

Victorian Heritage Database Report

Report generated on - 15/08/24

ISABELLA



S342 Isabella CapeNelson
IronBallastPigsSideView
1997 GS



S342 Isabella CapeNelson
IronBallastPigsTopView 1997
GS

Location

Cape Nelson, Portland

Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

S342

Date lost

31/03/1837

Official number

None

Construction material

Wood

Propulsion

Sail

Number of masts

3

Length/Breadth/Depth

89.70 Feet / 24.00 Feet / 16.50 Feet

Year of construction

1826

Built port

South Town, Yarmouth

Built country

UK

Registration Number

1/1837

Registration Port

Launceston

Date lost

31/03/1837

Departure

George Town, Tasmania

Destination

St Vincents Bluff/ Gulf of St Vincent, Adelaide, South Australia

Cargo

Livestock (mostly cattle)

Owner

Michael Connolly and John Griffiths.

Master

Captain John Hart

Weather conditions

Weather: SE.

Cause of loss

Navigational error - crashed into high cliffs near Portland.

Passenger comments

John Jones Pearce
 Mrs Pearce
 Sarah Pearce (?)
 Edward Pearce (5yo)
 Pearces servant

Crew comments

John Jones Pearce, Mrd Pearce, Sarah Pearce, Edward Pearce(5yo) and their servant (un-named)

Statement of significance

<p>The Isabella is historically significant as Victoria s oldest located shipwreck site. It is also significant for its association with early trade with the colony of South Australia.</p>

VHR history

The ISABELLA had arrived in Australia (Hobart Town) from London with a cargo of sheep on 11 February 1837, the ship sailed to Launceston on 22 February and arrived on 8 March 1837. The vessel was reported wrecked at Cape Nelson on 30 March 1837 whilst on a voyage from Launceston to Adelaide with livestock. Syme states that vessel went ashore at Cape Northumberland. McKenzie reports that the vessel was wrecked on the eastern side of Cape Nelson. Captain Hart, an experienced Captain and familiar with the coast, mistook Lady Julia Percy Island for Cape Nelson and set course up the coast. The ship sailed straight into the cliffs. After a number of attempts the ships boats were launched and the 25 passengers and crew managed to get to Portland Bay.
 One of the passengers travelling with his family John Jones Pearce (Peers?) was a master builder. A descendant of his advises he was commissioned to do the Melbourne Customs House and the base foundations for the 1st Methodist church on the corner of Little Collins and Swanston St.