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HEART THROBS OF THE HALIFAX HORROR.

BY STANLEY K. SMITH

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Heart Throbs of the Halifax Horror

BY

STANLEY K. SMITH

COLLABORATOR IN THE WRITING OF
"THE GLORIOUS STORY OF THE
FIGHTING 26TH"

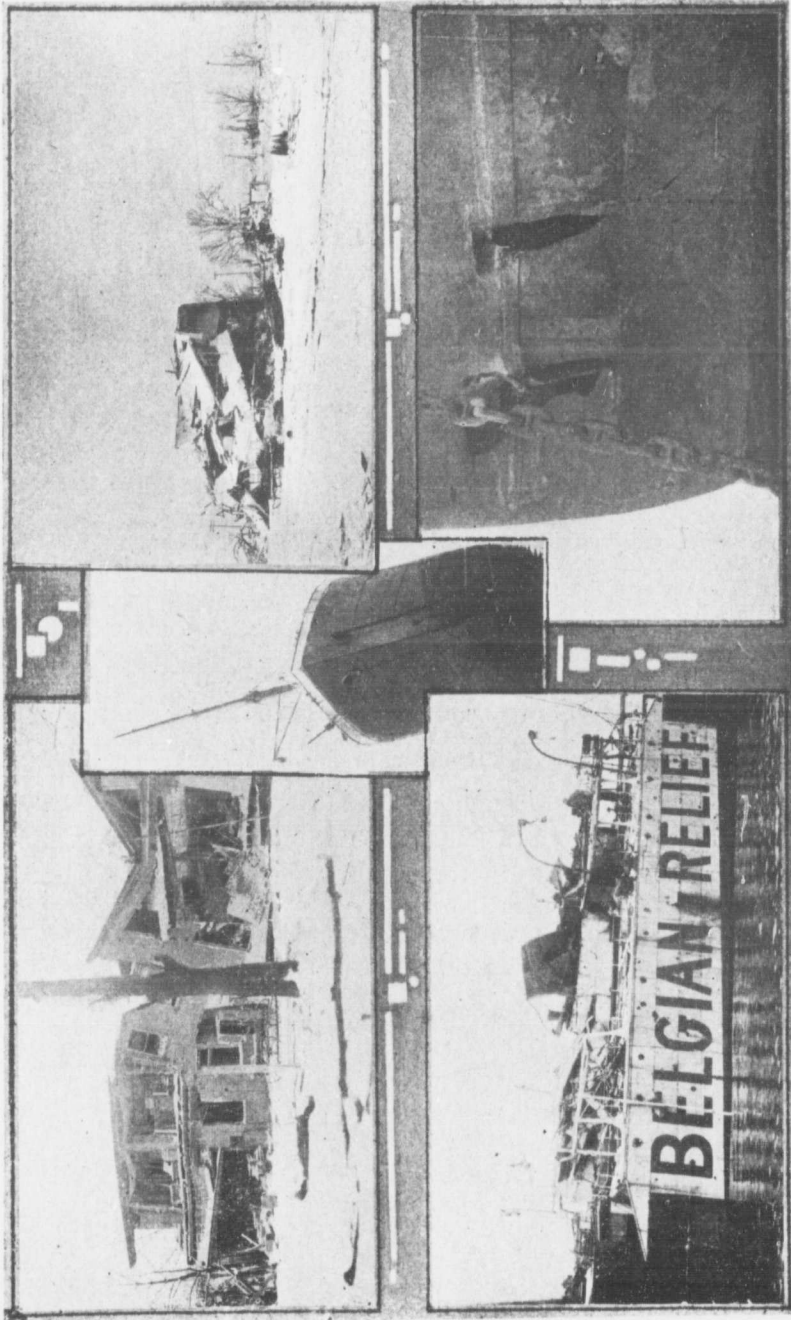
60 ILLUSTRATIONS FROM ACTUAL PHOTOGRAPHS
MAP OF CITY, SHOWING DEVASTATED AREA
AND LIST OF DEAD



PUBLISHED BY

GERALD E. WEIR
223 HOLLIS STREET
HALIFAX, CANADA

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Scene at Corner Kaye and Göttingen Streets.
View Showing Deck of the "Imo."

Bow of "Imo."

Ruins of a Roome Street Residence.
Holes where Anchor was Blown Thru Bow of "Imo."

