

Into the Maelstrom: The Wreck of HMHS Rohilla

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On 29 October 1914 the hospital ship Rohilla left Queensferry with 229 persons on board, bound for Dunkirk on an errand of mercy, under wartime restrictions and in deteriorating weather. Just after 4am there was a tremendous impact as the ship ran onto rocks at Saltwick Nab, a mile south of Whitby. Rohilla was mortally wounded 600 yards from shore, 'so close to land yet so far from safety'. Over the ensuing days the heartrending loss of 92 lives in terrible circumstances would prove to be Whitby's greatest maritime disaster, still regarded as one of the worst amongst the annals of the RNLI. This book reveals the heroic actions of the public who waded out into icy waters to reach those who made the swim to shore and the gallant efforts of lifeboatmen forced to manhandle lifeboats over piers, rocks, overland and down a 200ft cliff.

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