



*Although heavily re-touched, this is an actual photograph of the body of the first woman to be brought ashore.*

others, caught the small white object in its relentless grasp, pushed it high on the sloping shore, and then retreated seaward.

Down the slope Johnson plunged and snatched the object from the sand. Clutching it to his breast, the life saver staggered up the cliff to climb over the edge of the bank to safety. As the snow and sand bit into his face, Johnson lighted a Coston flare to examine his find. It was a life jacket, and by the flickering light he read the words on the jacket, *Steamer Portland*.

Actually, the *Portland*, although in serious trouble some distance offshore, had not as yet gone to the bottom, and it was several hours

later before masses of wreckage from her stricken hull began to come up on the beach.

Nevertheless, the life savers were still hopeful of finding some one still alive in the wreckage, but this was not to be. Every single soul of the 190 who sailed with the *Portland* went down with her.

The bodies began to come ashore shortly afterwards, and several of those which were clothed had watches, each of which stopped between 9:15 and 9:28. Thus, we can estimate fairly accurately that if the *Portland* was seen afloat as late as ten-thirty that Sunday morning she could not have gone down until about nine-fifteen or so Sunday evening, because of

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custom, which culminated in 1948, the fiftieth anniversary of the sinking of the side-wheeler.

At that time the Portland Associates, as the group had become known, decided to disband as most of the members had reached old age. To mark the occasion President John A. Thornquist of the Associates unveiled a tablet at Highland Light, Cape Cod, commemorating the loss of the ship.

Later, however, the sons and daughters of those same friends and relatives agreed to revive the group under the name Sons and Daughters of the Portland Associates, and now each year they continue to drop flowers in the sea on the anniversary of the *Portland's* sinking.

Possibly the final act connected with the steamer *Portland* will take place on November 27, 1956, when the Sons and Daughters of the Portland Associates will make the long journey from all over New England to a wintry Cape Cod, where at the Race Point Coast Guard Station a tablet with a list of all the victims of the disaster will be unveiled.

The unusual significance of this unveiling is that not until one month ago could the list be completed, for when the *Portland* sailed from India Wharf that memorable night she took with her the only list of crew and passengers in existence, and it has only been after years of research that that list of 190 persons has been gathered together again. For those who assemble on that November eve at Race Point, Cape Cod, and I hope to be one of them, the affair will have a very unusual significance. They will probably be taking part in the last historical act connected in any way with the saga of the sinking of the side-wheeled steamer *Portland*, an event which was truly New England's greatest sea drama.

TURN OVER CAREFULLY