The Hope of Resurrection.

Weeping may endure for a night
But joy cometh in the morning.

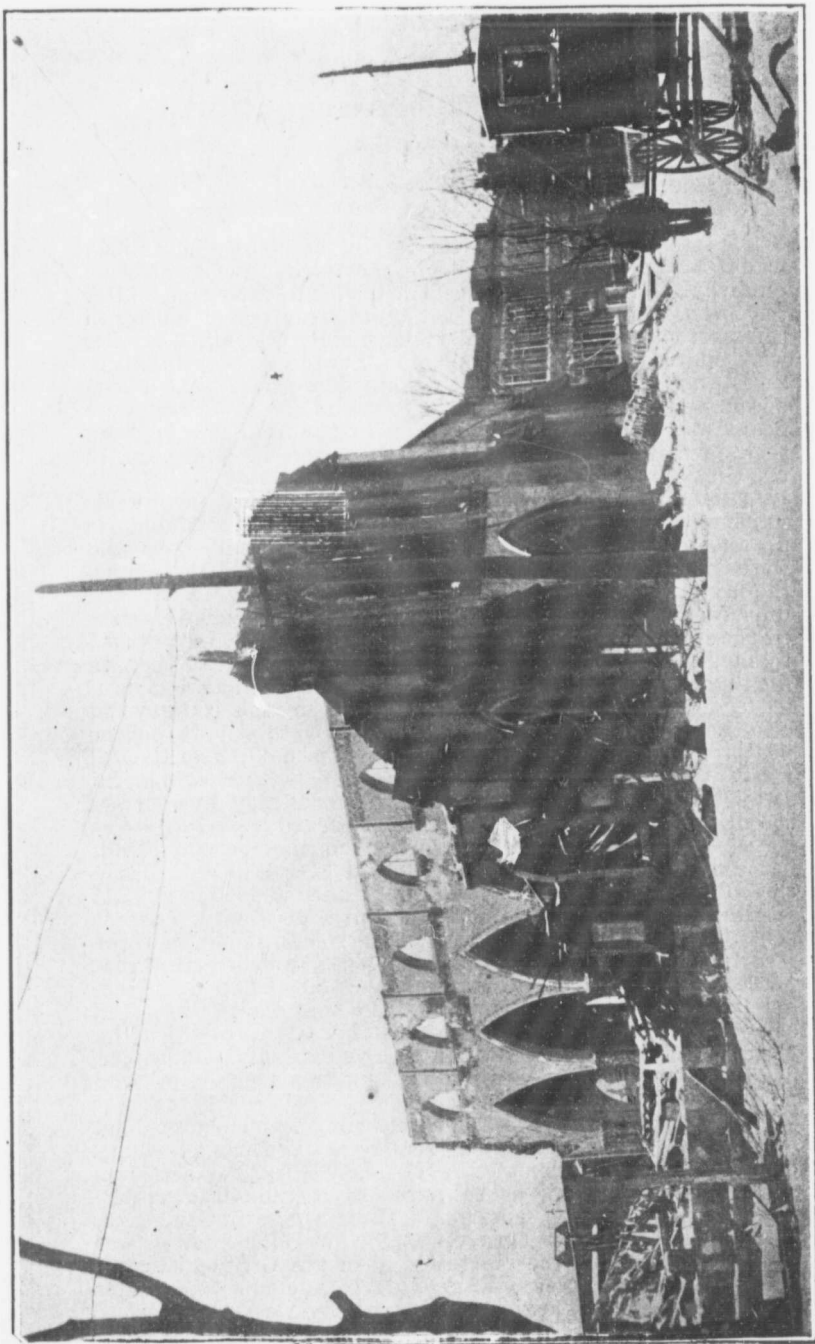
Yesterday was the saddest day in the history of Halifax, when the unidentified dead from the terrible explosion were publicly laid away. There is a tragic side to the whole matter that seems unequalled, and yet there is an added pathos in this particular phase. For it is not merely that all the bodies were marred beyond recognition. That was true in many cases and was sad enough, but many more were not claimed because there was nobody left to claim them. They were people for the most part born and bred in Halifax; they had their joys and their sorrows here; they were integral parts of the City's life.

