

Victorian Heritage Database Report

Report generated on - 28/04/24

ELIZA

Location

Port Phillip Bay, approximately 18 miles from Williamstown

Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

S215

Date lost

25/01/1855

Construction material

Wood

Hull

Lengthened and major repairs, 1851. Minor repairs, incl. zincsheet sheathing to ballast mark, 1853. Special survey 1851,asterisk AE1 Lloyds

Propulsion

Sail

Length/Breadth/Depth

0.00 / 0.00 / 0.00

Year of construction

1835

Built port

Milford, Pembrokeshire

Built country

Wales

Registration Port

Wisbech

Date lost

25/01/1855

Departure

Melbourne

Destination

Geelong

Cargo

Not known

Owner

Bunn & Co.

Master

Captain Thomas Bunn

Weather conditions

Heavy squall struck at 4 pm

Cause of loss

"a heavy squall struck her and hove her down considerably. The jib-sheets gave way, the fore spencer gaff broke, and the mainsail split." (UID 9) Laboured for 5 hours & was discovered to have sprung a leak. Pumps began working but soon choked, bailed with buckets throughout the night but found that hte ship was nearly full of water and sinking (UID 9, 71)
 Sprang a leak and sank

VHR history

The Eliza left Hobsons Bay at 4am. While reaching on the port tack, a squall struck. The jib sheets gave way, the fore spencer gaff broke and mainsail split. Anchor let go in about 14 fathoms. While Eliza rode at anchor waiting for gale to pass, the master recorded position as 'Williamstown lighthouse bearing N by E about 18 miles and the You Yang Mountain bearing W about 25 miles'. After 5 hours the schooner sprang a leak and commenced to take water. Attempts to pump and bail were ineffectual so the captain and crew took to ship's boat and rowed clear just before Eliza sank "taking with her the clothes &c of all aboard" (ID 9). In the boat until 10 am, 26 January, they were picked up by schooner Susan and taken to Geelong. Bunn praised his crew for their efforts to save vessel. A 'Notice to Mariners', 27Aug 1855, described the position of a sunken wreck about 5miles from where Bunn had reported loss of Eliza . The Melbourne Morning Herald incorrectly described vessel as a steamer - error perpetuated in later literature. The only previous record of voyage to Victoria located was from Bristol on 24 August 1853, calling at Cape of Good Hope, no passengers, arriving at Geelong 18 January 1854. No departure date located.