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The Toronto World

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27TH YEAR. PROBS: Mostly fine and very warm; thunder-storms. TEN PAGES—WEDNESDAY MORNING, JULY 17, 1907—TEN PAGES. ONE CENT.

Two Buildings Collapse in London Burying Scores in Tons of Debris

STEEL BEAMS, WEAK, SNAPPED AND "PALACE" TOPPLED OVER CRUSHING ADJOINING BUILDING

Employees and Customers Given No Chance to Escape—Women and Girls Rescued From Debris, But Tons of Brick Still Cover a Number of the Victims.

Heroic Work of Rescuers Saved the Lives of Many From Deep in the Ruins

Known dead: W. T. HAMILTON, FRANK SMITH, WILLIE TAMBLYN, 14 years, son Dr. C. S. Tamblyn. JOSEPH LONG, CLARA MULLIN, 430 Hill-street. TANTUM HOWITT, 505 Matland-street. MRS. TANTUM HOWITT, Unknown man in alley.

The injured: MR. PETERSON, St. John, both legs fractured and internal injuries; serious. MRS. PETERSON, badly bruised, unconscious. LITTLE PETERSON girl, slightly bruised. JOHN LONEY, 75 Cartwright-street, fractured skull. LIBBIE SMITH, 317 Simcoe-street, internal injuries. MARY HARDINGHAM, slightly injured. PERCY ROBINSON, badly bruised. GEORGE FITZALLEN, slightly bruised. MRS. ROBERT RANKIN, arm broken, internal injuries, will recover. MISS JOHNSTON, slightly scratched. JAS. CLUXTON, 13 years, both legs fractured. Frank Lewis, Yank Lewis, Jack Bray and Jack Middleton were in the ruins four hours, and were in a state of collapse; will recover.

LONDON, July 17.—(2 a.m.)—At least eight crushed to death and a score of people injured is the result of the worst disaster that has ever visited London, when Reid's Crystal Palace collapsed at 4.15 yesterday afternoon.

Of the dead, two have been taken from the avalanche of debris, and five, it is hoped, will be taken out before morning.

That hundreds did not perish when the terrible crash which started the whole district came without a moment's warning is the greatest miracle.

As soon as the citizens realized what had happened, there was a mad rush at the pile of debris in a frenzy to save.

Men struggled and tore at the bricks, stone and mortar until their fingers bled, and still fought like lunatics in a wild despair. With the clothing ripped in shreds, men, women and children made every effort to do something for the relief, and a dozen or more girls were taken out alive from under the cruel walls.

In the intersection of the two buildings, Brewster's and that occupied by Hamilton & Long Co., two bodies were located at midnight. Both are pinned under the ceiling joists. The corpses are unrecognizable.

The location of several other bodies is known to a degree, but it will take days before they are all found. The walls are, perhaps, 40 x 80 feet, four stories in height. This whole mass is tumbled into the Brewster and Hamilton & Long stores. The ceiling are 5 feet deep and the debris is fully 20 feet high.

It is very slow work getting the stuff removed, owing to the somewhat limited space, so it appears that several days will elapse before all the bodies are removed.

LONDON, July 16.—(Staff Special)—A few minutes after 4 o'clock this sultry afternoon an awful, crushing disaster befell London's busiest section. Next door to the fine building of the Advertiser on Dundas-street, the old structure containing Reid's china warehouse or Crystal Palace, Brewster's new 5 and 10 cent store, and the photographic studio of McCallum and Westlake, fell without a moment's warning into a heap of stone and splinters and broken beams.

The shock made the neighboring walls tremble as the earth that marked just filled the air so that one could scarcely see for ten minutes.

The cause of the accident is supposed to have been the alterations in progress, which were to transform the Reid building into a bowling and billiard palace for the Greek firm of Smithies & Co.

From all appearances the east wall of the Reid building was the first to give way, and falling out with tremendous force went across the lane-way separating the building from the photograph gallery, where it smashed into the five and ten-cent store, completely demolishing it and letting down the photograph gallery, which had just been moved into the second floor.