Some were men who had given the best of their years here; some were mothers whose children the world over would rise up and call them blessed; some were the girls and boys who were the hope of the City, and some were tender little infants, the joy of their households, and yet they were there silent and unclaimed, no loving though sorrowing heart that had cherished them to ache with pain for them; no eye that had watched to shed a tear over, no hand that had ministered to them in life to do any of the last sad offices for them. They are mourned by the whole community—nay more—by this country and all others whose hearts have been stirred with pity during the past ten or twelve days, but the grief is not personal. All who loved them best are either sleeping with them, or far away overseas fighting that other children may live, or are too ill to stand the strain of trying to identify.

It would be black, indeed, were this life the end of all, if the first solemn strains of the "Dead March in Saul," told the whole story. But the triumphant note is not missing. It is still possible to cry with hope and faith, "O Death, where is thy sting; O Grave where is thy victory!" In the hope of the resurrection in which all mankind believes, a resurrection that makes the soul of man to triumph over all and to live again here, beautifying and ennobling all life that shall come after, as well as that resurrection to a life hereafter to which the Christian clings, Halifax reverently lays away its unidentified dead. Unidentified by man but not unknown to Him who notes even the sparrow's fall.

There must we leave them, returning to our homes and our work feeling that upon us rests the responsibility of so building and conducting the new City to arise on the ashes of the old, as to make of it the most enduring monument to the memory of those whose hopes, plans, aims and ideals they themselves might not fulfil. Sad as was the day, it may be the greatest day in the City's history if we as a people consecrate ourselves to the new and better spirit whose highest expression is true civic consciousness.

—Halifax Chronicle, Dec. 18, 1917.



Ruins of St. Joseph's Church—Roman Catholic.

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CHAPTER I.

Out of a Clear Sky.



S. K. SMITH

City Editor of "The Daily Telegraph"

ST. JOHN, N. B.

UNSUSPECTINGLY the people of Halifax went about their usual occupations on that fateful Thursday, December 6th, 1917. Stores had just opened, business men were on their way to offices, the older grades were at morning prayer in the schools, many of the little ones were at the breakfast table for a hasty meal, the mother with loving hands preparing the food. In half a hundred factories the wheels of industry were turning and along the historic waterfront—so valuable an asset for the Allies in the War of Nations—men worked like ants in all forms of labor.

Out of a clear sky the blow fell. The French munitions steamer *Mont Blanc*, loaded at New York with a deadly cargo of T. N. T., picric acid and benzine, came up the harbor seeking a convoy and was ordered to anchorage in Bedford Basin. There was a mist on the water and this, no doubt, contributed to the tragedy which followed.

The Norwegian steamer *Imo*, in the Belgian Relief service, Captain Fron in charge, was coming out of the basin, outward bound. Both Captain Fron and Pilot William Hayes, who was on the bridge, are dead, but the finding of the Drysdale Commission, just issued as I write, relieves them of all responsibility for the collision with the *Mont Blanc*, fixing the blame upon Captain Aime Lemedec of that steamer and Pilot Francis MacKey recommending the dismissal of the latter, also proceedings against Captain Lemedec by the French government. Arrests of these men on the charge of manslaughter have just been made and the startling

stories, current in the early hours of the disaster, are likely to be sifted to the bottom in the sensational trial expected to follow.

Survivors of the *Imo* say that the *Mont Blanc* first signalled by two blasts of the whistle that she would pass on the Halifax side of the harbor, which was, for her, the wrong side. Accepting this signal as final, those on board the *Imo* say the Belgian relief ship was steered to the Dartmouth side but, while taking this course, heard one blast which indicated that the *Mont Blanc* had then taken the right, or Dartmouth side. The *Imo* attempted to stop but could not and the *Mont Blanc* was struck under the bridge, starboard. The *Imo* survivors say, also, that the *Mont Blanc* carried no red flag to indicate she was carrying high explosives and that even when the *Mont Blanc's* crew were seen escaping in boats when fire had broken out, those on the Belgian relief ship did not realize that an explosion was imminent.

