

FOUR IN CRYSTAL STREAM FIRE, AWFUL TALES BY SURVIVORS

River Steamer, at Dead of Night, Burns at Cole's Island, and Agonizing Scenes Preval

Deckhands and Fireman, Penned In Below Decks, Perish, and Mutilated and Dismembered Bodies Are Found—Aged Stewardess' Remarkable Escape From Burning Deck—Had Premonition of Disaster—Mate McCleery Fought Way to Safety Through Fearful Surroundings—Steamer Lay Laden—No Opinion as to Cause of Fire But Some Talk of Incendiarism—Detailed Stories of Survivors.

THE DEAD

Edward P. Baxter, 23, of Westfield, deck hand, single.
William (Willard) Logan, fireman, about 24, Brooks street, North End, St. John, single.
Allan Logan, deck hand, brother of William, about 28, Clark's Settlement, married, leaves wife and one child.
Frederick Smith, deck hand, 22, Shannon Settlement, Queens county, single.

THE INJURED

Herbert McCleery, mate, head, face and hands burned, belongs to Long Reach.
Archibald P. Belyea, purser, 122 Waterloo street, face and hand burned.
Mrs. Amelia Chase, bridge street, head and hand burned.
Wentworth W. Roberts, engineer, corner Metcalf and Albert streets, hand burned.

OTHERS ON BOARD WHO ESCAPED

Frederick Mabee, captain of the steamer, Kennedy street, North End.
Mrs. May Coleman, cook, 5 Harris street.

One of the worst tragedies enacted on the St. John river in the history of that waterway occurred in the early hours of Friday morning when the steamer Crystal Stream, taking fire at Cole's Island, from some cause as yet undetermined, burned to the water's edge and in the fire were cremated four of her crew, while all the others had remarkable escapes, some carrying serious burns which will mark them for life.

Not long after midnight, as the steamer lay at her wharf, those on board awoke to find the vessel in flames. For some es-

of things is not limited to the Crystal Stream. The bodies of the four victims were recovered in the early hours of Friday morning. After an inquest had been opened by Coroner Earle they were taken to the coroner's office and the bodies were buried in the morning. The inquiry will be resumed on Tuesday. The Aberdeen, which had a narrow escape from sharing the same fate as the Crystal Stream, was towed to the wharf and returned to the city by the Central Railway and I. C. R. last evening.

A painful interest was taken in the terrible news of the disaster as it became known yesterday morning. Anxious enquiries for reliable information were heard on all sides. When the full extent of the catastrophe was realized there was a general feeling of deep sympathy for the friends of the unfortunate men who had lost their lives amid such terrible surroundings. The Telegraph gives detailed interviews with all the survivors.

SURVIVORS ARRIVE

AT INDIANTOWN

Aberdeen Awaited by Anxious Friends—Four Who Were in the Crystal Stream Come to the City.

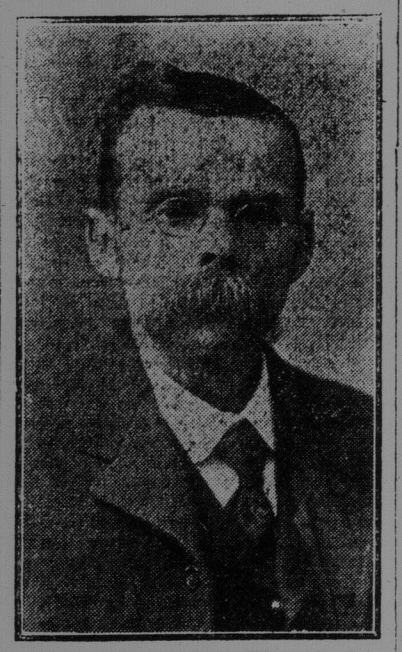
The steamer Aberdeen arrived at Indiantown about 3.45. She had been anxiously awaited and a large crowd was gathered on the wharf. The ambulance was on hand to convey the seriously injured to the hospital or home and a coach to take home the others who had come out of the terrible experience more fortunately.

