

TERRIBLE EARTHQUAKE PRACTICALLY DESTROYS KINGSTON, JAMAICA; MANY KILLED AND INJURED

Disaster Occurred Monday Afternoon--Fires Broke Out and Are Still Raging at Last Accounts--About 100 Dead and Hospitals Are Full--Many New Brunswickers and Canadians There, But All Are Said to Be Safe--Distinguished English Delegation in Ruined Town--Cable Communication Broken and Details Meagre.

Kingston, the picturesque capital of the Island of Jamaica, has been devastated by a violent earthquake.

Details of the disaster are lacking as direct communication with the stricken city has been cut off. The land lines had been reconstructed to within five miles of Kingston Tuesday evening, and from meagre reports received through such channels as were open, it has been learned that many of the most important buildings have been destroyed and that there has been serious loss of life. So far as the reports indicate, the fatalities number less than 100, though the hospitals are filled with injured, and the list of victims may be materially increased.

Reference to St. John and New Brunswick people either now in Jamaica or having relatives and interests there will be found below.

Kingston and the other points of interest in the island are at this season of the year thronged with tourists from both America and England, and the greatest apprehension is felt for the safety of many persons who had recently arrived at the Jamaican resorts. The most distinguished of these were members of a party of English statesmen, agricultural experts and men of affairs, who, under the leadership of Sir Alfred Jones, had arrived in Kingston within the past few days to attend an agricultural conference there. Among those in the company were Hall Caine, the novelist; Viscount Montmorres, H. O. Arnold Foster, M. P.; Sir Thomas Hughes, Sir Thomas Shann and others of equal prominence. The Earl and Countess of Dudley were also passengers on the steamer which carried out the Jones party.

The first great shock was felt about 3.30 o'clock Monday afternoon, and as in the San Francisco and Valparaiso disasters, flames immediately sprung from the wreckage to carry on the

work of destruction. Tuesday afternoon the fire was still burning, although it was believed to be under control.

The Myrtle Bank Hotel, the principal hotel at Kingston, which probably sheltered the great bulk of visitors to the island, is reported destroyed. The great military hospital was burned and 40 soldiers are reported dead.

Sir James Fergusson is said to have been instantly killed, but according to London reports no other Englishman, Canadian or American is believed to be missing.

The extent of the destruction which has been wrought in Kingston, a city which always bears the scars of a number of disastrous visitations of fire, earthquake and cyclone in years gone by, is still left largely to the imagination. The city is one of low-lying buildings, clustered along the shores of one of the finest and most securely land-locked harbors in the West Indies. The population which numbers 50,000 is largely made up of native blacks.

Many steamers carrying tourists to Jamaica were en route to the island when the earthquake occurred, but it so happened that, according to schedules, none of the ships from New York or Boston was in Kingston harbor Monday afternoon.

Hamar Greenwood Says Town is Ruined.

London, Jan. 15.—The colonial office to-night received confirmation of the terrible disaster which has overtaken Kingston, Jamaica, in a dispatch from Hamar Greenwood, M. P., sent from Holland Bay, at the east end of the island.

The telegram says that Kingston has been ruined by an earthquake, which occurred without warning Monday afternoon at 3.30. A very great number of buildings and dwellings were destroyed, either by the earthquake or by the consequent fire.

The military hospital was burned, and forty soldiers are reported to have been killed, together with several prominent citizens and many other of the inhabitants of the city.

Sir James Fergusson is reported to have been instantly killed, but no other English, Canadian or American are missing.

The city is quiet, but disciplined workers are needed.

The governor of the colony, Sir Alexander Swettenham, assisted by Sir Alfred Jones, is directing affairs.

The steamer Port Kingston will leave Thursday with a number of the members of the party who went out with Sir Alfred Jones to attend the agricultural conference.

The Right Honorable Sir James Fergusson, mentioned in the foregoing despatch, was a man of considerable prominence. He served in the Crimean war, was several times a member of the house of commons. He was under secretary of state for India and the home department in Lord Derby's third, and in Mr. Disraeli's first administration. He was made governor of South Australia in 1863, governor of New Zealand in 1873, and governor of Barbados in 1885. He was under secretary of state for foreign affairs in 1886, and from 1891 to 1892 he served as postmaster-general.

Distinguished English Party There.

London, Jan. 15.—The only news of the earthquake at Kingston (Ja.), thus far received in London, is contained in brief despatches from New York.

In addition to a great number of Englishmen in business at Kingston there is at present a party of distinguished persons, headed by Sir Alfred Jones, on a visit there to attend an agricultural conference. There is much uneasiness here on their account.

