

Victorian Heritage Database Report

Report generated on - 27/09/24

ELIZA

Location

Between Port Phillip and Western Port, or Bass Strait

Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

S214

Date lost

1797

Construction material

Wood

Hull

10 ton sloop rigged decked long boat (Stone 2006)

Propulsion

Sail

Number of masts

1

Length/Breadth/Depth

0.00 / 0.00 / 0.00

Date lost

1797

Departure

Preservation Island

Destination

Sydney

Cargo

Salvage from SYDNEY COVE.

Master

Archibald Armstrong (Master of the HMS Supply)

Cause of loss

ELIZA and FRANCIS sailed to the wreck of the SYDNEYCOVE to pick up crew members and as much cargo as possible. Were then to return to Sydney. FRANCIS arrived on 6 July but ELIZA was not seen again. Presumably, she had foundered.

Passenger comments

6 Lascars

Statement of significance

<p>The remains of the Eliza are historically significant as one of the first vessels recorded to have been lost in Victorian waters, for its association with the wreck of the Sydney Cove (1797), and subsequent exploration of Bass Strait and Victorian coastline.</p>

VHR history

Lost in 1797, the sloop Eliza may have been the earliest wreck in Victorian waters. It was returning to Sydney from the wreck of the Sydney Cove at Preservation Island when it disappeared. When HMS Calcutta was surveying the Victorian coast in 1803, the wreck of a large, unidentified boat was found between Port Phillip and Westernport, which one secondary source states may have been the Eliza (Bateson). It could also have belonged to early sealers or escaped convicts recorded to have sailed in Bass Strait between 1797-1803.

 The Eliza left Preservation Island on 23 June in the company of the government schooner Francis, but the vessels were separated in a heavy gale the next day.
 When the Eliza failed to arrive in Sydney it became apparent that the Eliza had foundered with the loss of all hands.