

HULL LIFESAVING MUSEUM

SAVING LIVES THEN. CHANGING LIVES NOW.



**“Science, skill, bravery and
hardihood”**

The Rescue of the *Ulrica*

On the night of December 15, 1896, a powerful northeast storm with snow and gale-force winds struck the Massachusetts coast. The three-masted schooner *Ulrica*, a British ship carrying

plaster from Parrsboro, Nova Scotia to Hoboken, New Jersey, was caught in the storm and headed toward Boston Harbor.

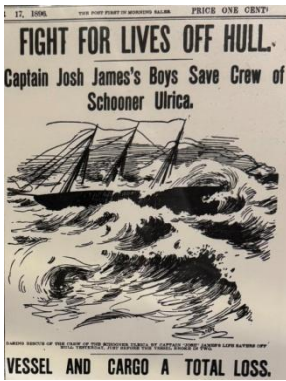
By morning on December 16, the storm had destroyed the *Ulrica*'s sails, forcing the crew to drop anchor. The ship grounded in the surf off Nantasket Beach around 8 a.m. The bitter wind whipped Surfman Louis Galiano's face on his patrol as the storm-beaten schooner emerged through thick snow on Nantasket Beach. Galiano raced to secure horses to pull a surfboat to the wreck site. Point Allerton Station had been summoned by phone and



Capt. Joshua James and his lifesaving crew jumped on a train to be transported to the site.

Upon arrival, the lifesavers brought out the large Humane Society lifeboat *Nantasket*. James saw the ship being pounded by waves, with her crew stranded in the rigging and on the after-house. Believing time was critical, James and a combined crew of station men and Humane Society volunteers launched the lifeboat. The storm's heaving seas caught the steering oar, catapulting 70-year-old

Joshua James into the frigid surf. Catching hold of a forward oar, he was dragged ashore with the boat, uninjured.



With the beach apparatus now on-site, Joshua James fired the Lyle gun. The survivors reached the shot line on the third attempt, and made the tailblock and hawser fast, but too low on the mizzen. The frost-bitten and exhausted men would be dragged through the surf in the breeches buoy. Joshua James ordered the surfboat launched again, this time attaching the boat to the hawser and a stern line. Using oars, shore support, and the hawser, the crew maneuvered to the *Ulrica*. Despite rough seas, they successfully carried the half-frozen sailors aboard the surfboat, and then to the Sea Foam House Hotel for care.

The rescue made the front page of The Boston Post newspaper on December 17 where a reporter recounted the harrowing experience and said “seven souls plucked from the sea was the golden victory of strategy and struggle.Again science, skill, bravery and hardihood had made man master of the waters.”

A few weeks later, on January 8, 1897, a salvage crew of ten became stranded on the wreck during worsening weather. James and his crew launched an older surfboat, which began leaking after being struck by waves. After returning to shore, they re-launched with the *Nantasket* and safely removed all ten men.



Make sure to visit our current exhibit, **For the Souls of Strangers: *True Tales of Rescue at Sea***. Step into this gripping story of courage and survival as you explore original artifacts from this legendary maritime rescue. See

haunting relics like a fragment of plaster and intricately carved wood pieces from the ill-fated ship, and stand in awe before the stunning *Nantasket* surfboat—the very vessel that braved the waves to save lives. This is history brought to life—come experience it for yourself!