



**ACTIVITY:** Swimming

**CASE:** [GSAF 1888.12.09](#)

**DATE:** Sunday December 9, 1888

**LOCATION:** Iron Cove Bridge, Sydney, New South Wales, Australia.  
*33°51'32.06"S, 151°9'44.11"E*

**NAME:** Stephen Carter

**DESCRIPTION:** He was an 11-year-old male.

#### **BACKGROUND**

**MOON PHASE:** First Quarter, December 10, 1888

**ENVIRONMENT:** The original Iron Cove Bridge, constructed of wrought iron lattice girders, opened in 1882 and provided a new western route to Sydney via Balmain.

**TIME:** Afternoon

**NARRATIVE:** He was swimming by the saw mills near the bridge with three other boys and a man when he was killed by a shark.

**INJURY:** Fatal.

**SPECIES INVOLVED:** Not identified

**SOURCES:** The Brisbane Courier, Tuesday December 11, 1888, page 5

Poverty Bay Herald, December 28, 1888, page 2

Gilbert P. Whitley (1951), page 192, cites the Sydney Morning Herald, December 10, 1888, page 5

The Sydney Daily Telegraph gives the following particulars of the terrible fatality which happened at Iron Cove on December 9th :—A boy named Stephen Hallett Carter, aged 11, with three other boys and a man, was bathing near the sawmills adjacent to the bridge, when he was seized by a monster shark and dragged under water. His companions, filled with consternation, precipitately rushed from the water, and, helpless to render assistance, watched from the bank the completion of the tragedy. Nothing was seen of the unfortunate boy, and the only evidence of his presence was the blood which dyed the surface near where he had disappeared. Efforts were made to recover his body, and ultimately it was brought to the surface by means of grappling irons. It was then seen that the shark had inflicted one terrible injury and then left its victim. A great wound extending from the heart to the abdomen, out of which the entrails were torn, evidenced the ferocity of the monster's attack. Neither before nor after it had seized the boy was anything seen of the shark, but it is believed to have been a very large one. It was thought to be one of the same species that not long ago dragged a youth from the bridge itself.

Several boys were bathing in Iron Cove on Sunday afternoon, when one named Stephen Carter, aged 11, was seized by a shark and dragged out of sight. The others escaped. The body was recovered shortly afterwards, and found to be disembowelled.