

Victorian Heritage Database Report

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RIVER CHIEF

Location

Western Port

Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

S577

Date lost

4 Feb 1858

Construction material

Wood

Hull

1 deck, Square stern

Propulsion

Sail

Number of masts

2

Length/Breadth/Depth

71.90 Feet / 22.50 Feet / 11.70 Feet

Builder

W H Edwards

Year of construction

1845

Built port

Murray River, Western Australia

Built country

Australia

Registration Port

Sydney

Date lost

4 Feb 1858

Cargo

Timber

Owner

Captain Edward Lane

Master

Captain W.H. James

Weather conditions

Southeast gale

Cause of loss

Dragged anchors

VHR history

While loading a cargo of timber in Westernport Bay, the Western Australian-built brig River Chief was blown onto a reef by a gale and wrecked.
 "While this brig was lying at anchor at Western Port there were strong south east gales. Finding she was dragging her anchors, and nearing the reef, Captain W. H. James, at 10 pm, ordered her masts to be cut away. She seemed to hold on until 3:30, when she struck, knocking off her false keel, bilged and became a wreck. The vessel belonged to Captain Edward Lane of, Sydney, and was not insured. She was about one third laden with sawn and squared timber" (The Age 9 February 1858)