

AWFULLY FATAL EVENT
SEVEN PERSONS DROWNED

Never, we believe, has it been before the painful duty of a public journalist, to narrate so affecting an event connected with this city, as one which occurred on the afternoon of Thursday last – one by which seven individuals in the bloom of health and in the height of enjoyment were in a moment numbered with the dead. Indefinite rumours of the shocking event reached this city about five o'clock and when it was afterwards more distinctly stated, that a pleasure-boat had been upset in the river Ouse, near the Marquee, and that seven persons were drowned, an accident of such fatal extent was scarcely credited. The result alas! in this instance proved the rumour to be too numerically correct. In the space of three quarters of an hour both sides of the banks of the river were lined with several hundred persons, amongst whom were many on horseback.

A party of pleasure consisting of nine persons, comprising seven of the family of Mr Rigg, nursery-man near this city [Fulford Road], a young lady, Miss Grace Robinson, only daughter of Mrs Robinson, a widow of Ayton near Scarborough, who was on a visit to their house, and Mr Seller, son of Mr Seller of the Falcon Inn in Micklegate, were going to Poppleton. The two elder sons of Mr Rigg had only returned on Tuesday from an eight weeks journey, which they had gone in consequence of their grandfather's illness; and it was their intention to have set out again on business yesterday morning. They availed themselves of the interval of relaxation to enjoy this social and domestic excursion of pleasure, which alas has proved too fatal.

At a little after four o'clock, when they had got past the Marquee, and had arrived at that part of the Ouse which forms an extensive circuit round the bank of Clifton Ings, a keel appeared ahead coming down the river full sail. There were only two men and a boy on board, and they immediately called to the party to keep to one side – this had not been sufficiently attended to – the vessel bore down upon them, stoved in the side of the boat, and sent the party, with the exception of Mr Seller and Jesse Rigg, a little girl of eight years of age, to the bottom of the river, whence they never rose alive.

The above young man saved himself by catching hold of a rope belonging to the keel and was enabled thus to be instrumental in urging the sailors to endeavour to save the only other survivor of the party. From the remoteness of the spot it was some time before sufficient assistance could be procured for the recovery of the bodies. The last body remaining in the water was that of a little boy, for whom five boats were constantly employed in creeping, until a quarter to eight o'clock, when he was found near the middle of the river and removed to complete the awful group of victims to this sad misfortune.

The names and ages of the sufferers belonging to Mr Rigg's family are as follows:

Ann Guthrie Rigg, the eldest daughter, in her 20th year

Thomas Gorwood Rigg, the eldest son, aged 18 years

John Rigg, the second son, aged 16 years

Eliza Rigg, the second daughter, in her 15th year

James Smith Rigg, aged 7 years

Charles Rigg, aged 6 years

The other unfortunate sufferer, Miss Grace Robinson of Ayton, near Scarborough, who was on a visit at Mr Rigg's, was about 18, and is cousin to Mr Robinson of the firm of Simpson and Robinson, tea-dealers of this city.

The following particulars have been communicated to us, and their recital may perhaps add to the melancholy interest of this affecting event. Mrs Rigg has had 14 children, six of whom died in their infancy, and we believe three of them were interred within a very short time of each other. Two girls are now the only survivors of this numerous family. The grandfather of the sufferers has attained the advanced age of 84, and is very ill. The dreadful news, through prudential motives, was not communicated to him until the following day. Mrs Rigg's health, from her attentions to Mr Rigg senior, has been much impaired and it was consequently found necessary to prevent her seeing her deceased family till after they were laid out [in their once cheerful home]; which by great exertion was accomplished by three o'clock yesterday morning. The family were the most united and happy of any we have ever heard of, and the stroke will consequently be felt with greater poignancy.