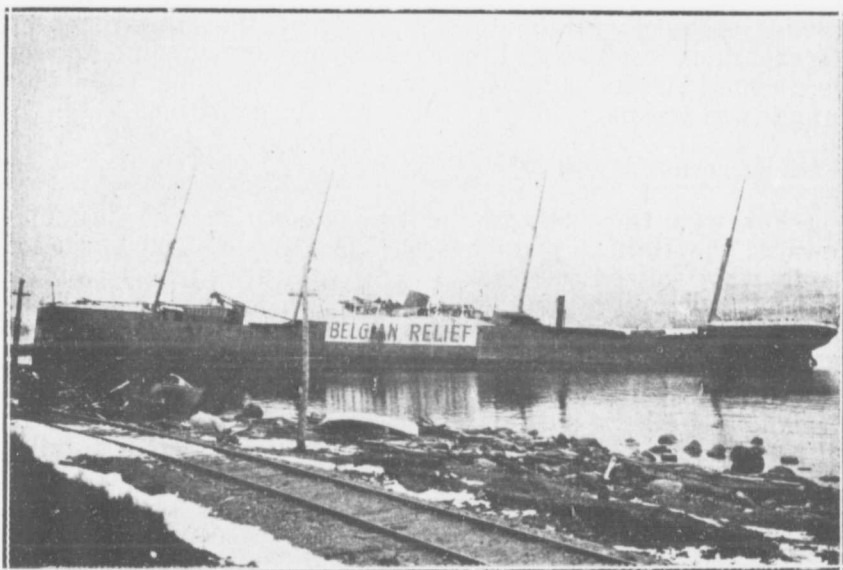
Captain Lemedec, now under arrest, gives the following statement regarding the movement of the steamers:

"We had on board the *Mont Blanc* nearly 5,000 tons of freight, mostly explosives. The ballast tanks were filled with water. In the forward hold were stored picric acid; then came a steel bulkhead and in the next hold was T. N. T., a high explosive. We also had T. N. T. in the third hold.

"On top of the forward deck were stored about twenty barrels of benzol, over the picric acid with a deck in between.

"It was a clear morning. The water was smooth and we were at half speed on the starboard side toward the Bedford Basin. There were no vessels in our course until we sighted the Belgian relief ship *Imo* coming out of Bedford Basin and headed for the Dartmouth shore. She was more than two miles away at the time. We signalled we would keep the *Mont Blanc* on the starboard tack going up to the basin where we were to anchor. We headed a little more inshore so as to make clear to the *Imo* our purpose. She signalled that she was coming down on the port, which would bring her on the same side with us. We were keeping to the right or starboard according to pilotage rules and could not understand what the *Imo* meant. But we kept on our course, hoping that she would come down, as she should, on the starboard side, which would keep her on the Halifax side of the harbor and the *Mont Blanc* on the Dartmouth side.

"But to our surprise the *Imo* continued on the north side so we signalled again. We saw there was danger of collision and signalled to stop the engines, at the same time veering



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

toward the Dartmouth shore. We landed and ran into the woods. About twenty minutes after we left the ship we heard the explosion. It knocked nearly everyone of us down and we were struck by bits of the trees and other things, but only the gunner was seriously injured. He has since died."

