



ACTIVITY: Swimming after boat capsized

CASE: [GSAF 1849.09.19](#)

DATE: Wednesday September 19, 1849

LOCATION: The accident took place at the mouth of the Merri River, Warrnambool, Victoria, Australia.

NAME: Unknown

DESCRIPTION: He was a seaman from the schooner *Brothers*, and a “splendid swimmer”.

BACKGROUND

MOON PHASE: New Moon, September 17, 1849

TIME: 01h00

NARRATIVE: He was swimming to shore when “he threw his hands in the air and disappeared.”

INJURY: Fatal. Shark involvement suspected but not confirmed.

SOURCE: The Maitland Mercury & Hunter River General Advertiser, Wednesday October 10, 1849, page 3

MELANCHOLY ACCIDENT. — The schooner *Brothers*, Captain Dockray, arrived at Warrnambool on the 17th instant, from Sydney, after a passage of 21 days. Yesterday morning, about 1 o'clock, Captain Dockray left the vessel with two men, in his boat, for the shore, and when about making the mouth of the Merri River a small roller took the boat on the quarter, when she broached to and capsized. I regret to say, that by this unfortunate accident Captain Dockray and one of the men were drowned. The other man swam back to the vessel quite exhausted. Captain Dockray could not swim, but an oar was given to him by the man who swam back to the vessel. He appeared, however, to have given up all presence of mind, and very soon disappeared. The other sailor who was drowned was a splendid swimmer, and tried to make for the shore, but as he threw his hands up in the air and disappeared, it is supposed he either took cramp, or else was caught in the leg by a shark, with which the bay abounds. The bodies have not been recovered as yet.— *Warrnambool Correspondent of the Victoria Colonist*, Sept. 20.