This party left Bristol (Eng.), on Dec. 30, on board the steamer Port Kingston, for Kingston. It was composed of about sixty prominent British statesmen and agricultural experts and formed an expedition to the West Indies in the interests of cotton growing in British colonies on the invitation of Sir Alfred Jones, the president of the British Cotton Growing Association.

In addition to Sir Alfred there were in the party F. Sweeney, a West African merchant; Viscount Mount Morris, Arnold Forster, M. P.; P. Murray Hunter, of the Liverpool Cotton Association; A. A. Pearson, of the British cotton trade; Sir Thomas Hughes, of Liverpool; McDowell Nathan, a leading Jamaica merchant; C. Lancaster, representing the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce; Mr. Oliver, representing the Manchester Fine Spinners; Sir Thomas Shann, representing the Manchester Cotton Spinners; Sir Ralph Moor, L. G. Oliver, chairman of the Jamaica Cotton Company, Ltd., of Stockport; Hall Caine, the author; E. Bryan, secretary to Sir Alfred Jones; Mr. Hutton, chairman of the British Cotton Growing Association; Mr. Cotterell, a member of the West African section of the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce; Jesse Collins, M. P., and Henrick Heston, M. P.

Other passengers aboard the Port Kingston bound to Kingston were the Earl and Countess of Dudley, Evelyn Ellis, Percival Phillips and Captain Rhodes.

A conference of spinners and planters has been planned to be held in Jamaica at Kingston. On this voyage the Port Kingston went first to Barbados, where she embarked some thirty delegates from that colony to attend the conference. The Port Kingston reached Barbados on Jan. 8 and should have reached Kingston several days later.

Many Dead and Injured.

St. Thomas, D. W. I., Jan. 15.—According to further, though still meagre, details of the Kingston earthquake received here, it would appear that the first reports that the city had been "destroyed" were exaggerated. The fire which followed the shock was still burning Tuesday morning, although it had been confined to certain limits. The work of fighting the flames was still being pursued with energy, and in this respect the situation seemed to be improving. It was thought the fire would be under control tonight.

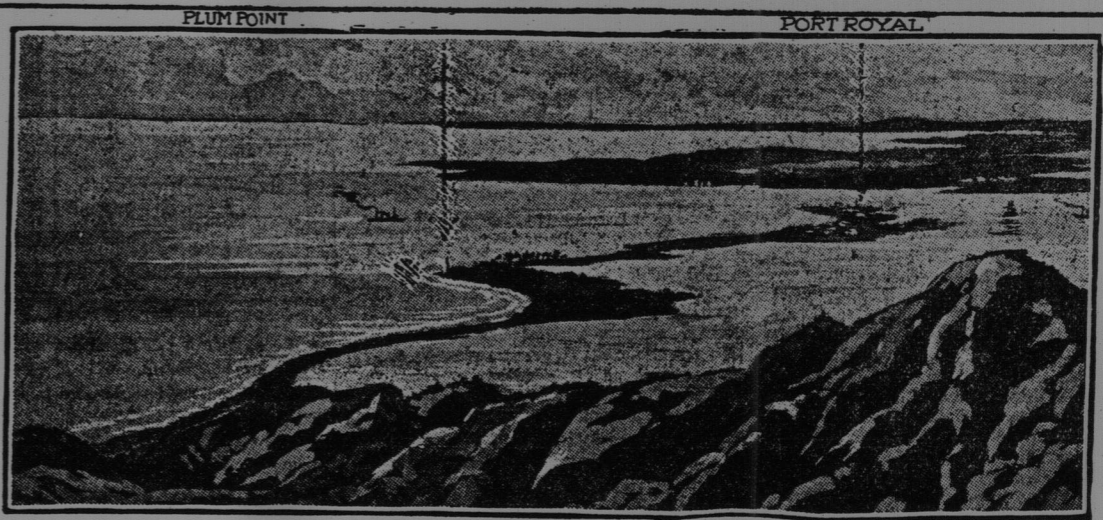
The statement is made that the total loss of life is not yet known, but a first count gives the number of dead at less than 100, and the number of wounded at several hundred. The hospitals are filled with injured persons, and everything possible is being done for their comfort.

