



ACTIVITY: Swimming

CASE: [GSAF 1898.07.26.R](#)

DATE: Reported July 26, 1898

LOCATION: Sydney, New South Wales, Australia.

NAME: Martin Gunner

DESCRIPTION: He was one of the crew of the Government steamer *Fitzroy*.

NARRATIVE: Richard C. Brown and Martin Gunner were sent out to communicate with the sand pump *Doris*. When their boat reached the bar it capsized. Gunner and Brown were swimming to shore when Gunner was seized by shark.

INJURY: Fatal

SPECIES: Not identified

SOURCE: The Brisbane Courier (Queensland) Tuesday July 26, 1898, page 7

NOTE: This is a questionable incident; the above account appeared in a testimonial for Dr. Morse's Indian Root Pills.

Having heard of an experience which few are called upon to undergo, a reporter was despatched to learn the true facts of the case, and on being interviewed, Mr. Richard C. Brown, a storekeeper at No. 7 Burton-street, North Sydney, related the following particulars:—"One stormy night, whilst employed upon the Government steamer *Fitzroy*, I was ordered to form one of the crew called out to communicate with the sand pump *Doris*. Upon reaching the Bar our boat capsized, and Martin Gunner and myself attempted to swim for shore. Gunner disappeared—seized by a shark. My blood ran cold. I turned to get back to the boat, when Captain Grant cried, 'Brown, for God's sake try to come back.' After a desperate struggle, and sinking twice, I reached it, though I was as one dead. The captain then swam ashore, and we were eventually rescued by the Trial Bay convict lifeboat. That night at Seal Rocks, Dr. Kelly sat at my bedside trying to ease my terrible pain. James Anderson, who accompanied me to Sydney Hospital, knows what I suffered; but after four weeks I started to improve, when I was ordered to join the *Rhoa* at Cape Hawke. From there