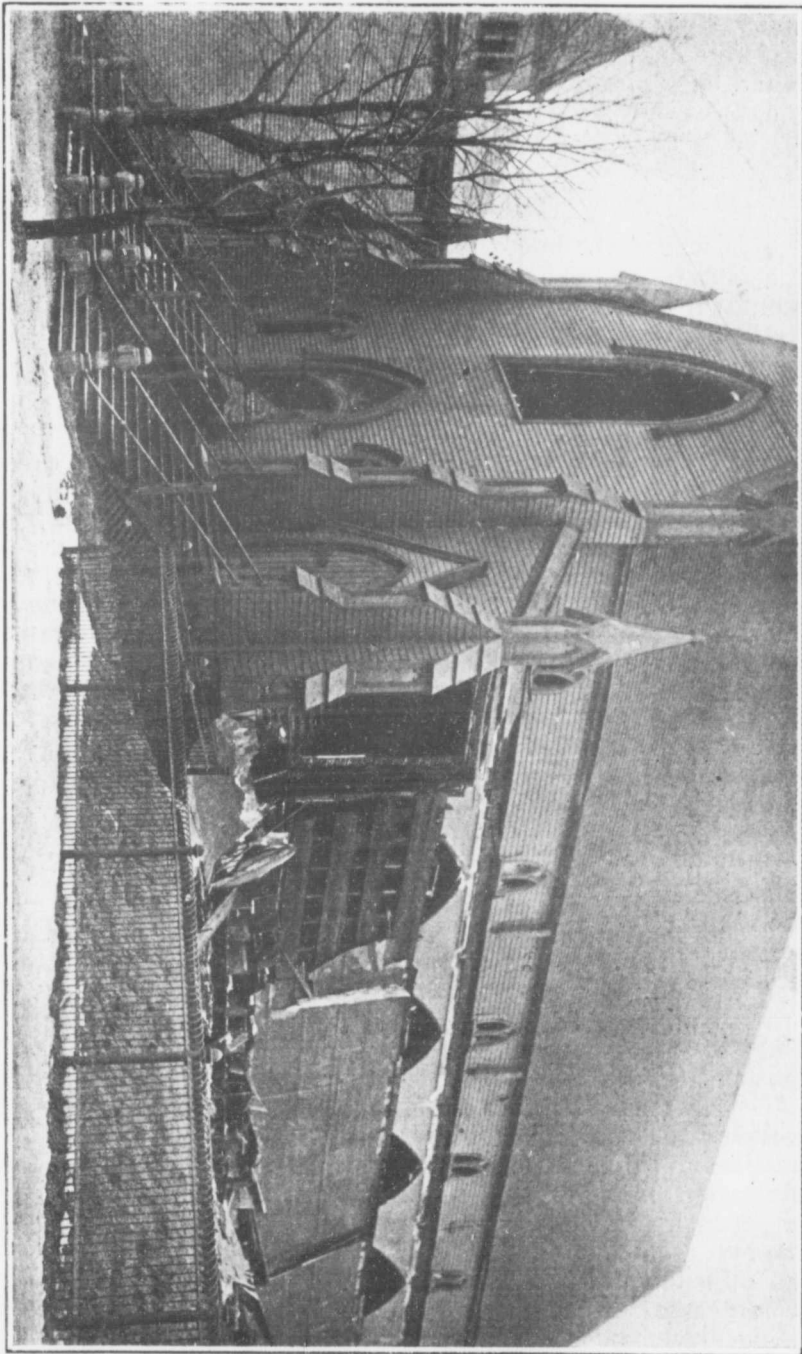
What Explosion Meant to the City.

Few were they who saw that abandoned steamer drifting towards the Halifax piers wrapped in a cloud of smoke and flame, who realized the load of death she carried. In twenty minutes it was all over. The clocks which I saw in the ruined buildings of the North end were stopped at 9.07 o'clock and this evidently was the exact time of the explosion. More than 1500 died within the hour in the cataclysm which followed, the whole of Richmond was left a smoking waste, buildings in all parts of the city shattered, two hundred were totally blinded, thousands injured, whole families wiped out. To adequately sum up the destruction, the damage and the suffering seems impossible. My whole book scarcely suffices to convey what that awful concussion brought to the Citadel City. I find however the following paragraphs in the preliminary report of Thomas Adams, Town planning adviser to the Canadian Commission of Conservation:

"From investigations made, it appears that about 794 residences and other private buildings have been completely destroyed; 337 partially destroyed and 394 injured to an extent from 15 per cent to 30 per cent of their former value. In addition about 5,000 buildings in the city have been injured in part. About 1,500 buildings will have to be rebuilt in the whole city to accommodate the homeless population, numbering about 9,000 persons.

"To provide temporary housing for 9,000 people, even with the assistance of the Militia Department, and to rebuild their homes or erect others in lieu of those destroyed, and to repair the injuries to other buildings, may mean an expenditure of \$6,000,000. This will be apart from the heavy expense to be incurred by the Federal Government and the city of Halifax in re-instating public buildings, railway rolling stock, etc., and also apart from the large expense which will be involved in providing for the maintenance of the permanently injured and the re-adjustment of business which has been temporarily dislocated."

So much for the property loss, which is described in detail in a later chapter. The story of what followed that terrible explosion concerns us here. All the horrors of war were crowded into a brief space of time and forced upon the stricken people. Hundreds died from the shock alone. With the fall of



St. John's Presbyterian Church, Brunswick Street.—Most of congregation lived in vicinity and were injured or killed.
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many of the wooden buildings in Richmond women and children were crushed beneath the ruins. Many bodies were later found half-buried by the bricks from the crumbling chimneys, caught as they were bending over the stove preparing breakfast.

