

Victorian Heritage Database Report

Report generated on - 15/08/24

AUSTRALASIA

Location

Portland

Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

S48

Date lost

19/03/1855

Construction material

Wood

Hull

Classified 12 A1 June 1847, resurveyed 12 A1 1854. Yellow metal 1853. Timber & Space 13.5", Floors (s)12.12" (m)9.5", Keelson (s)14" (m)15", Keel (s)13" (m)10". Hull planking, Keel to Bilge 3.25", Bilge 5", Bilge to Wales 3.5". Inside planking Foot Wali

Propulsion

Sail

Number of masts

3

Length/Breadth/Depth

117.00 Feet / 28.00 Feet / 19.00 Feet

Builder

James Laing

Year of construction

1847

Built port

Sunderland

Built country

England

Registration Port

London

Date lost

19/03/1855

Departure

Portland

Destination

Melbourne

Cargo

Wool

Owner

British-owned

Master

Captain McPherson

Weather conditions

Strong south easterly gales

Cause of loss

Strong south easterly gale caused the ship to drag its anchor and drift ashore.

Statement of significance

<p>The vessel is historically significant due to its involvement with transporting convicts to Australia 1849 - transported 200 female convicts to Hobart from Dublin (Ire). It is impossible to assess the archaeological significance of the site as it has not been located, however historical sources suggest it was broken up severely and as a result, the vessel may have limited archaeological significance. However, if any part of the hull has survived it may yield important information regarding the construction of the Sunderland-built ships and those ships that were employed to transport convicts to Australia in the early to mid 1800s.</p>

VHR history

The vessel CONSTANT was lost in the same gale that caused the loss of AUSTRALASIA. The Australasia like many of the Sunderland-built ships was involved in the transportation of convicts. According to Bateson, the Australasia made a voyage from Dublin to Hobart in 1849 with 200 female convicts. The Sunderland-built ships were "excellent frigate built vessels, fast, seaworthy". According to local accounts at the time of wrecking, the vessel was originally wrecked stern up onto the beach. However, it later turned broadside to the beach and broke up. Local press reports severely criticised the colonial government for the lack of proper port facilities. #VHR: A south easterly gale caused the barque Australasia to part one of its cables while anchored in Portland harbour. The second anchor dragged, and the vessel grounded on a reef and soon began to break up. The Australasia, which was loading a cargo of wool, had previously been a convict transport ship. The same gale also wrecked the barque Constant. #Classification: 12 A1. #