

THE CITY OF PORTLAND WRECKED.

PASSENGERS AND CREW RESCUED AND THE EXPRESS FREIGHT SAVED.

ROCKLAND, Me., May 8.—The steamer City of Portland, of the International Steamship Company, struck on North-west Ledge, Owl's Head, at 3:15 o'clock this morning. The steamer left Boston, yesterday morning, with passengers for Portland, Eastport, and St. John, New-Brunswick. After a brief stop at Portland she left there at 8:45 o'clock last evening with 70 passengers and about a two-thirds cargo of a general character. The night was clear. When Capt. Larcom retired to his state-room the steamer was on the outside course, but as the weather was threatening when she reached Manhegan, First Pilot Bibber altered the course to Muscle Ridge.

As the day was breaking, Pilot Bibber sighted the striped buoy in Grindstone Channel, in the port bow, between Sheep and Fisherman's Islands. In a few minutes the steamer, going at full speed, struck on North-west Ledge and slid on amidships far enough to prevent sliding back and thus escaping the additional disaster of drowning all on board. The striped buoy was 50 feet away, on the port side. The pumps were started at once, distress colors set, and the boats cleared. The officers and crew were cool, and the passengers behaved well. The mate landed in a boat and drove to Rockland, six miles distant, for help.

The steamer Rockland, Capt. Sawtelle, of the Boston and Bangor Line, promptly answered the call, and reached the scene of the wreck at 6:30. Meantime, a sloop from Owl's Head, Capt. Wallace, answered the signals, and two boat-loads of women and children were transferred to the sloop without accident, despite the heavy sea. The rest of the passengers, together with the baggage, express freight, &c., were put on board the Rockland and brought to this city. The passengers were well cared for here and were forwarded to their destination. The Captain of a sloop at Fisherman says the striped buoy was out of position, and had the steamer passed within one width on the other side of the buoy she would have been all right.

Replying to the reporter's question, Bibber said the second pilot was in charge of the steamer. J. A. Wheeler, the second pilot, said: "The steamer was two miles westward of Manhegan, inside; within four minutes we reached the light; Capt. Bibber took a position at one window of the pilot-house; I was at the other; made Ash Point Bell, where we always swung to go out through Sheep Island Channel on our course east-north-east; I gave order to put the wheel to port, and gave the course east-north-east; I ran half a minute and sighted the striped buoy on Northern Grindstone Ledge, one point on the port bow, which I reported to the first pilot, who said: 'All right.' We were a minute from the buoy. I said: 'Hadn't we better port, so as not to go too close to the buoy?' Bibber said: 'Yes.' I gave orders to port. In 10 seconds we struck. We were going 12 knots; there was 12 feet of water forward of the pilot-house and 3 fathoms at the stern as the steamer lay. A fisherman told us the buoy was out of position." All the passengers join in praising the coolness and efficiency of the steamer's officers and crew. Twenty-two years ago the British steamer Emperor was wrecked on this same ledge. Several schooners have also come to an end there.

The revenue cutter Woodbury left the wreck at 6 o'clock this afternoon. The steamer had broken in two, all her upper works were gone, and the sea, which is increasing in violence, will soon destroy what remains of the vessel. The insurance on the steamer amounts to \$40,000. The vessel registered 1,025 tons, and had engines of 425-horse power. She was owned in Eastport.

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