*The Story of That First Day
as Told Me by a Friend.*

It was in the hotel in Halifax two days after the explosion that I greeted my friend Weir, who has since become instrumental in placing this story in the reader's hands.

I was looking for a story of the first days and asked him how he had fared and what he had seen.

"I am one of the lucky ones," he said,—"I was in my room, on Barrington Street, when the first shock of the explosion came. The building rocked and toilet bottles on my dresser were overturned. I had just time to glance out of the window as the thought of "earthquake" passed through my mind, when the big crash came. One window of heavy plate glass was broken into hundreds of pieces and blown across the room onto the bed from which I had risen only a few minutes before. The window sash was torn from the frame and fell across the phonograph on which I had placed a record to play while I dressed. The music ceased and was succeeded by a thousand kinds of noise too terrible and too great to describe.

"Glass from many windows tinkled in my ears and flew about my head. It seemed that the building was falling in upon me. The cries in the street I shall never forget.

"I ran into the hall and down the stairs. Windows and doors rolled down the stairs as I ran. In the street I saw men and women covered with blood.

One man rushing into a building for safety, was met by a terrified girl who cried: 'Don't go in, the building is falling.' She was cut and bleeding and the man grasped her by the arm to prevent her falling. As they hurried in search of a place of safety, a brick fell on the girl's head and she died in his arms.

"As I ran down Barrington street I met another man carrying a child in his arms. Only a part of the little one's head was visible and from the forehead a large splinter of wood protruded. It was at least a half inch thick and about six or seven inches long. The end must have been imbedded in the eye.

"Sickened by the sight I hurried on, only to meet many worse cases. Automobiles bearing wounded and dying were being driven at greatest possible speed toward hospitals.



Devastated Homes in Richmond.—St. Joseph's School on left.

In the Fire Area of Richmond.

“When I reached the fire area of Richmond, the scene beyond was shut out by a dense curtain of smoke from which issued soldiers, sailors and civilians, bearing horrible forms on chairs, mattresses, doors or in their arms. The street was lined on both sides with dead and dying. Those in which the spark of life still lingered were rushed to hospitals where operations were being performed on tables covered with fallen plaster and broken glass.

“Everywhere I saw refugees covered with blood and with clothing blown from their bodies. Women and children in bare feet seemed unmindful of the snow that covered the ground. All were seeking safety from another explosion which everyone then expected.

“Wellington Barracks and the streets above were deserted except for a few who vainly attempted to save from their burning dwellings, what articles they could carry in their arms.

“In a field I saw a pile of clothing which had been taken from a burning home. A spark had fallen and a flame was eating its way into the pile. I tore the burning garments away to save what remained untouched but efforts were in vain for burning brands were falling all about.

“On the common were thousands of people seeking refuge in the open. Soldiers of the Medical Corps went about among

the wounded, rendering what aid they could with dressing and bandages at hand.

"At Camp Hill Hospital where we were taking the wounded, soldiers were placed to see that not a car went away without passengers. Those who were able to be removed after wounds were dressed were taken to homes thrown open for the purpose.

"In the kitchen of the hospital ladies were preparing food at one end of the room while at the other doctors performed operations and removed eyes by the score. Even the floors were covered with the injured."

*Like Unto a Mighty
Rushing Wind.*

Survivors speak of a mighty rushing wind which accompanied the explosion and actually blew the clothes from the living and dying. The scenes were heart-rending. Many bodies were crushed and broken into parts and were unrecognizable. Husbands would arrive at their homes to find, in cases, wife and nine or ten children buried in the debris of a razed home. Children came toddling in search of parents. One lad of sixteen was the pathetic sole survivor of a family of father, mother and nine children.

