# Portland Head Lt. Me

from Conn's book

Portland Head light station, Maine, at the entrance to Portland Harbor was undertaken by the State of Mass and ceded to the US in 1790 and was completed in 1791 under an appropriation made by Congress which authorized the Secretary of the Treasury "to cause the said lighthouse to be finished" The original tower of rubble stone is stated to have been 43 feet in height and is standing today forming the lower 2/3 of the present tower as in all early towers the illuminating apparatus consisted of reflector lights and the record of 1848 stated that there were then 15-16" reflectors in use giving a fixed white light. This was changed in 1853 to 13-21" reflectors. In 1855 the interior of the tower was lined with brick and a cast iron stairs were built in to replace wooden steps. In the same year the fog bell in use at Cape Elizabeth was repaired & recreated at Portland Head. In 1856 a 4th order lens replaced the old reflector lights. In 1865 the tower was increased in height 20' by a brick addition to the top of tower and a Dicard Order lens installed in place of the 4th order lens thereby greatly augmenting the range of the light. The gale of April 8, 1869 destroyed

the fog bell tower adjoining the light tower, but it was rebuilt immediately and in 1800 found bell + improved striking machinery provided. In 1872 the trumpet at Monhegan Id was removed + established at this station. In 1883 the light was reduced in height + power but in 1885 it was raised again and an improved 2nd order lantern and illuminating apparatus were placed in commission. In 1891 the old stone dwelling was taken down + replaced by a frame double dwelling + other improvements made. In 1900 the old rubble tower built in 1790 was extensively repaired and from that time to the present the station ~~has undergone the usual period of the general care of the light houses and~~ has continued to send out the light and fog signal warnings to the mariner. The light now in use is of the 2nd order, 3800 candle power (flash white) 101 feet above the sea + visible 16 miles in clear weather. The fog signal consists of a 1st class reed horn giving a blast of 5 seconds duration every 20 seconds in foggy weather. Should this horn be disabled a 1200 pound bell rung by hand will take its place.