliette basin in Marseille

Real photo of the ship before 1905. Divided back Postcard, Published by Bassin De Radoub - LL. Canceled: 24 Mar 1900, La Ciotat, Marseille.



8 LA CIOTAT. — Chantiers des Messageries. — Bassin de Radoub. — LL.



The City of La Ciotat arrives in Nouméa before 1905
Real photo divided back postcard, Published by Bassin De Radoub - LL. Edited by L. Bonifay Canceled: 1911, La Ciotat, Marseille.

- Characteristics:**
 Length: 152 meters
 Width: 15.26 meters
 Gross gauge: 6639
 Heavy port: 4200 tons
 Displacement: 10,790 tons
 Passengers: 172 1st class, 71 second, 109 3rd, 239 berths in the
 Propulsion: an alternative triple expansion machine heated by 12 coal-Fired boilers
 Power: 7500 HP
 Speed: 17.5 knots
 1 Propeller
 Double chimney

LE CHILI 1894

The Golden Age From 1871 to 1914

On 14 Oct 1894, Chili launched in La Ciotat and was first assigned to South American lines from Bordeaux. After a failure in Apr 1903, it was redone with the help of the Swedish rescue ship HERAKLES and became the fastest liner on the Buenos Aires.

Characteristics:

Length: 148 meters
Width: 14.6 meters
Gross Gauge: 6489
Heavy Port: 4785 tons
Displacement: 7725 tons
Passengers: 129 first, 149
seconds, 689 third
Power: 6000 HP
Speed: 16.9 knots
1 Propeller
Two central chimneys.



Launch of Chili on October 14, 1894 in La Ciotat

Divided back postcard published by Bourelly, 22, rue de l'Etrieu, Marseille

An exciting travel story from Jan 1909 remains. It served on the Far East and Mediterranean lines after 1912, transported troops during the war. It was sold for demolition on Apr 1927, after ensuring lines of the Levant and Madagascar.