The principal hotel of Kingston (probably the Myrtle Bank), and other important

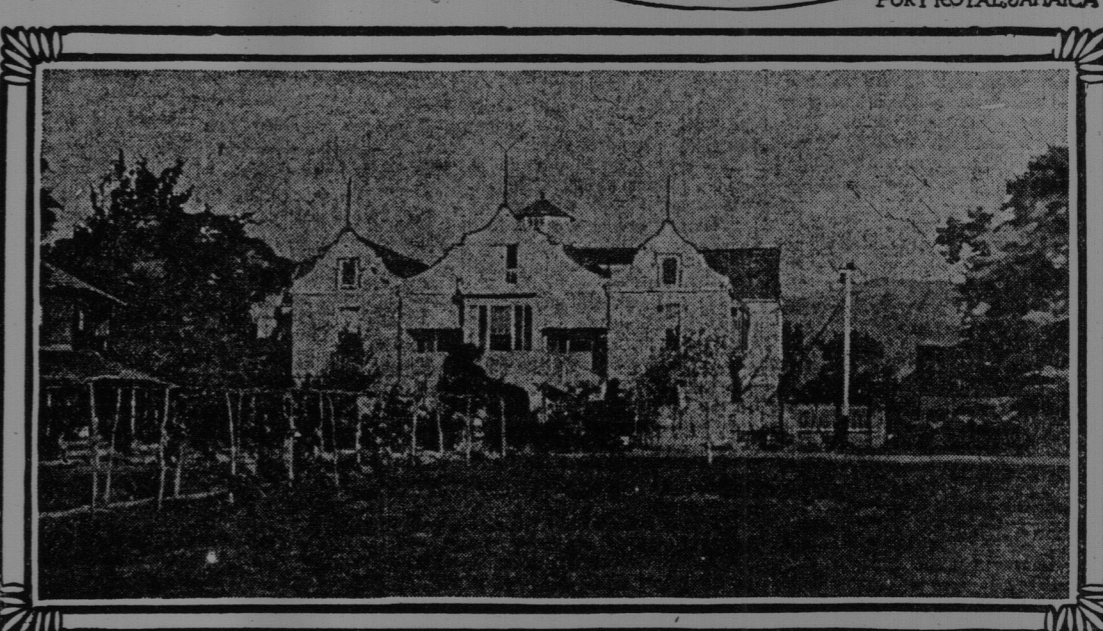
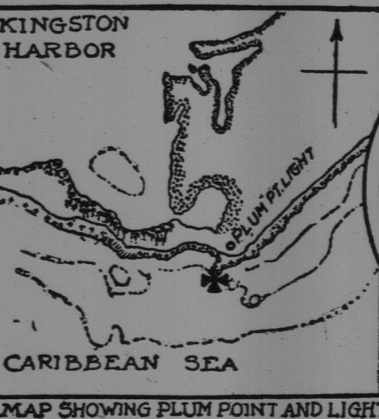
KINGSTON, THE HARBOR AND SURROUNDINGS



IN THE HARBOR, PORT ROYAL.



BIRDSEYE VIEW OF PORT ROYAL, PLUM POINT AND LIGHTHOUSE.



KINGSTON PARK HOTEL NEAR KINGSTON, JAMAICA.

ant buildings have been destroyed, and other houses in Kingston sustained considerable damage. The flames apparently were confined to the docks and the warehouse district. If this is so, only a small portion of the city has been burned over. No mention is made of a continuance of the earth shocks.

Up to this hour the foregoing is the most complete despatch regarding the Kingston disaster that has reached here. The absence of details is accounted for by the breakdown in cable communication, but the announcement that no Englishmen, Canadians or Americans are missing will greatly reassure the public concerning the fate of the unusual number of tourists and others who are spending the winter in Jamaica, or who were attracted there by the agricultural and cotton conferences.

The party on board the Port Kingston only arrived at Kingston on Friday last. The Port Kingston, in addition to the members of Sir Alfred Jones' party, had other guests and passengers on board which gave her a total passenger list of more than 100 persons.

The news of the disaster arrived in London too late tonight to become generally known to the public, but it is certain to cause widespread consternation and anxiety and it will bring home to the imagination of the British people the terrors of an earthquake in a way that even the San Francisco catastrophe failed to do. Owing to the active efforts in recent years of Joseph Chamberlain and Sir Alfred Jones, the commercial development of Jamaica has made the island much better known, and it has been greatly in favor as a winter resort.

Few Tourists at Kingston.

Boston, Jan. 15.—Dr. George H. Bridgeman, of Elizabeth (N. J.), who relinquished his post as American consul at Kingston (Ja.), and arrived from that city on the steamer Admiral Dewey yesterday, stated tonight that the consulate is at present in charge of W. H. Orrett, a native of this country but a resident of Jamaica for many years. The office has two secretaries, both Jamaicans, so that at present there are no Americans connected with the office. Dr. Bridgeman's family is in Italy.