Fortunately fire did not add its horrors to the collapse. Had this dire feature been added to the horror the extent of it would have been far worse, and many more lives might have been lost.

The cause of the disaster is given out to have been the weakening of the centre wall on the second story. The steel beams are said to have been too weak and snapped, allowing the brick-work and masonry to give way and fall like a mighty avalanche upon the west wall toward the east, sweeping toward the other stores, and carrying down an enormous weight of masonry and crockery from the Crystal Hall.

The collapsed buildings are among the oldest structures in London, so much so in fact that they are landmarks to the oldest residents. They are situated on the south side of Dundas-street, half way between Richmond and Clarence-streets. Reid's Crystal Hall, and Hamilton, Lang & Co.'s stores were one and the same building with the floor space divided, the larger space, probably two-thirds, being used by the Reid Company. McCallum's Photo Gallery and Brewster's 5 and 10-cent store were in another building, separated from Reid's by a 10-foot lane. When Reid's building collapsed it toppled north toward the street and east across the lane, knocking over McCallum's and Brewster's stores. The building to the east of Brewster's fortunately is much newer than the doomed structure, and consequently withstood the shock.

The building owned by W. J. Reid, which was the Crystal Hall, and Hamilton, Lang & Co.'s premises, has often been the subject of public talk as to its safety, rumors to the effect that it was to be demolished have often been in circulation, but as far as can be ascertained it was never being done.

The Work of Rescue. There was a considerable number in the place who actively made their escape even as the walls and floors fell in. Many more or less fortunate were pinned down or cut off.

It was imperative to begin at once a vigorous and many handed work of rescue.

There were great crowds pressing to the scene of death and ruin.

Chief Rowe of the fire department, and City Engineer Kirkpatrick, were promptly and able, as always, to meet the



Dundas-street, London, Looking East From Richmond-street—It is Near the Centre of This Block, on the South Side of the Street, That the Destroyed Buildings Were Located.

When Men Became Heroes.

LONDON, July 16.—(Special).—All honor to the spirit of London's citizens, who, in such an emergency as to-day's, showed themselves possessed of true heroism.

Inspired by the thought of human beings beneath that cruel mass of stone heaped high, men worked as never before, in a chance that the awful suspense would be relieved by finding, maybe, that certain ones were not dead, or even dying. From each side of the mass of debris, the thoughts of a dozen young girls being imprisoned, agonized the workers to such a pitch that they literally forgot each other in a mad effort to snatch from the jaws of death the lives of young Londoners.

Down into gloomy little fissures they tore their way like beavers. Slowly but surely, they came to the huddled bundles of clothes, carefully testing every piece for fear that its removal might send down a weight of ruin sufficient to crush an army.

Some had to claw their way thru little holes not larger than small stable windows, and let themselves down into a depth that, for all they knew, might be bottomless.

The cry of a child was agonizing, or the moan of a man was the most terrible thing of the whole excruciating fight against death.

Not a man shirked, and some desperately threatened to throw themselves into a ticklish place and effect a speedy rescue, bent on stopping the terrorizing agony. Men became almost like fiends in their work. They cursed—clean-tongued men tho they may have been—and threatened everything which could be threatened, if any attempt was made to stop them in their noble work.

They were parties at work in several different places, and all were constantly relieved by new detachments when they could be relieved.

Some it was impossible to relieve until the task had been done. These were the men who had cut their way under beams and slanting ceilings, bulged down with a great weight, into little dark hollows, in which were the bodies of some dear ones.

Worked for Hours. Until they had sawed and chiseled and cut their way thru the network of things that held them back, it was impossible to come out again. For four and five hours some of the heroes labored, cramped until they were almost unconscious, and as nearly dead as the persons they had rescued when brought out again. At the entrance to these black caves, which were harboring the dark angels, there were other little parties at work passing in water, making the small entrances bigger, as with the care of skilful surgeons fighting against hope.

There were heroes from all walks of life in that band of bravest citizens. The fireman, the policeman and the young clerk vied with each other for places on the fighting line. It was a fight, and one of the grimmest ever waged; and if ever there is a roll of heroes inscribed upon the walls of London every man who worked in this battle should be remembered.

