



THE FLOODS.

On 3 January 1870 a sad occurrence is reported to have taken place at West Taieri, by which a young man named James **Hastie** has lost his life. It appeared that Mr Hastie, who was the son of Mr Alexander **Hastie**, a farmer in the West Taieri, feeling anxious at hearing that the district was flooded, left Dunedin on Monday by the coach, intending to go home.

On arriving at the West Taieri bridge, it was found impossible to cross, a portion of the embankment having been washed away. He, however, crossed the river in a boat, and having done so, proceeded on foot, his best way being pointed out by the ferryman. The water lying on the low parts of the flat was very high, only the tops of the fences being visible in some places, and although requested by Mr Ford, who ferried him over, not to venture, he determined to do so, expressing great anxiety for the safety of his parents.

Nothing more was heard or seen of him until yesterday morning, when his body was found lying in a lagoon in Mr James Shand's paddock, about three quarters of a mile from the place where he had parted with Mr. Ford. He was found in about three feet of water, although there must have been ten or twelve feet there when the flood was at its height. It is supposed that the strength of the current washed him off his feet, and that he was unable to recover himself, so as to avoid getting into deep water. The deceased was about 30 years of age, unmarried, and had been of late employed in Dunedin as a drayman.

The driver of Steadman's coach reported yesterday that a landslip had taken place near the Junction Hotel, Saddle Hill. The slip extended across nearly the whole breadth of the road, vehicles being only able to pass with great difficulty. The road was also washed away in some places, and the two bridges near Thomson's were bent in the middle. He also states that the township of Mosgiel was covered with water, and the inhabitants were being removed in boats. The river, which, was at its height on Sunday night, was then, however, falling, and in his estimation the flood did not reach within two or three feet of the level of that of February, 1868.

The driver of Cobb and Co.'s coach, which arrived from Tokomairiro about noon yesterday, reported that the river at that place was level with the bridge, and that people whose houses were adjacent to its banks had removed to the township. Many portions of the road were in a dangerous condition, and in some places it was likely that landslips would occur. The water in the Waihola Lake was on a level with the road when the coach passed, and was still rising.

Another informant states that a portion of the road beyond Mosgiel has been washed away. In his estimation the water at Mr Anderson's, East Taieri, is quite as high as it was two years ago, and will be but little less disastrous in its effects. At the time of his leaving for Dunedin, the Taieri river showed no signs of going down, though the Silverstream had fallen considerably. It was impossible yesterday to obtain any information regarding the amount of damage done, owing to the absence of means of communication with the settlers, but there can be no doubt that it must be very great. The Taieri Plain, as seen from the top of Saddle Hill, presented the appearance of a large lake, covering the entire extent of the depression between the hills on either side. With respect to the damage caused by the rain and floods in West Taieri district, Constable Fair reports yesterday as follows : In consequence of the incessant rain which fell in this neighbourhood on Sunday, the Taieri river rose very high,

and at about 4 p.m. commenced to cover the township. The constable seeing that several families were surrounded by the flood and had no means of escape, went to their rescue with the police boat.

James Hastie is buried in the family plot in Dunedin's Southern Cemetery along with his mother and father, a brother, and a young child who died at 18 months.

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