



Mr William Scoular, the head of the firm of W. Scoular and Co., of Jetty street, Dunedin, and his wife fanny Mary, and two daughters—Miss Nellie Scoular (aged 18) and Miss Fanny (aged 16), both of whom had been educated at the Girls' High School—were passengers in the s.s *Wairarapa*, and all of them lost their lives when the ship was wrecked on Great Barrier Island on 28 October 1884 in terrible circumstances. They had been on a trip to Sydney, having left Dunedin some weeks ago. Mr Scoular was one of the most successful of our Dunedin business men.

During recent years he devoted himself passionately to farming, having acquired a property in Southland, which he brought, to a high state of cultivation. He spent much of his time on his farm, leaving the conduct of his business in Dunedin to Mr J. Moloney, the manager, in whom he had implicit confidence. Mr Scoular was, among other things, very fond of music, himself playing the violin, and was a performing member of the Dunedin Orchestral Society. He leaves a numerous family.

Mr W. Scoular, merchant, of Bond street, who was lost together with his wife and two daughters, was one of the directors of the New Zealand branch of the Scottish Metropolitan Insurance Company of Edinburgh, and was insured against accident for £600. This is the only insurance on that gentleman's life. Mr D. Scoular, his son, proceeded north in the hope that the bodies of one or more of the members of the family may be recovered, and was successful in identifying the whole four bodies. Three sons and four daughters are left in the family.

Survivors' narratives make harrowing reading:

On deck there was a great deal of singing and praying going on. Many of the poor people were praying and not holding on to anything, so that when the seas broke over the vessel they were washed off. I saw at once that there was no chance of getting into the boats, for the waves were smashing over the port side and down the companion way. I therefore went and sat on the starboard side, and as the ship settled more on her port side I got over the rail and sat on her hull, hanging onto one of the hooks to which the doors of the bulwarks are fastened. It will give you some idea of the immense list she had taken to port when I say it was far easier to stand on the side of the vessel than on her deck, for it was nearly perpendicular. Clinging on to the rail just beside me were Mr and Mrs Scoular and their two daughters, and they kept asking me what we should do next, but I could not give them any advice, since in the darkness I had no actual notice of the real state of affairs, and if I had known I could have rendered them no assistance, I expected every moment that the ship would turn over, and I cannot find words sufficient to praise the way in which the young Misses Scoular behaved. All the time their conduct was really heroic. If some of the men could have taken a pattern from these girls and from the ladies generally, it would have been well.

The bodies discovered a few yards further on were identified as those of Mr Whaley, a commercial traveller (saloon passenger), and the youngest Miss Scoular, aged about 14 years. The bodies were almost entirely naked. The man's body was encircled by a lifebelt and was lying with one arm over its face. The young girl had a nightdress which had got entangled round her waist.

The next body found was that of a young woman, the face and part of her body covered by a chemise and petticoat, the former of which had blood on it as from a wound. This body was recognised as that of the elder Miss Scoular, about 18 years of age. The face was up-turned, the mouth open, and the whole appearance of the body was terribly ghastly. Hard by lay the keel of one of the ill-fated steamer's boats. The nineteenth and last body found in Catherine Bay was discovered near the life raft, a long stretch of rocky coast intervening between it and the body of Miss Scoular.

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