Launch of Le Chili on October 14, 1894 in La Ciotat

Divided back postcard published by J. H. B. Éd, Marseille

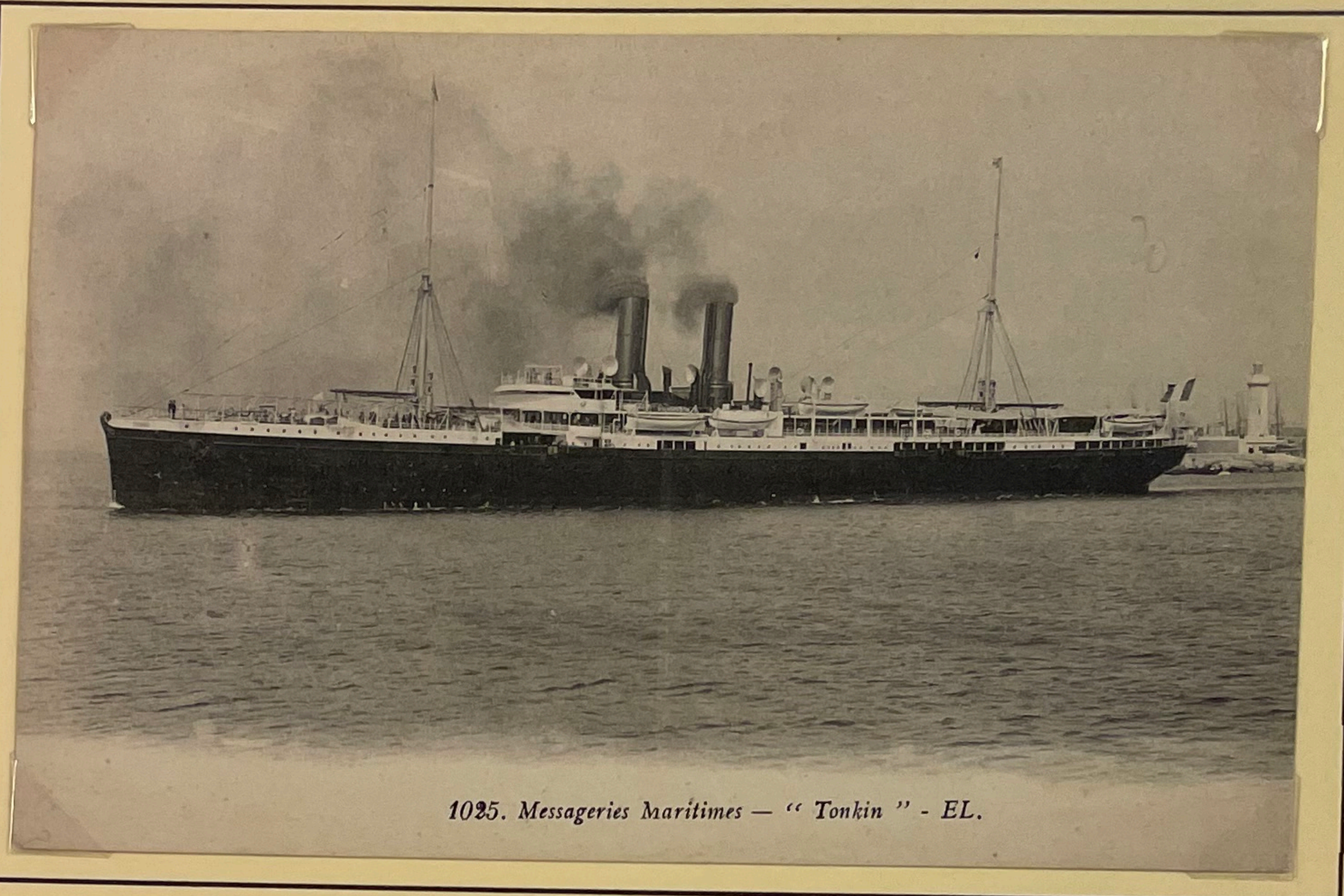
LE TONKIN 1898

The Golden Age From 1871 to 1914

Launched on Mar 6, 1898 in La Ciotat, it was assigned to the Far East line. It suffered a major fire on Aug 6, 1903. Modified in 1912 and renamed LOTUS, it transported troops and survivors during the war. It sank near Mytilene in 1926 and was sold for demolition on Feb 29, 1932.

Characteristics:

Length: 142 meters
Width: 15.5 meters
Gross Gauge: 6246
Heavy Port: 4100 tons
Displacement: 9850 tons
Passengers: 185 first, 86
seconds, 77 third
Power: 9500 HP
Speed: 19 knots
2 Propellers
Double Chimney



1025. Messageries Maritimes — "Tonkin" - EL.

Tourane – Paquebot Français des Messageries Maritimes M.M.
Divided postcard no information for publisher

LE KARNAK Ex-TOURANE 1898

Launched as ANNAM on 6 Nov 1898, in La Ciotat for the Far East line with LAOS, TONKIN, and INDUS. Renamed TOURANE in 1904 and modernized to become KARNAK in 1912 for lines of the Levant. It was requisitioned for postal services in 1914 and torpedoed on Nov 1916, by U32.



Characteristics:

Length: 142 meters
Width: 15.5 meters
Gross Gauge: 6350
Heavy Port: 4075 tons
Displacement: 9850 tons
Passengers: 185 first, 86
seconds, 77 third
Propulsion: 2 triple
expansion alternatives,
twelve coal-fired boilers
Power: 7200 HP
Speed: 18 knots
2 Propellers
Double Chimney

Tonkin – Paquebot Français des Messageries Maritimes M.M.
Divided postcard no information for publisher