As soon as the gang plank had been thrown out a rush was made to get on board but the police kept back the eager crowd with little difficulty. The injured were all in the cabin upstairs where they had been well cared for. After a time Mate McCleery was carried out on a stretcher and put in the ambulance, which hurried him to the hospital. Purser Belyea and the Stewardess, Mrs. Chase, were put into the coach and driven to their homes. Mrs. Coleman, the cook, who escaped practically unharmed, was joined by her husband and they boarded a street car and also went home.

MEN ON ABERDEEN

TELL OF DISASTER

Capt. Geo. H. Perry, of the Aberdeen, of which the Crystal Stream was rival, said that his steamer lay at Cole's Island near to the Crystal Stream, but close to the beach. He thinks that Mrs. Perry was the first one on the Aberdeen to



Arch. P. Belyea, Who Tells Thrilling Tale.

By this time the two women from the burning steamer had reached the wharf and some of the others had landed and nothing could be done for those who had been unable to leave. Capt. Perry looked after the safety of the Aberdeen and the men from Alfred West's mill hauled her along to a place of safety, while steam was quickly raised to assist. Water was thrown over her deck to prevent her catching fire. Capt. Perry could give no idea as to the cause of the fire.

A. P. Craft, fireman on the Aberdeen, told of the recovery of the bodies. Two were recovered about 4.45 o'clock and the others between 6 and 7 o'clock. They were hardly recognizable, and that identified as William Logan's was headless and also lacking legs and arms.

MRS. CHASE, AGED 71, JUMPS INTO BOAT

Remarkable Escape of Stewardess for Second Time—Had Premonition of Disaster.

Surrounded by friends and relatives at the home of her son-in-law, Thos. Morrill, 240 Bridge street, Mrs. Chase was seen by a Telegraph reporter soon after the arrival of the steamer Aberdeen. Mrs. Chase was stewardess of the ill-fated Crystal Stream. She willingly answered all questions, though her burns must have been very painful, while at times she shook with sobs at the recollection of the terrible experience she had undergone and the horrible fate of the four young men of the crew. Mrs. Chase's injuries are chiefly about the head and neck, the skin being badly scorched in some places. She is seventy-one years of age, and her bearing

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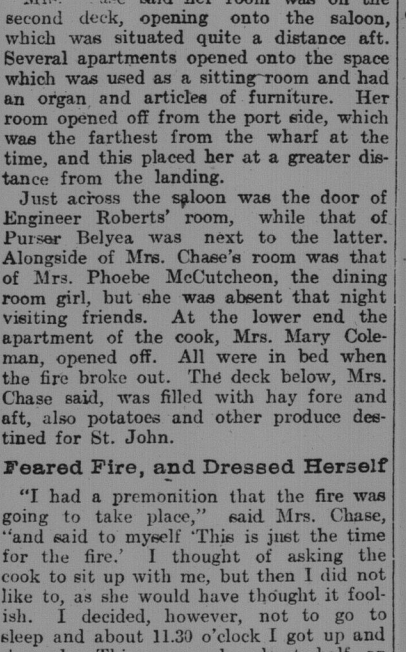
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W. W. Roberts, Engineer, One of the Survivors.

at her wharf in Indiantown, and Mrs. Chase and Mrs. Coleman were working on the craft then. The fire broke out between 2 and 3 o'clock in the morning, while all were asleep. It was a coincidence that the rooms on the ill-fated Star were situated in a position corresponding to those on the Crystal Stream, and all opened out into the saloon. When the Star burned, Mrs. Coleman and Mrs. Chase slept in adjoining rooms. Mrs. Chase says that she escaped by rushing into the saloon and then jumping overboard. She described the smoke and flame as presenting an almost impenetrable barrier to escape, but nevertheless she stepped back into the room, intending, if possible,

to save at least her gold watch and some of her clothing, as she had only just taken time to throw a mackintosh over her. On second thought, however, she made once more for the door, plunged into the smoke and flame, crying loudly that the boat was on fire and calling for help. Half suffocated, she made her way to the door of the saloon and out in the passage-way into the pure air. But even there her position was very precarious. The whole top work of the vessel was shrouded in smoke and flame. The smoke issuing from every crack and crevice was overhanging everything.

Dropped from Deck Into Small Boat.

