

Victorian Heritage Database Report

Report generated on - 27/04/24

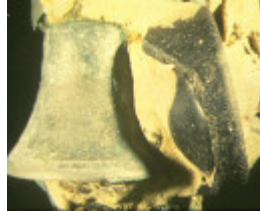
ISABELLA WATSON



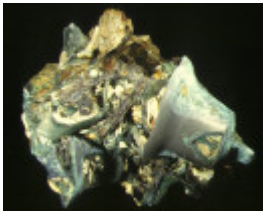
S346 IsabellaWatson
PortPhillipHeadsNepeanReef
Anchor



S346 IsabellaWatson
PortPhillipHeadsNepeanReef
AnchorDetail



S346 IsabellaWatson
PortPhillipHeadsNepeanReef
BellBottleBaseInMarineConcret



S346 IsabellaWatson
PortPhillipHeadsNepeanReef
Bell PF

Location

Nepean Reef, Port Phillip Heads

Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

S346

Date lost

21/03/1852

Construction material

Wood

Hull

Wood, yellow metallated and part repaired 1851, classified A1 by Lloyd's 1851

Propulsion

Sail

Number of masts

3

Length/Breadth/Depth

118.00 Feet / 26.00 Feet / 18.00 Feet

Builder

R. Menzies & Co

Year of construction

1840

Built port

Leith

Built country

Scotland

Registration Port

Glasgow

Date lost

21/03/1852

Departure

London

Destination

Melbourne

Cargo

General: merchandise, brandy, porter, ale, gig shaft rails, tobacco, lucifer matches, beer, puncheon varnishes colours etc., iron & brass work, tin, rum, red lead, wine, oil, ring weights, hardware, iron pots, ovens & covers, vinegar, books, stationery, looking glasses, glassware, playing cards (UID 9)

Owner

Russell and Raeburn, Glasgow

Master

Captain John Fullarton

Weather conditions

SE; force 2; clear; day; strong ebb tide ; squally

Cause of loss

Attempted to enter the Heads and was struck in a squall. Struck Corsair Rock. Starboard side was stove in & stem & stern posts carried away (UID 71). Driven onto shore & became a total wreck. Pilot had been late leaving the beach to board the Isabella Watson, was unable to reach the vessel due to strong seas.

Passenger comments

50 passengers: 16 cabin; 34 intermediate and steerage
 (landed Passenger List only has 43 names). Elijah 31yo
 Derrick; Jane 34yo
 Hobbs; Joseph 21yo
 Terry; William 29
 Terry; Emma 31
 Langford; George 25
 Langford; Martha 26
 Orphert; James 30
 Orphert; Jane 29
 Butler; Alfred 25
 Oliver; George 53
 Oliver; Susan 55
 Paterson; Thomas 36
 Paterson; Jane Gray 34
 Paterson; Eliza 5
 Paterson; Jannet 32
 Drew; Samuel 26
 Rudd; John 24
 Kingsley; Samuel 36
 Kingsley; George 21
 Kingsley; Emma 21
 Bell; George 28
 Tolbert; Richard 23
 Christian; Thomas 27
 Menaud; Joseph 37
 Simpson; Hutchison 20
 Dudgeon; William 25
 Verdon; Mr C.E. 30
 Pasley; Mr Walter
 Pasley; Wife with
 Parker; H.M. Mr
 Parker; Wife with
 Carr; W. Mr 34
 Taylor; Thomas H. Mr
 Taylor; Wife with
 Taylor; Child with 6
 Taylor; infant with l
 Moriat; Robert Mr 37
 Gray Archibald Mr 30
 Ritchie; Thomas Mr 20
 Mandell; J Mr
 Clarke; Hubert Mr 34

Number of crew

21

Crew comments

William J. Pierce (surgeon)

Statement of significance

<p>The Isabella Watson is historically significant as an example of an emigrant ship from the UK to Port Phillip. Its archaeological significance lies in the remainder of the ship's cargo that is associated with the wreck and has the potential to reveal information about mid C19th material culture. It is historically and socially significant for its association with the ongoing debate surrounding the Port Phillip Pilot Service, and for its association with 9 deaths</p>

VHR history

After a fair voyage the immigrant ship, in attempting to enter the Heads, struck the then uncharted Corsair Rock in a sudden violent squall and wind change at 5 pm. Starboard side stove in, stern and stern post carried away. Against his better judgement, Captain Fullarton finally acquiesced to the passengers' pleas for the boats to be launched. One landed safely but the ship's mizzen mast fell on the next boat, capsizing it as it left the ship - 6 women and 3 men drowned. The remainder (about 60) were landed safely after the pilots, on a rescue mission, managed to secure a line to the rocks. Pilot Tobin commended for battling the surf with a life-line. However, Pilot Lawler resigned - had been late leaving to board Isabella Watson, and, unable to reach the wrecked vessel due to the heavy seas, had returned to Queenscliff to consult with the other pilots. Captain Fullarton, last to leave Isabella Watson, was praised for risking his own life for those of the passengers. Early press reports indicated that eight, not nine, people had drowned. Press called on the government to ensure that the pilot service operate outside the Heads and for lights at the Heads. In 1842 the vessel had carried 197male convicts (incl. 2 who died) to Hobart. Ports and Harbors incorrectly gave date lost as 21 April 1852.