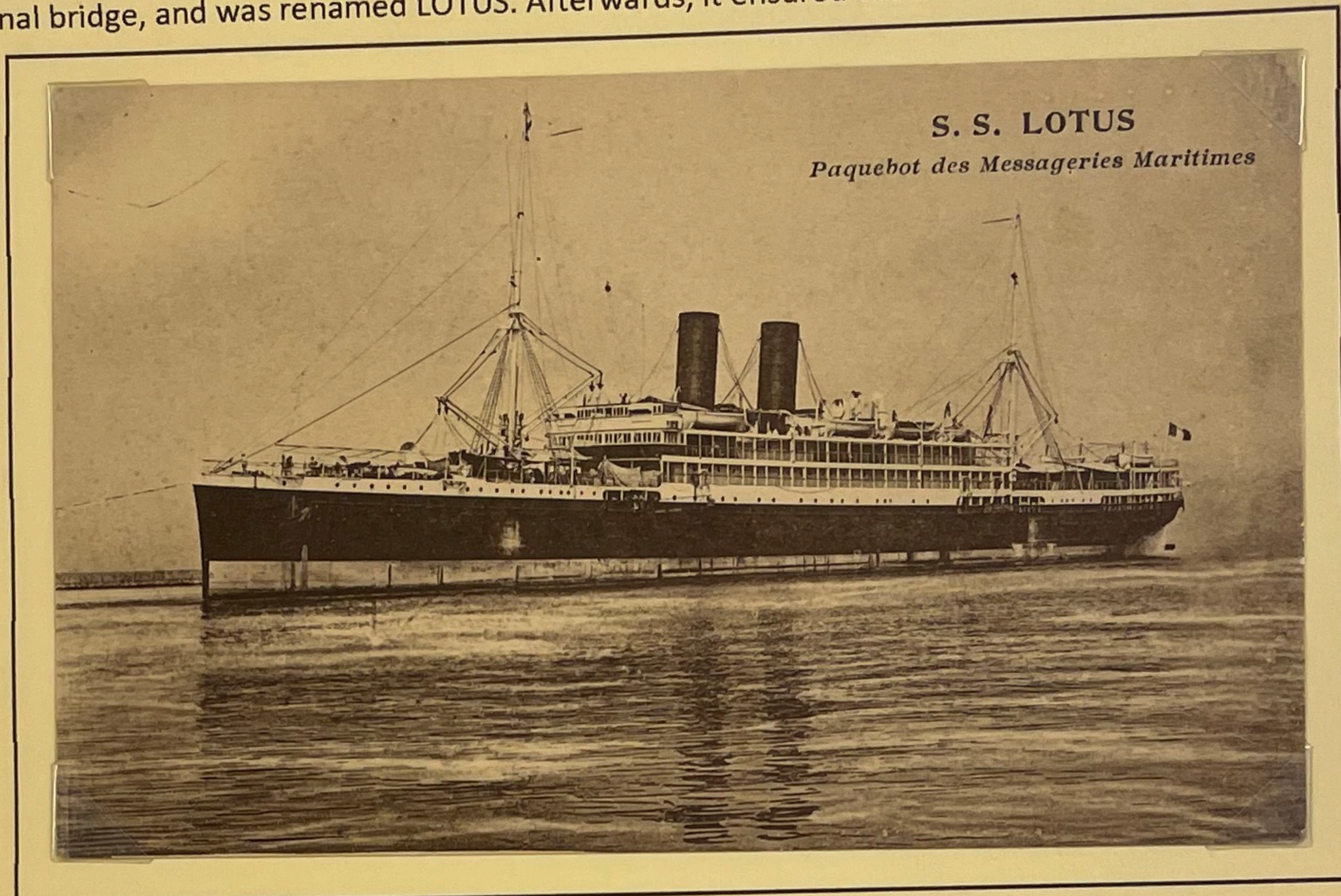
The Golden Age From 1871 to 1914

LE LOTUS 1898

Launched on March 6, 1898, the ship Lotus was assigned to the Far East line. It suffered a major fire in Kobe in 1903. In 1912, it was modified and given an additional bridge, and was renamed LOTUS. Afterwards, it ensured the line from Egypt and Syria.