Thrilling Scenes. There were thrilling scenes that stirred a crowd to the

wildest pitches of enthusiasm. Such tales as were enacted there are often read in fiction. The rescue of children and of girls and of maimed men, and the struggles to ascertain if there were a dozen people or half a hundred beneath the horrible pit of carnage. But there would come a cry of hope, like a message from the dead, it seemed, and the crowd would wait with serious, expectant faces.

"Bring the stretcher," would be a call that would echo and re-echo thru the ranks of the watchers, and to the top of the pile would be borne a frail little body, grimy-faced, but still alive. Carefully her girlish form would be placed upon a stretcher, and she would be tenderly borne to one of the waiting ambulances.

Cheers would sweep above all for an instant, and then the crowd would lie back upon the ropes which were stretched along the streets, and wait until the next word was given.

Meanwhile, scores of men plied around the wagons which were carting away from the gradually reducing piles of debris, and prominent citizens, and those not prominent, carried water or worked with a shovel.

The Danger of It.

Upon a point which jutted above the strewn pile stood J. A. Cottam, with a megaphone in his hand, directing here and there like a general over an army of embankment. His was not a task of violent labor, but it was one of the most onerous and important. To him and to Innes Carling was assigned the duty of watching the great threatening wall and cornice-piece at the west end of the Reid Building. Not for a second did they move an eye. Men were working beneath, and the crowd at times was not to be kept back.

Rescued Fifteen Girls.

Delving thru mud and ooze with their hands, a party of ten men made the most wonderful rescue of fifteen girls, who were imprisoned under the avalanche. It was almost a hopeless task when the men started, but willingly they scratched and tore at the debris with a terror born of great determination and a struggle for life and death.

For forty feet they went under the cruel walls, with nothing to guide them but the moans of maybe a dying victim. The work was not in vain, for in a short space of time more than a dozen girls emerged from the death dungeon in perfect safety.

With his wife and child, F. Peterson of St. John, N. B., was shopping in Hamilton & Long's store. The trio took refuge underneath the counter immediately in front of them. They were imprisoned for fully two hours. Every now and then Mr. Peterson would shout at the top of his voice, and the earnest workers would strive harder. All were taken out in safety.

Hymn From Dying Lips. Dr. Stevenson, who, with the many other physicians, was close to the scene of action from the start, told a pathetic story. He was down among the ruins at the rear end of the building at about 7 o'clock when he heard a voice which, for a time, he could not distinguish. He followed the sound, however, and finally came to a point where there was a loosened, and it was there that the words—or, rather, music—came. It seemed to be the voice of a young man, and he was singing "Nearer, My God, to Thee, Nearer to Thee."

A great effort was made to get at this victim, but it was next to an impossible task, and the strains of the great hymn soon died away.

Miss Skene Advances Miss Vogan Now Sixth

What Yesterday's Battle of the Ballots Resulted in—Miss Robertson of Haileybury Makes a Big Gain in District No. 3.

Table listing candidates for District No. 1 in the City of Toronto, including names and vote counts.

Table listing candidates for District No. 2 in the City of Hamilton, including names and vote counts.

Table listing candidates for District No. 3 in the Province of Ontario, including names and vote counts.

The standing in the Trip to London Contest will be announced to the public each day until the close of the contest.

All votes, to count in the final standing of the contest, must be in the hands of the Trip to London editor by 12 o'clock Monday night, the 22nd of July.

Your Wedding Flowers. See Jennings' roses; beautiful blooms on long, stiff stems, 123 West King-street. Phones Main 7210 and Park 1237.

ELECTED BY ACCLAMATION. BRANDON, Man., July 16.—Dr. McInnis, recently appointed to a portfolio of department of education in the Roblin Government, was elected by acclamation to-day.

NO. 8.4 Not Good After 12 o'Clock Midnight July 22, 1907 Trip to London Ballot THIS BALLOT GOOD FOR 1 VOTE For District No. Address County City