

ACTIVITY: Swimming

CASE: GSAF 1868.09.01

DATE: September 1, 1868

LOCATION: The incident took place in the Adriatic Sea in the Bay of Trieste, Trieste, Italy.
45°38'N, 13°48'E

NAME: Unknown

DESCRIPTION: Male, a supply worker from Dalmatia.

BACKGROUND

In 1868 the construction of the current *Porto Vecchio* (the Old Port, at the time called *Porto Nuovo*, the New Port) was started. The Northern part of the port was built between 1868 and 1883 together with the outer breakwater and other sea infrastructures.



NARRATIVE: The man was swimming quite close to a bathing establishment, when he was bitten on the thigh by the shark. When his cries were heard he was thrown a rope, which he had the presence of mind to attach to his arm. He was pulled in towards the bathing establishment when the shark bit his lower leg.

INJURIES: He sustained two bites to his leg. The first was to his thigh, the second to his lower leg, breaking the tibia.

FIRST AID / TREATMENT: The injured man was helped ashore, then taken to the military hospital. There were concerns about tetanus and the possibility of having to amputate the leg. He may have succumbed to his injuries because an article published on September 10, 1868 refers to a fatality at Trieste.

SOURCES: Le Gaulois (Paris, 1868), September 7, 1868, page 3
The Edinburgh Evening Courant, Thursday September 10, 1868

CASE INVESTIGATORS: Dott. Alessandro De Maddalena, President of the Italian Ichthyological Society, Curator of the Italian Great White Shark Data Bank and Member of the Mediterranean Shark Research Group citing (Radovanovic, 1965; Soldo and Jardas, 2002), and Chris Moore, Global Shark Accident File



Le Gaulois (Paris, 1868)
September 7, 1868, page 3



Un visiteur incommode. On lit dans l'*Osservatore triestino*: Le bureau central du port et de la salubrité porte à la connaissance du public qu'au moment du coucher du soleil, on a constaté la présence d'un requin dans nos eaux; ce qui rend dangereux de s'écarter de la côte en se baignant. On s'est empressé de faire avertir tous les directeurs des établissements de bains. Il paraît que ce requin est venu jusqu'à notre port en suivant un navire suédois. La première personne mordue est un individu employé aux vivres et qui est arrivé de la Dalmatie pour voir sa fille. Nageant au large, et cependant assez près d'un établissement de bains, cet homme a été mordu à la cuisse par le requin. « A ses cris on s'est empressé de lui lancer une corde qu'il a eu la présence d'esprit de s'attacher au bras. On l'a alors tiré vers l'établissement de bains et pendant ce temps le requin l'a mordu une deuxième fois à l'os tibia qu'il lui a fracturé, puis il a disparu. Le malheureux baigneur a été recueilli et transporté à l'hôpital militaire. On craint le tétanos et qu'il ne faille procéder à l'amputation de la jambe. Ce matin, on a aperçu le requin à la gauche de la jetée San-Carlo: il a 20 pieds de longueur. L'autorité a donné l'ordre d'organiser une expédition pour aller à la pêche de ce dangereux visiteur de notre port.

Translation by Mark Radcliffe

An unwelcome visitor.

An article appearing in the *Osservatore triestino*: the central port and safety authority has brought it to the attention of the public that at sunset a shark was spotted in our waters. This makes swimming in the open sea away from the shoreline more dangerous. Hurried efforts were made to warn the management of bathing establishments. It appears that this shark arrived at our port having followed a Swedish boat. The first person bitten was a supply worker who had arrived from Dalmatia to see his daughter. He was swimming in the sea, still quite close to a bathing establishment, when he was bitten on the thigh by the shark.

When his cries were heard he was thrown a rope, which he had the presence of mind to attach to his arm. He was then being pulled in towards the bathing establishment when the shark bit him for a second time, breaking his tibia bone, before disappearing. The unfortunate swimmer was helped ashore and then taken to the military hospital. There were concerns about tetanus and the possibility of having to amputate the leg. This morning the shark was seen on the left side of the San Carlo jetty: it is 20 feet in length. The authorities have ordered an expedition to be arranged to go and catch this dangerous visitor to our port.

"BEAKEN" TAKEN TO TASK.—An Italian complains in the *Times* of Mr Koebuck stigmatising a whole people as the assassinating Italians. Moreover, the tide of Italian emigration almost entirely sets in the direction of South America.

The authorities of Trieste have issued a notice warning all persons to be careful as to where they bathe, as at this moment there is a large shark in the bay. One man has already been bitten.

REPORTS from southern and western Irish counties say that the present weather has put it beyond doubt that the "poor man's harvest" in the remoter districts will be as favourable as the harvest is in Ireland generally.

The Edinburgh Evening Courant, Thursday September 10, 1868