Dr. Bridgeman said tonight that there

were perhaps 100 Americans residing in Kingston in addition to the tourists who visit the city at this time of the year. When he left on January 8th, the tourist season had been a poor one and there were at that time less than fifty in the city. Last year the city was crowded during the month of January.

Speaking of earthquakes Dr. Bridgeman said that three slight shocks were felt in Kingston during November, but they were no greater than those sometimes felt in New England and were not regarded with any apprehension.

The island has usually been looked upon as being outside the earthquake belt of the West Indies and is of limestone formation rather than of volcanic origin. Referring to the city of Kingston Dr. Bridgeman said that the buildings were nearly all of wood and of a character that would be easily prostrated by any severe series of shocks.

Most of the business section is on Harbor street at the head of which on the east end is the Myrtle Bank. The prevailing direction of the wind at this season of the year is from the northeast, the island being in the zone of the northeast trade winds. If a fire started in the section near the Myrtle Bank, it would probably sweep the entire water front as well as Harbor street, which would practically destroy the entire business section. Nearly all the private residences are outside of the city to the north and are built of limestone. A fire on the east side of the city during this season of the year when the trades are very strong, has been dreaded for many years.

Dr. Bridgeman has been in Kingston for four years and resigned during the fall.

Fire Raging at Kingston.

Boston, Jan. 15.—Allen Ainslee of the firm of Ainslee & Grabow, proprietors of the Tidfield Hotel at Port Antonio, received a cablegram tonight from his partner, Edward R. Grabow, at Port Antonio, stating that Kingston was shaken by an earthquake yesterday afternoon and that a fire was raging there. The earthquake did no damage on the north side of the island where the Tidfield Hotel is situated.

Mr. Grabow stated that he would send additional advices later.

THE ISLAND AND ITS CAPITAL

Jamaica is the largest island of the British West Indies, and lies between the Caribbean sea and the Gulf of Mexico, about eighty miles to the southward of the eastern extremity of Cuba.

The estimated population in 1901 was 753,730, and by natural increase would be about 839,000. By the last census there were 14,692 whites, 121,225 colored, 488,621 black, 10,116 East Indian, 481 Chinese, and 3,633 not stated.

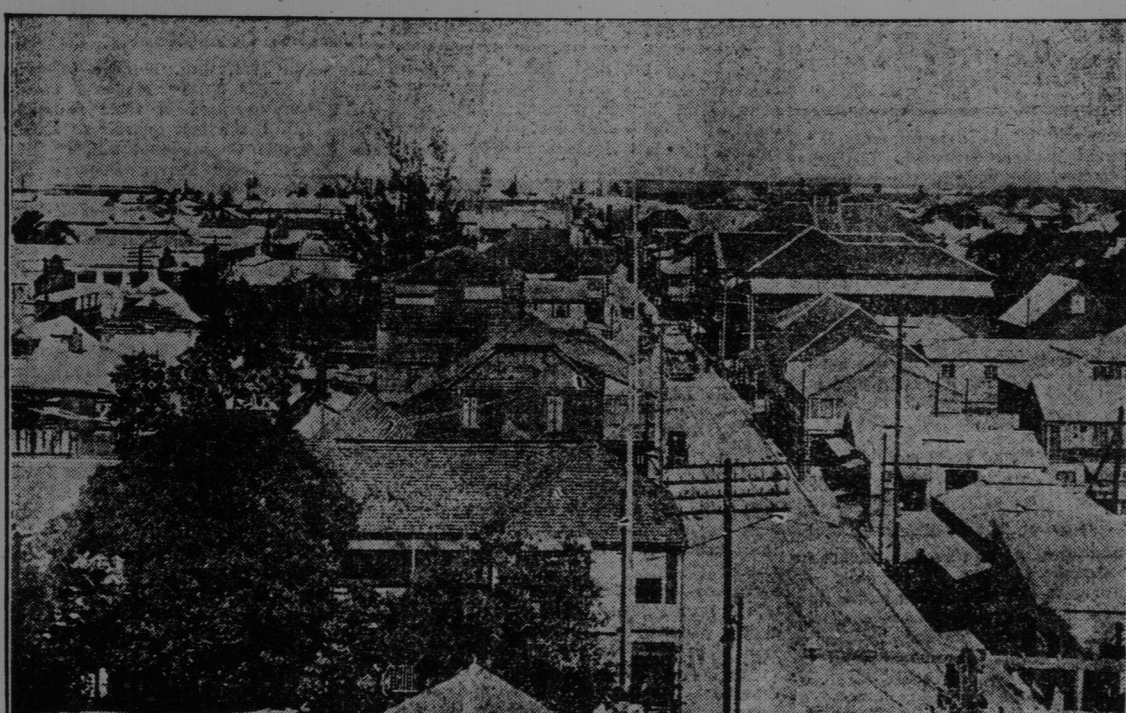
Kingston, the capital of Jamaica, stands on a gravelly soil. The population by local census in 1901 was 40,542. It covers, with its suburbs, an area of 1,080 acres of ground, regularly sloping down to the sea.