"I made for the railing," said Mrs. Chase, "and saw a boat coming out from shore rowed by two men. I don't know how I did it, but I climbed up and dropped into the boat below." Mrs. Chase does not know the names of her rescuers, but thinks they were residents of Cole's Island, who had been awakened by the screams and, seeing the fire, put off to render what assistance they could.



William Logan, One of the Men Burned to Death.

Mrs. Chase lost everything, including her bedding, a trunk full of wearing apparel, some money and her gold watch and chain. She has no idea as to how the fire could have started. She says there was some talk of incendiarism, but is completely at a loss to advance any plausible theory.

Her Second Experience.

Mrs. Chase, though seventy-one years of age, is remarkably bright and active. She

time, and drew sufficiently near to permit of her being taken aboard by those on her deck. "As I rushed out of my room on the Crystal Stream," Mrs. Chase said, "the organ at the head of the stairs was burning, just as was the case on the Star." Mrs. Chase will probably be around again and well. The death of the four young men seemed to unnerve her more than her own narrow escape, and frequently she would cover her eyes with her hands and burst into tears, bemoaning their untimely end.

AWFUL EXPERIENCE OF HERBERT MCCLEERY

Fought His Way from Below Decks Where Four Men Perished.

Probably none of the many experiences were so thrilling as the awful agony and suspense of Mate Herbert McCleery, who was the only one of the five men in the boat to escape. His having got out alive is nothing short of a miracle. Cooped up in the quarters below the main deck with all chance of escape via the stairway cut off by the flames, he forced his way up through a trap door which was doubly hard to raise on account of its covering of carpet and getting into the ladies' cabin, he smashed one of the windows with his bare hands and scrambled out, he hardly knows how, until he found himself exhausted and bleeding on the shore. He told a reporter who interviewed him at the hospital that he thought the other men were close behind him, and the manner in which their dead bodies were found indicates that they were striving to follow him when they were evidently overcome by the smoke and suffocated before the flames reached them. "I never want to go through such an experience again," remarked the mate, as he lay on his cot in the hospital, his head bandaged, his nose swathed in lint and oil, and both hands bound up. "It was terrible. I thought the other men were right behind me and did not know until some time afterward that they did not get out."

Asked as to how he felt, he said he was feeling fine outside of his burns, but he was rather tired and played out. "I did not know my head was burned until I got here," he said. "It was an awful experience trying to get out of the boat," he said. "When I awakened all escape by the stairway was cut off, and with the other men coming behind me, I made for the trap door, which I remembered opened into the ladies' cabin. The door was hard to force up, but I finally managed it and scrambled up, upsetting a heater as I went."

thought I was doomed, and I lay down on the bed prepared to die. "I commenced to think then of my wife and family, and on the instant determined to make an effort to get out if possible. I pulled on my overalls and, picking up a bench, smashed the window and crawled through, tumbling to the deck outside. Owing to the dense smoke and flames, I had to crawl along on my hands and knees until I reached one of the posts in

ever, the story is better told in Mr. Roberts' own words: "I was sitting talking to Mrs. Chase and Mrs. Coleman a while before going to bed," he said, "and the talk turned on the possibility of the boat taking fire. It was suggested that someone might set fire to the boat, and naturally it made us feel rather nervous about going to bed. Before I turned in, I made a round of the boat, as I usually do to see that everything was all right. It was then about 10 o'clock. A lantern was left burning on the main deck, but it was quite a distance from where the hay was.

PURSER BELYEA ALMOST LOST LIFE

Relates Thrilling Story of His Own Experience and That of Others Aboard.

Purser A. P. Belyea had an escape which most men would consider miraculous. Losing his head at the terrible position in which he found himself on awakening he shunned the easy means for escape offered through a nearby doorway leading to the outer deck and instead plunged into the very centre of the fire and actually fought his way forward in face of advancing flames and smoke and out through a door situated quite a bit forward. His injuries, under the circumstances, are almost of minor nature but his face is blistered and scorched, while his right hand and fingers are little but a mass of singed flesh. Remarkable as it may seem Mr. Belyea's moustache and his eyebrows were not even singed despite the fact that the skin around was cruelly burned.

Mr. Belyea's room was situated near the paddle box on the side facing the water front. He was asleep at the time and was awakened by the shrill scream of the women. He found his room full of smoke and the flames eating in on every side. Mr. Belyea was sleeping in his underclothes.