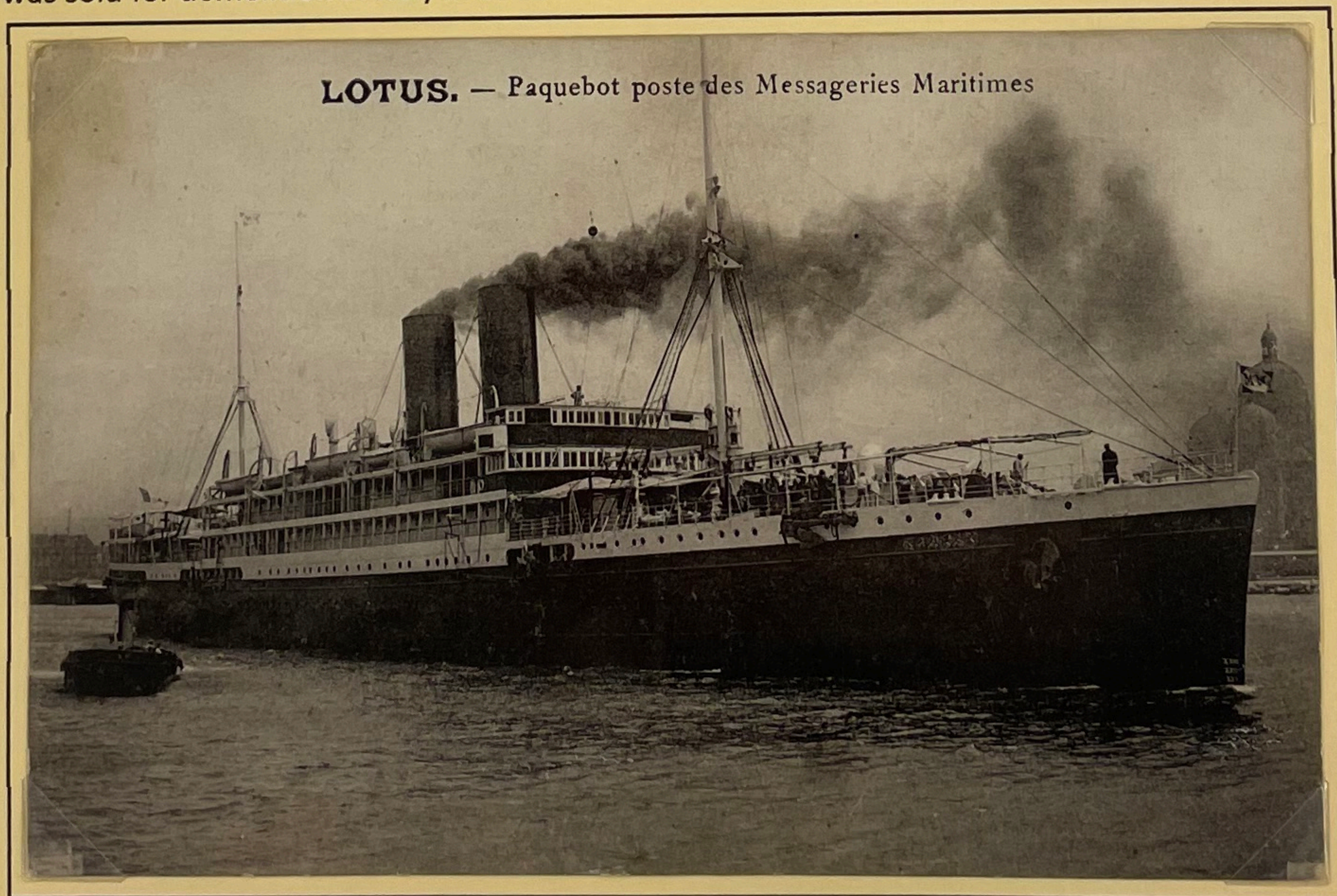
Characteristics:

Length: 142 meters
Width: 15.5 meters
Gross Gauge: 6822
Heavy Port: 3830 tons
Displacement: 9850 tons
Passengers: 192 first, 110
seconds, 92 third and 316
Propulsion: 2 triple expansion
alternatives, 12 Belleville coal
boilers
Power: 9500 HP
Speed: 19 knots
2 Propellers
Double Chimney



The Lotus at the dock in Marseille in Cap Pinède in 1929.
Postcard, divided back, no publisher information provided.

In 1914, the ship Lotus was requisitioned for postal services and had a gun installed in 1915. It participated in the transport of troops to the Dardanelles and survived the war. In 1926, it sank a Turkish steamer and its captain was sentenced to prison. The ship was sold for demolition in Italy in 1932.



The Lotus leaves Marseille after the war.
Postcard, divided back, no publisher information provided.

L'ATLANTIQUE 1899

The Golden Age From 1871 to 1914

Launched on November 5, 1899, for the South American line and later moved to the Far East line. It approached a sailboat in 1909 and a tongue in 1915. In 1918, it was torpedoed by a German submarine but managed to take refuge in Bizerte and was repaired. The incident resulted in a quote and Commander Gary receiving the Legion of Honor.

Characteristics:

Length: 148 meters
Width: 14.8 meters
Gross Gauge: 6478; then 7357 for the Angkor
Heavy Port: 5510 tons; then 4362 tons for Angkor
Travel: 7740 tons
Passengers: 197 first, 111 seconds, 87 third and 217 fourth then after 1921: 134 first, 75 second and 87 third
Power: 7200 HP
Speed: 19 knots
Two propellers



L'Atlantique entering the dock at Bordeaux

Postcard, Published by CH. Chambon.

Canceled: 24 Jul 1912, Pearl, Portugal sent to Paris, France.

LE JERUSALEM 1901

Launched in 1901 as LOMBARDIA, the ship was renamed JERUSALEM after being sold to Russian Steam Navigation in 1911. It participated in WWI and made trips to the Indian Ocean and Indochina, before being returned to the Russian company in 1925 and possibly demolished in 1931.



