

Loss of The Steamer "Portland."

By Capt. Frederic R. Eldridge, Chatham, Cape Cod.

On the twenty-seventh of November,
 In the year of ninety-eight,
 A northeast blizzard swept the sea,
 Death following in its wake.
 And many good ships foundered,
 Or were stranded on the coast;
 And naught but broken timbers,
 To show how they were lost.

The clouds were dark and threatening,
 The "glass" was falling low;
 The Weather Bureau signals
 Foretold a stronger blow,
 When the steamer *Portland* left her dock,
 Proceeded down the bay,
 With over one hundred souls on board
 O where! O where are they?

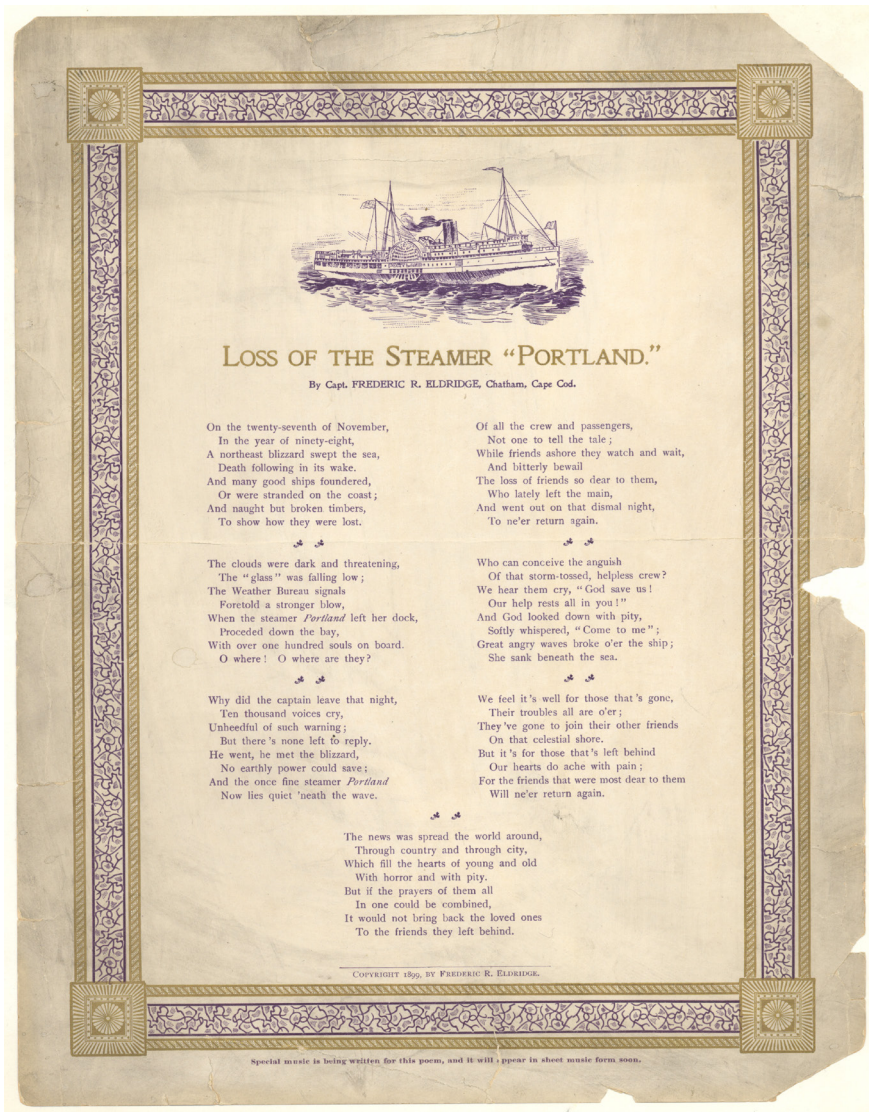
Why did the captain leave that night,
 Ten thousand voices cry,
 Unheedful of such warning;
 But there's none left to reply.
 He went, he met the blizzard,
 No earthly power could save;
 And the once fine steamer *Portland*
 Now lies quiet 'neath the wave.

Contributed to Maine Memory Network by Maine Historical Society

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Description: Poem memorializing the loss of the steamer "Portland", 1899



[Column at right]

Of all the crew and passengers,
 Not one to tell the tale;
 While friends ashore they watch and wait,
 And bitterly bewail
 The loss of friends so dear to them,
 Who lately left the main,
 And went out on that dismal night,
 To ne'er return again.

Who can conceive the anguish
 Of that storm-tossed, helpless crew?
 We hear them cry, "God save us!
 Our help rests all in you!"
 And God looked down with pity,
 Softly whispered, "Come to me";
 Great angry waves broke o'er the ship;
 She sank beneath the sea.

We feel it's well for those that's gone,
 Their troubles all are o'er;
 They've gone to join their other friends
 On that celestial shore.
 But it's for those that's left behind
 Our hearts do ache with pain;
 For the friends that were most dear to them
 Will ne'er return again.

[Column in middle]

The news was spread the world around
 Through country and through city,
 Which fill the hearts of young and old
 With horror and with pity.
 But if the prayers of them all
 In one could be combined,
 It would not bring back the loved ones
 To the friends they left behind.

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 Special music is being written for this poem, and it will appear in sheet music form
 soon.