

Victorian Heritage Database Report

Report generated on - 18/07/24

BLACK BOY

Location

Mushroom Rock, Lonsdale Reef, Port Phillip Heads

Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

S76

Date lost

08/07/1883

Official number

19598

Construction material

Iron

Hull

One deck, 2 masts, clincher built, no galleries or head; iron framework. Schooner rigged but removed after voyage from England

Propulsion

Steam - Screw

Engine specification

15 HP, simple vertical steam engines, 2 x 12 inches diameter, stroke 1.33 feet

Engine builder

Scott, Sinclair & Co.

Number of masts

2

Length/Breadth/Depth

81.50 Feet / 15.00 Feet / 7.90 Feet

Builder

J. Scott & Sons, Westburn

Year of construction

1857

Built port

Greenock

Built country

Scotland

Registration Number

14 of 1875

Registration Port

Melbourne

Date lost

08/07/1883

Departure

Melbourne

Cargo

Salvage from George Roper - 40-60 tons of softgoods, paper, general merchandise.
 Barrels of whiskey (UID 147)
 Previously transported gunpowder from manufacturers works at Glenlean to varous ports. Also worked out of Swansea before working as a tug in Melbourne (Records of J.Scott & Sons, held at the University of Glasgow)

Owner

1857: Curtis, Harvey & Co. Glenlean
 1875: James Deane, shipowner, of Williamstown

Master

Captain Stafford

Weather conditions

Very heavy seas

Cause of loss

Drifted onto Mushroom Rock with flood tide after fouling propeller. "...one of the slack ropes of the Blackboy became accidentally entangled with the steamer's rudder, which was rapidly destroyed. The loss of the rudder, and some further bungling in not having steam up placed the Blackboy completely at the mercy of a heavy swell and tide. In a few minutes she drifted on to the reef..(Greenock Telegraph 31 January 1883 p2)

Number of crew

12

VHR history

Had been chartered at 20 pounds per day to take cargo from wreck of the ship George Roper (sank 4 July 1883). Bad weather had hampered salvage operations. In heavy seas, alongside George Roper, had lost mast, a tow rope from George Roper tangled Black Boy's propeller, funnel knocked over, lines to ship were cut and Black Boy drifted helplessly onto rocks. Those on board narrowly escaped death - rescued by Queenscliff lifeboat when tide changed. Black Boy impossible to board, subsequently abandoned by underwriters, and sold at auction for 200 pounds on 12 July 1883 to same Melbourne syndicate that bought the George Roper. That evening the Black Boy was forced over the reef and sank in deeper water. Had been brought to Melbourne for towing trade. Anticipated usefulness in event of shipwrecks - attended the wreck of the Romeo in Gippsland. Had been involved in the lime trade from Walkerville to Port Phillip. Frequently overhauled. Valued at about 1,500 pounds, insured for 600 pounds.