Characteristics:

Length: 128.16 m
Width: 15.8 m
Gross Gauge: 5104
Heavy Port: 4480 tons
Displacement: 9600 tons
Power: 4527 HP
Speed: 14.5 knots
1 Fireplace

The Jerusalem paquebot under the Russian shipping company steam

Divided back Postcard, Published at Marseille, by Orimaud.

LE SPHINX 1915

From Shipwrecks to Restoration From 1915 to 1945

The ship launched on 1915, served as a hospital ship during WWI, and was later converted into a civilian liner. It made trips to Alexandria and the Northern Mediterranean, and was converted for oil heating in 1932. It served the Far East and was converted back to a hospital ship in 1939. It participated in repatriation efforts and was disarmed in 1941, renamed SUBIACO, and bombed in 1944.

Characteristics:

Length: 151 meters
Width: 18.8 meters
Gross gauge: 11,375
Displacement: 15,025 tons
Passengers: 188 first, 90
seconds, 106 third and 250 in
the bridge
Propulsion: two alternative
steam engines with quadruple
expansion, heated first by 8
coal-fired boilers, then with oil
after 1932
Power: 9000 HP
Speed: 17 knots
2 Propellers
2 Mats
Two Chimneys



The Sphinx in a hospital ship between 1915 and 1918
Divided back postcard, Published by Grimaud Marseille



The Sphinx in a hospital ship in the Bay of Thessaloniki on 1917.
Divided back postcard, Published by Bourelly, 22, rue de l'Etrieu, Marseille.

LE MARIETTE PACHA 1925

From Shipwrecks to Restoration From 1915 to 1945

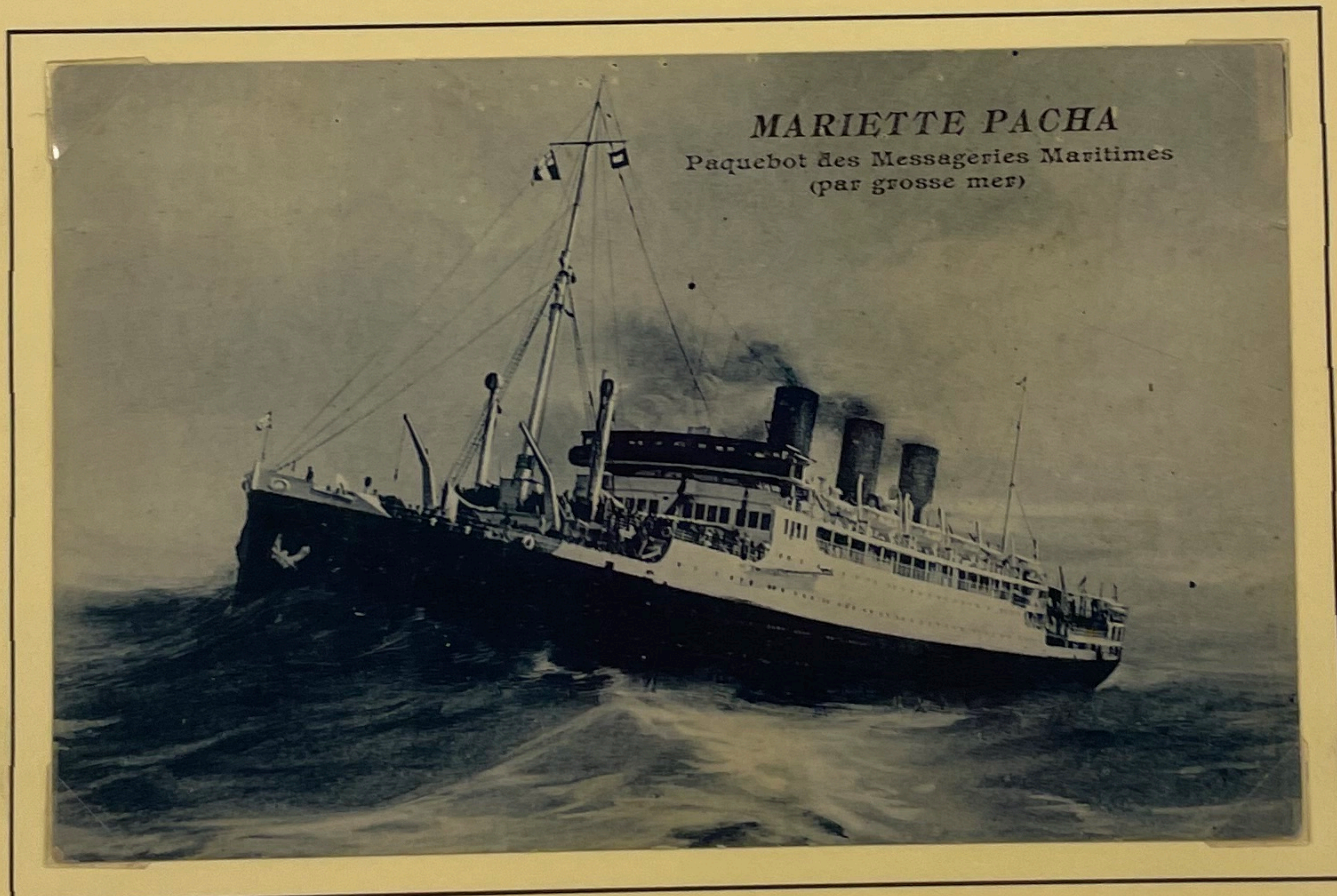
Launched at La Ciotat on February 8, 1925, it was meant for the Levant fast line: Marseille Alexandria Beirut. Its first travel was on September 7, 1926, following a cruise on the coast of Spain. Like its sistership the CHAMPOLLION, it remained unmodified in 1934, thus keeping its right bow. In 1939, it was requisitioned as a troop transport on the Levant.

