

# The Cospatrick Tragedy



150th Anniversary reflections  
on a Wychwoods story of hope and loss

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**Above: Engraving of the Cospatrick**, an illustration for *The Graphic*, 9 January 1875. After a photograph by Mr. F. C. Gould of Gravesend (Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons)

**Front cover: The Cospatrick Memorial on Shipton-under-Wychwood Green** photographed in 2024 (courtesy Diane Melvin)



# INTRODUCTION

A modest drinking fountain in the form of a stone obelisk stands on Shipton-under-Wychwood Green, in the centre of the village.

We might pass it every day with barely a thought for its significance. It commemorates the seventeen Shipton parishioners who lost their lives when the ship on which they were travelling caught fire and sank in November 1874. They were 7,000 miles from their home en route to New Zealand.

**Who** were these seventeen people?

**Why** were they on a sailing boat travelling to New Zealand?

**What** were they leaving behind?

**What** were they expecting to find on their arrival in New Zealand?

This small book is an attempt to answer these questions on the 150th Anniversary of this tragic event.



**Above: Shipton Green photographed by Henry Taunt in 1903**  
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