"I jumped out of bed," he stated, "and shoved my feet into the first pair of boots at hand, which happened to be an old pair. I grabbed my coat, which had \$70 belonging to the company in an inside pocket, also my vest and trousers and made for the door, holding these in my hand."

Became Confused.

Mr. Belyea then went on to state how, by turning about from the spot where the smoke seemed to come he could in a few seconds have reached a door leading out into the deck. His reason for not doing this, he stated, was because he was dazed and confused. He lost his presence of mind and made a rush forward, directly in the path of the advancing destruction. "The fire," he added, "was so close that I could feel it on my face. The heavy smoke choked, while the glare of the fire blinded me. I staggered forward and got up to where I saw a door. There I fell from exhaustion but the fall seems to have benefited me, for near the door the smoke was less thick. I dropped my bundle and crawled forward along the floor, reaching a door at the head of the saloon and out onto the deck. From there I climbed ashore."

Started Near Smokestack, He Thinks. Questioned concerning the cargo Mr. Belyea stated that the boat was loaded with hay from the engine room aft, while there was none in the forward part. The fire, he feels convinced, started amidships around the smokestack as the crew near the portion that the heat was most intense. He has no idea as to how the fire originated. A lantern is always hung forward, clear of all cargo. When it was suggested by a reporter that this might have exploded and set fire to the surrounding woodwork Mr. Belyea would not make any statement.

He lost everything, including all his clothing, but a pair of shoes and his underclothes, also his gold watch and \$100 in money belonging to the boat as well as some of his own cash. Of the boat's money \$70 was in the coat which he was forced to abandon, and the rest in his office downstairs. "I tried to save the coat on account of the money being in it," he explained. Mr. Belyea said that the women were fearful every night about fire and particularly so Thursday night on account of the close proximity of the steamer Aberdeen as the danger was then thought of in case the latter caught fire.

"There was quite a wind blowing from the south," he added, "and as the boat was facing down stream and the wind was fire aft and gave it a powerful draught. The woodwork burned like tinder but the centre of the fire seemed to be just amidships around the smokestack. The nearest doctor was five miles away and the bleeding was stopped by pressing on his wrists until the doctor arrived."

Mr. Belyea did not see any of those on the vessel while making his escape. "When I got ashore," he said, "the captain was helping Mrs. Chase onto the landing while Mate McCleery was sitting on the bank. His hands looked as if he had dipped them into a pail of blood. They were a mass of gore from the cuts he got when escaping through the window. The arteries had been cut and he was in danger of bleeding to death. The nearest doctor was five miles away and the bleeding was stopped by pressing on his wrists until the doctor arrived."

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McCleery Badly Out.