On September 22, 1939, it joined the L3 convoy from Oran to the Levant, which crossed the L1 convoy moving in the opposite direction in total darkness. It collided with the CHENONCEAUX, causing 11 deaths and minor damage. On June 22, 1940, it sailed from Marseille to Oran in one of the last convoys of troops and equipment to North Africa. During the attack on Mers El Kébir on July 3, 1940, it was in the port of Oran but remained undamaged. On November 27, 1940, it was involved in a naval battle between Italian and British warships off Sardinia while returning from Beirut with its sistership the CHAMPOLLION. On August 9, 1941, it left Toulon for the Levant to repatriate Vichy troops from Syria.

It was one of the ships officially transferred to the Axis by the Laval/Kaufmann agreements in January 1943, but it never sailed under the German flag. From January 5 to August 4, 1943, it remained moored in Sète, then in Port de Bouc for the rest of the war. On July 24, 1944, it was moved by the Germans and on August 21, 1944, it was scuttled and cut in half by explosives in the port of Marseille.

Characteristics:

Length: 156.70
Width: 19.13 meters
Gross Gauge: 12239
Heavy Port: 12339 tons
Displacement: 15039 tons
Passengers: 188 first, 135
seconds, 128 third
Propulsion: 2 alternative
steam engines with triple
expansion Heated by 7 oil-
fired boilers
Power: 10,000 HP
Speed: 16 knots
2 Propellers
Three Chimneys



The Mariette Pasha probably in Marseille, the front bridge loaded with soldiers.
Divided back Postcard, no publisher information provided.

LA BOURDONNAIS 1951

Retired But Not Forgotten From 1946 to 1951

The ship, which was the second among four "sisterships," was launched on July 5, 1951, at the Lorient Arsenal. The other three ships that comprised this group were FERDINAND DE LESSEPS, PIERRE LOTI, and JEAN LABORDE. The ship spent its entire career operating on the Indian Ocean line, with its route beginning from Marseille, passing through the East Coast of Africa, Madagascar, and Reunion. In 1953, it had its first departure on March 31, and usually passed through Suez, except in 1956 and after 1967, when it opted for the Cape Town route.

The ship underwent a few modifications over time. In 1963, it had a repainting job that saw the black liston replaced with a voluminous white "false neck," while the company's logo appeared on the fireplace. The ship was sold in December 1968 to Konstantinos Ephytiadis in Greece, and it was renamed KNOSSOS. Unfortunately, the ship burned down on May 3, 1973, while it was between Piraeus and Limassol. The ship was finally demolished in August 1976 in Spain, marking the end of its journey.

Characteristics:

Length: 150 m
Width: 19.6 m
Gross Gauge: 10100
Heavy Port: 6270 tons
Displacement: 17500 tons
Passengers: 88 first, 112
tourists, 30 third, 248 rations
in dormitories
Propulsion: 2 Burmeister &
Wain 5-cylinder twin-stroke
diesel engines
Power 12500CV
Speed 18 knots
2 Propellers
1 Fireplace



La Bourdonnais at the beginning of his career under a great bulwark

*Postcard, published by Véritable, Marseille, Printed for M.M.
Canceled: 6 Sep 1945 Marseille RR.*