Kingston Reported Destroyed.

St. Thomas, D. W. I., Jan. 15.—The cable station at Holland Bay, Jamaica, reports that a very severe earthquake occurred there at 3.30 Monday afternoon. The cable office was badly damaged and all the land lines to Kingston were instantly interrupted.

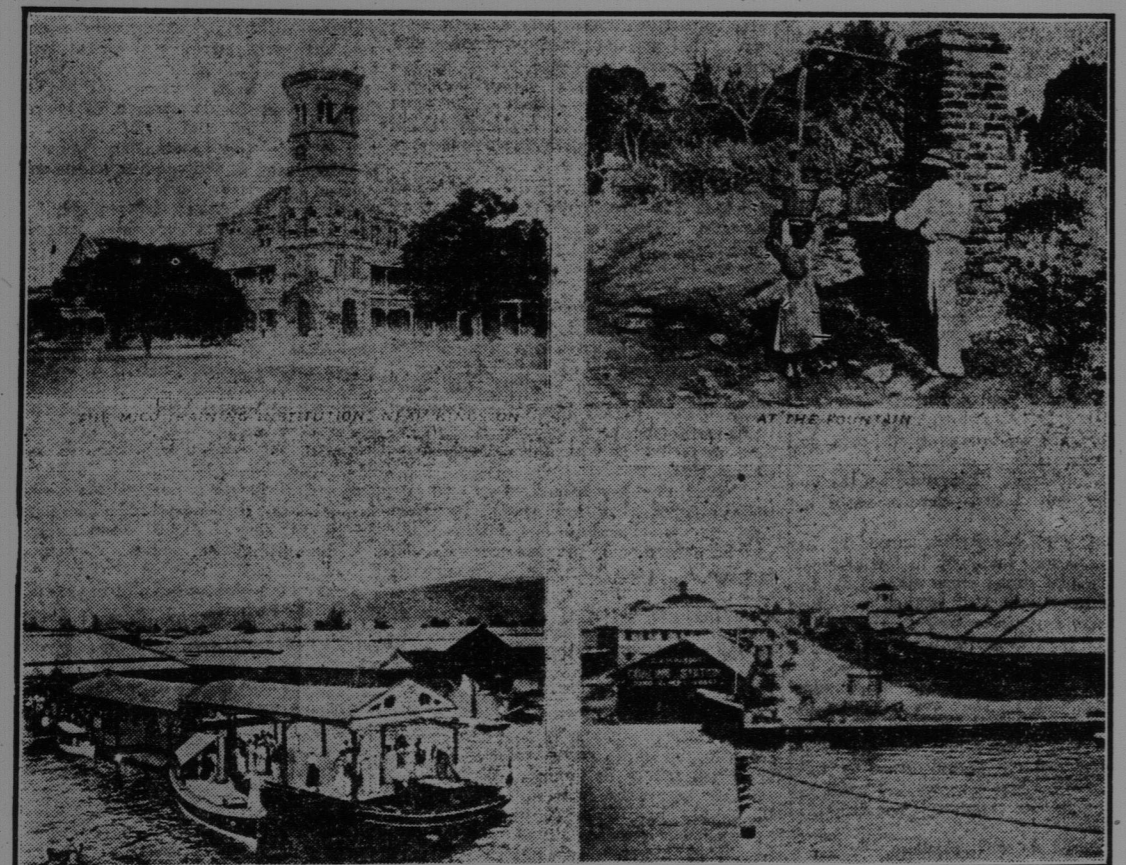
Communication by the land lines was restored this afternoon to within five miles of Kingston. That city reports a terrible earthquake on Monday afternoon. The city was destroyed and there was much loss of life. The shocks continue. Everybody is camping out and much distress prevails. Fires started at Kingston immediately after the earthquake.

The Jamaica, Colon and the Jamaica-Bermuda cables are interrupted.



Kingston Looking West.

Picture by courtesy of L. G. Crook.



Picture by courtesy of F. E. Law.

Upper row, left to right: The Mico Training Institution, near Kingston; at the Fountain, Kingston.

Lower row, left to right: Kingston Landing Stage; Kingston from the Harbor.