

Victorian Heritage Database Report

Report generated on - 03/08/24

ESSINGTON

Location

Port Fairy, Port Fairy Bay

Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

S240

Date lost

03/05/1852

Official number

None

Construction material

Wood

Hull

Square stern, one deck, carvel. Most fittings, sails and rigging were recovered before she broke up.

Propulsion

Sail

Number of masts

2

Length/Breadth/Depth

76.00 Feet / 19.00 Feet / 11.00 Feet

Year of construction

1826

Built port

Government Dockyard, Sydney

Built country

Australia

Registration Port

Launceston

Date lost

03/05/1852

Departure

Sydney

Destination

Port Fairy

Cargo

General 2 :20 tons sugar

Owner

Capt. J.B. Mills and John Griffiths

Master

Captain J.B.Mills

Cause of loss

Wrecked in heavy weather

Statement of significance

<p>The wreck of the brig Essington is archaeologically significant for its remains of an early Australian built vessel. It is historically significant for its role in the whaling industry and in the early development of Victoria, and for its association with the pioneers Captain Mills and John Griffiths.</p>

VHR history

The brig Essington anchored at Port Fairy and commenced to unload cargo. A south easterly gale sprang up, which gradually increased in strength, bringing a heavy swell into the bay. The Essington parted from its best bower anchor but was brought up on its small bower anchor. However, the vessel struck the bottom in the trough of one wave. As the Essington rode at anchor, it continued to strike the bottom, but it was not making any water. One heavy sea caused the vessel to strike and break the rudder. The anchor began to drag causing the Essington to strike the bottom further as it moved towards the beach. By this time the hull was making water faster than the pumps could cope. When the gale and the sea moderated, attempts were made to unload the cargo, but the water continued to gain on the pumps. A kedge anchor was run ashore and the vessel hauled up on it. All fittings and cargo were then removed and the Essington was abandoned (Taken from log extracts published in the Argus, 25 February 1852).
 The vessel was originally built as a New South Wales

government brig - convict-built?
 Reference to the Essington capturing whales at Portland (Portland Guardian Sat 10/6/1843).
 Ref: Essington departed for Twofold Bay where there is less competition (Portland Guardian Sat 26/8/1843).