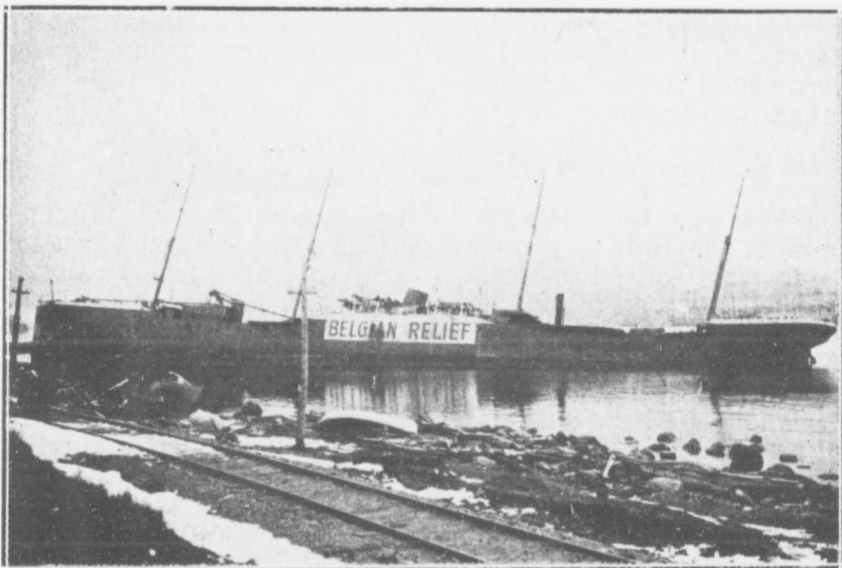




Belgian Relief Ship "Imo" which collided with the French munition ship "Mont Blanc."

slightly to port, which brought the two vessels with starboards parallel when about 300 feet apart.

"Then we put the rudder hard aport to try to pass the Imo before she should come on us and at the same time the Imo reversed engines. As she was light and without cargo the reverse brought her around slightly to port. This brought her bow pointing to our starboard and as a collision was then inevitable we held the Mont Blanc so she would be struck at the forward hold, where the picric acid was, a substance which would not explode, rather than have her strike us where the T. N. T. was stored.

"We were now in the Narrows, where the harbor is about three-quarters of a mile wide. The Imo cut into us about a third through the deck and hold and the benzol poured into the picric acid, igniting it, and causing a cloud of smoke to arise from the vessel forward. I saw there was no hope of doing anything more and knew that an explosion was inevitable, so the boats were lowered and all hands got aboard them and rowed for Dartmouth shore. Pilot MacKey went with us.

"In all there were forty-one men aboard the Mont Blanc. She was headed at the time for the Halifax shore and toward Pier 8. She was making very little headway as we had to push the boat away from the side. This was about twenty minutes before the explosion, but the picric acid was in flames. It did not explode. In the meantime the Imo had backed