

Loss of the Yongala

March 23-24, 1911

There were parting words and kisses, There were promises so gay
As the boat steamed out from Flat Top, That fatal stormy day
Hearts beat high with joy and pleasure, song and story passed around,
Not a moment's thought of danger as the ship sped homeward bound.

There were husbands, wives and children, mothers, sisters, sweethearts gay,
One and all were bright and happy, they had spent a merry day
Little golden heads were nestled close against their mothers' breast,
Joyful hearts with cheerful voices sang the songs they loved the best.

Glad to be returning homeward thinking only with delight
Of the loved ones fondly waiting their return that stormy night.
Bright young lives so full of promise, eyes that shone both clear and bright
Side by side in the deep are buried far beyond: our earthly sight.

How describe the grief and anguish of the ones who watched in vain
For the dear familiar faces they would never see again
How describe the scenes of sorrow, hearts that could not bear the pain
As along the storm-tossed waves piece by piece the wreckage came.

Surely telling to the mourners, All their hopes would be in vain.
Seven score of lives had perished hurried swiftly to their doom
And their sunny land Australia for a time was plunged in gloom
Trusting they shall have God's mercy, in that better land so bright

Let us draw the curtain softly, on that fateful Thursday night.

Poem 'Loss of the Yongala, March 23-24, 1911'
written by W J MacCarthy, of the North Queensland Herald, on April 29th 1911.
Donated to the museum by Maria Daley, Halifax

The Prayer

O Eternal Lord God, who alone spreads out the heavens and rules the raging seas, receive into your protection all those who go down to the sea in ships and occupy their business on the great waters. Preserve them both in body and soul, prosper their labours with good success, in all times of danger, be their defence, and bring them to the haven where they would be.

Heavenly, Father, creator of the seas, Bless us as we assemble for this most solemn remembrance. We give thanks for all your servants who go to the sea in ships and those who have paid the supreme sacrifice by giving their lives. The passing of 100 years has not diminished our love and remembrance for the 122 souls who went to sea and never returned.

O Father, grant his family today, and in the days hereafter, peace and comfort in the glory of his service to his fellow man, and in the knowledge he sails with you, O Lord, our maker and Protector.

And we make this prayer through Jesus Christ Our Lord. AMEN.

Peace be Still.... The Master Declare