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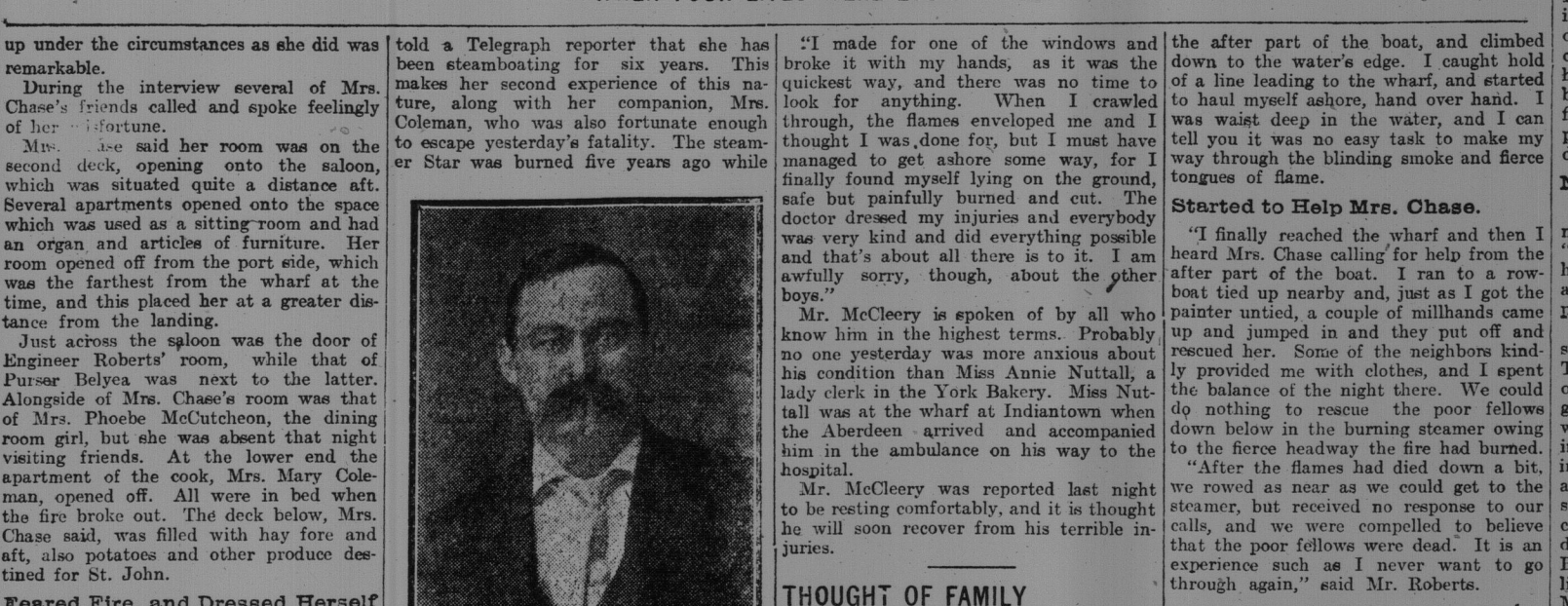
No Watchman.

Asked if there was no watchman at night, Mr. Belyea replied in the negative. "We usually sit up till about 10 o'clock," he said, and added that "the women were always fearful of fire and continually expressed their fears." "The quarters of the deck hands," he said, "were far aft under the cargo deck. There were five rooms, each opening out onto a passage and the cargo deck was gained by means of a narrow companion way. There was also a flight of steps leading from these rooms into the ladies' cabin, directly overhead. This was closed up and had not been used for some time. The stairs ended in a trap door over which a carpet had been stretched and tacked down. "Mate McCleery," continued Mr. Belyea, "and the four men who lost their lives, slept in these rooms. At the alarm McCleery made for the stairs but the passage way was full of smoke and his exit barred. There was no other way out but by the other stairs, as the port holes would not permit of a man's passage. He ran over these steps and by sheer strength forced the trap and carpet up and got into the ladies' cabin."

Called for Others to Follow.

He called for the other men to follow him but they did not do so. Mr. Belyea dashed his hands through the windows, climbed out onto the rail and swung himself ashore along the stern line. He lost a lot of blood and was in danger of bleeding to death. As the fire burned, the vessel kept raising out of the water as the weight of the top-work was lessened. This finally crashed overboard, the bulk swung against the bridge, which was set on fire and totally destroyed. The remnant of the vessel then sank between the wharf and the bridge, so that one could step from the wharf onto the wreck. She went down with a hissing of steam and lies in (Continued on page 7, fifth column.)

THE ILL-FATED STEAMER CRYSTAL STREAM WHICH WAS BURNED TO THE WATER'S EDGE AT COLE'S ISLAND, FRIDAY, WHEN FOUR LIVES WERE LOST.



THOUGHT OF FAMILY SPURRED HIM ON

Engineer Roberts Lay Down to Die, But Decided to Make Another Trial for Life—Tells of Finding of Bodies.

The experience of Engineer Wentworth Roberts was to one that a man is never likely to forget. The only two avenues of escape enveloped in flames, he had given himself up to die when he bethought him of his wife and family and in desperation resolved to take a chance in trying to force his way through the raging blaze. Smashing the window of his stateroom, which was on the upper deck, with a boot, he wriggled through and slid down to the deck, then crawled along on his hands and knees, clothed only in his overalls and night clothes, until he reached one of the posts leading to the main deck. He then clambered down and, catching hold of a line leading to the wharf, he hauled himself hand over hand, waist deep in water, to a place of safety on the wharf. How-