

King, William (1813–1883)

from *South Australian Register*

A sad accident occurred in St. Vincent's Gulf on Thursday morning, February 8, by which Messrs. William King, sen., and Henry Dawson lost their lives. Captain Pennington, of the yacht *Haidee*, the property of Mr. Thomas King, M.P., Mayor of Glenelg, left Glenelg between 1 and 2 o'clock on Thursday morning for the Neptune Islands. He had on board Mr. William King, sen., of Glenelg; Mr. Henry Dawson of Young street, Parkside; Mr. Henry Woodcock, of Beaumont; and Mr. William Watts, of South-terrace, Adelaide. When they got well out it was found desirable, owing to the threatening weather, to make for Kingscote, the idea being to work thence for the Neptunes. A squall set in, with a heavy sea and a strong south-cast wind; and then it was resolved about 8 o'clock to return and make for Port Adelaide. When they got off Noarlunga a squall struck the small craft and nearly capsized her. A heavy sea washed the dingey overboard, also Mr. Henry Dawson and Mr. William King. A seaman was on board acting for the captain, who was below at the time, and saw the occurrence, and Messrs. Woodcock and Watts also witnessed the accident.

Captain Pennington states that he had been up all night, and being tired had gone below for sleep, but when he heard the noise he rushed on deck and found Messrs. Dawson and King in the water. The yacht was running before the gale of wind. He tried to put the *Haidee* about and save those who were washed overboard, but she would not answer the helm in the nasty sea which prevailed. The gear, with which he had left in good condition, before returning was knocked to pieces, and the running gear was out of place, as one of the effects of the squall. He was, therefore, in the unhappy plight of seeing the unfortunate men perishing in the waves without the ability or means to save them, obliged to go on and leave them to their fate. The disaster occurred about eight miles off Noarlunga, at 10 o'clock in the morning, and the master bore up for Port Adelaide, and reached the town late in the afternoon, forthwith reporting the matter to the police.

It is presumed that the Marine Board will take cognizance of the loss of life at sea, and enquire into the circumstances, which seem to demand investigation. It is alleged that the yacht, of nine tons measurement, was not fit for a rough sea in the Gulf, and that premonitions respecting the weather were not wanting. It was reported that the dingey which was washed overboard with Messrs. King and Dawson had been washed ashore at Brighton, but on enquiry at a late hour on Thursday evening we learnt that there was no foundation for the statement. At the request of Mr. Albert King the mounted constable at Brighton was ordered to patrol the beach during the night. Other arrangements with a view of finding the bodies will be made to-day.

Mr. William King, sen., was about 65 years of age, and came to the colony about thirty years ago. He was the father of Mr. Thomas King, M.P. (the owner of the yacht), and Mr. William King, jun., the timber merchant and was well known in the southern districts, having been engaged in business there for many years, but for some time before his death he had not followed an active business life.