

Victorian Heritage Database Report

Report generated on - 28/04/24

GRANGE



S297 Grange Apollo Bay
Site View

Location

Little Haley Reef, Mounts Bay

Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

S297

Date lost

25/03/1858

Construction material

Wood

Hull

Classification: 11 A1

Propulsion

Sail

Number of masts

3

Length/Breadth/Depth

0.00 / 0.00 / 0.00

Year of construction

1840

Built port

Troon

Built country

Scotland

Registration Port

Greenock

Date lost

25/03/1858

Departure

Melbourne

Destination

Penang, Singapore, Guam

Cargo

Ballast

Owner

1841-42: Leckie & Co.
 1858: T. Shaw

Master

Capt. A. Alexander

Weather conditions

Light wind and rain, misty, south-east wind Force 4, hazy

Cause of loss

Navigational error

Statement of significance

<p>The Grange is archaeologically significant as an example of a Scottish built wooden barque and international trader, with remains of its wooden hull available for study. It is a typical vessel as used in international and

coastal cargo and passenger carrying trades in the early to mid 19th century ie: representative of a particular category or type. It is educationally and recreationally significant as it is one of the only wooden vessels accessible to recreational divers along this stretch of the coast.</p>

VHR history

The 275 ton Scottish barque Grange was built in 1840 at Troon, Scotland. It had previously voyaged to the Carribean (Lloyds 1841-42). On what was to prove its final voyage, the Grange cleared Melbourne to sail for Guam on 22 March 1858, in ballast for its agents Fanning, Nankivell & Company.

 After clearing Port Phillip Heads Captain A. Alexander made a course for Cape Otway, where the only light on the coast was expected to be seen. The weather was thick and hazy, a force 4 south-easterly wind was blowing and heavy rain was falling from 10pm that night until 4am. At 4am one of the look-outs reported a light on a west-north-west bearing - believed to be the Cape Otway lighthouse. Captain A. Alexander thus assumed his vessel to be well clear of the land - even when breakers were heard - however he was unaware of the small timber cutting settlement at Apollo Bay from where the light he saw was emanating. The Grange was in fact on a collision course for Little Haley's Reef at Apollo Bay.

 The barque struck, and it was immediately obvious that it could not be saved when an attempt to back the vessel through the reef by backing the yards resulted in it striking another rock. All hands were called to abandon the ship and everything moveable was carried onto the beach.

 Commander Purvis of H.M. steamship Moegaera passing the next morning reported that the barque Grange was on shore bilged with its rudder gone. The schooner Anne was on shore in the same place but was expected to be got off during the night (Argus 25 March 1858).

 A locally based syndicate salvaged the remainder of the hull, sails and fittings over the next month, before the Grange broke up. The estimated loss was about 2000 pounds.

 In 1968 the site was found by members of the Underwater Explorers Club of Victoria (UEC) and a small (six or nine pounder) muzzle loading cast iron trunnion carronade with encircling reinforcement bands was raised. This carronade would have been used as a weapon, as confirmed by the finding of a cannonball on the site.

 The carronade is unique with no comparable examples so far located, and the Tower of London Armoury and National Maritime Museum in Greenwich have not seen any such design. It is most likely a 'backyard' casting specifically for merchant ship use (NMM/ UEC correspondence 1968, MHU file), and is probably of English origin, and not of Dutch, Spanish or Portuguese origin as has at times been suggested (J. Green, pers. comm. 2001). Backyard manufacture is suggested as the reinforcement bands are old technology (they can be seen on cannon from the Mary Rose (1509-1545) that were applied to stop the muzzle from splitting or exploding, before advancements in metallurgy phased their necessity out by the 1600-1700s. Trunnion carronades first appeared around 1800. While the date of manufacture of the carronade is thus uncertain it is has stylistic similarities to the shorter carronades found on the wreck site of the Sirius (1790) on Norfolk Island.