

Victorian Heritage Database Report

Report generated on - 03/10/24

RELIANCE

Location

Three miles SE of Cape Schanck

Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

S570

Date lost

17/07/1869

Official number

53953

Construction material

Composite

Hull

1 deck, single mast, sloop rigged, round stern, carvel built, iron framed, (composite construction)

Propulsion

Steam - Paddle

Number of masts

1

Length/Breadth/Depth

94.00 Feet / 17.00 Feet / 6.50 Feet

Year of construction

1865

Built port

Yarra River, Melbourne

Built country

Australia

Registration Number

47 of 1865

Registration Port

Melbourne

Date lost

17/07/1869

Departure

Woody Point (Westernport)

Destination

Melbourne

Cargo

10 Trunks of clothes, 80 sheepskins, 2 bales of wool, 100s of wooden casks

Owner

Dec 1865: Alexander Dove, Footscray 48/64 & John K. Freyer. Captain Paxton part owner

Master

Captain Paxton

Cause of loss

The Reliance struck a rock at Woody Point, but did not appear to have suffered any serious damage. After putting to sea, the vessel began to leak and sank off Cape Schanck.

VHR history

The paddle steamer Reliance was built on the banks of the Yarra in 1865 and traded between Port Phillip and Western Port. After striking a rock off Woody Point, the vessel proceeded to sea but began to leak uncontrollably and foundered off Cape Schanck. The crew landed safely at Flinders.

 According to 'Port of Melbourne Quarterly' the steamer RELIANCE was built on the banks of the Yarra River in 1865 on the site now occupied by The World Trade Centre. It was originally built as a tug but was often used during public and school holidays as a ferry, later trading between Queens Wharf, Queenscliff, Dromana and Schapper Point. The Melbourne Argus reported in early July 1869 that due to the increasing trade between Western Port and Port Phillip, two steamers, the RESOLUTE operated by Messrs Norton, Graham & Co and the RELIANCE would operate between the two bays. In late July the Argus reported the loss of the steamer RELIANCE off the Schanck after it struck a rocky reef when leaving Woody Point. The vessel sank quickly in deep water. The master had inspected the vessel prior to leaving Western Port and believed that the leak could be controlled. Once at sea the leak quickly

developed and could not be controlled by the vessel's pump. The vessel foundered in 17 fathoms of water. The master and crew abandoned ship in a small boat and rowed to Flinders where they raised the alarm. The Marine Board of Inquiry attached no blame to the master or crew. Captain Paxton was engaged by the owners to salvage what cargo had come ashore along the coast two miles south of Cape Schanck. During this operation the police who accompanied the master arrested a local farmer for illegal salvage of the goods.