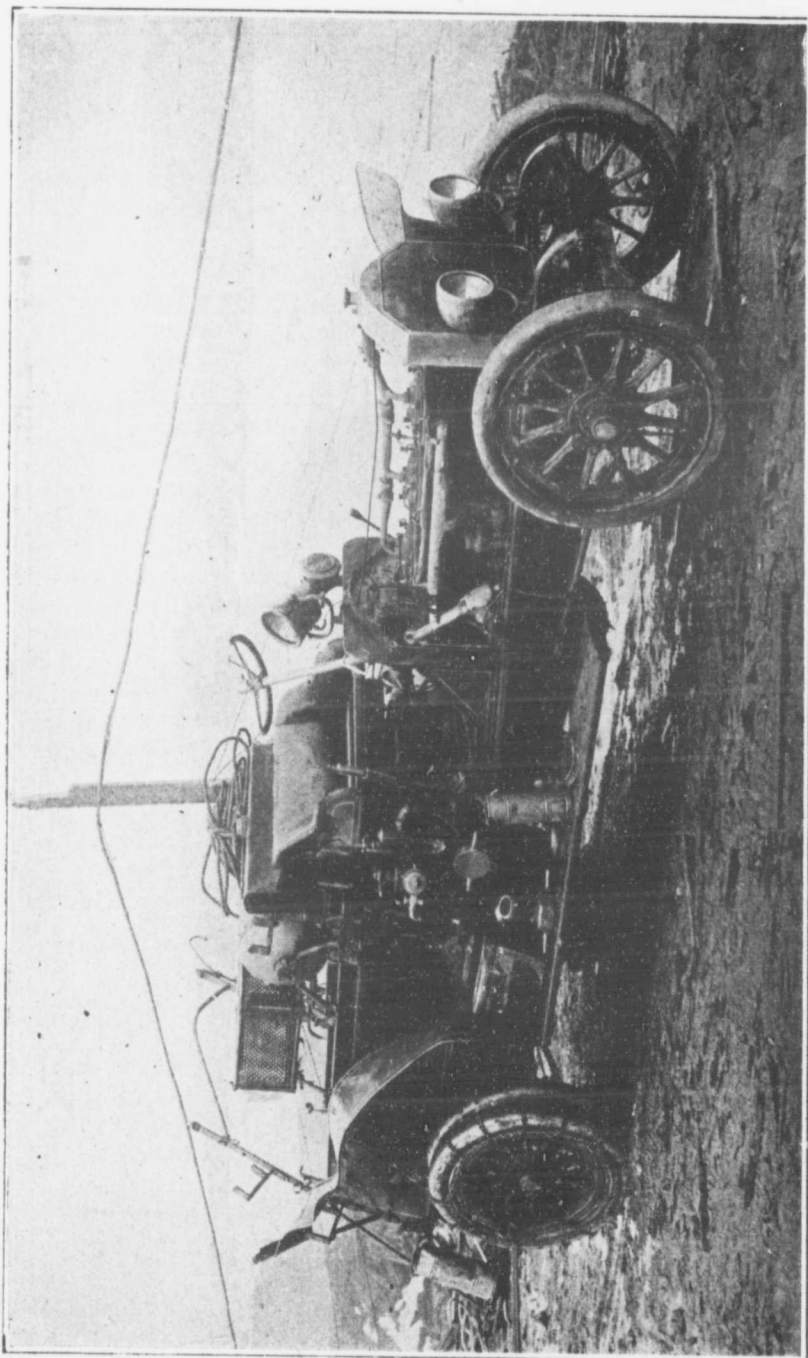
One man went into a drug store with one of his eyes held in his hand and the empty socket covered by the other, to inquire stolidly if anything could be done with it. Among the injured was a woman who, while holding her baby, had both eyes destroyed by flying glass.

The alarm of fire on board the steamer brought many people to the windows as curious spectators and this is one explanation for the horrible eye injuries. Another is that no matter whether windows were in back or front, facing the harbor or not, the glass was blown inwards, inflicting terrible injuries.

An eye witness of the collision told a newspaper reporter that he and his wife were looking at the two steamers as they approached each other. He noticed the French munition steamer *Mont Blanc* as she came in through the Narrows with her cargo of nitro-glycerine, T. N. T. and benzine turn slightly to port and the Belgian Relief steamer bear down upon her. "My God!" he exclaimed, "they are going to collide!" In a moment they were together, but as both vessels were proceeding slowly the impact was not great. In less than two minutes flames were seen to shoot from the *Mont Blanc's* deck as she turned in towards Pier 8.



Fire Chief's Auto.—Chief Edward Condon, his assistant and many of Department were killed.



Fire Engine "Patricia."—Note that half of steering wheel is missing. The driver's hand, severed at the wrist, was found at some distance from his body.

Constant Upham, grocer at 1299 Barrington street, and whose store was almost directly up from the pier, saw the flames shooting up from the steamer as she drew near the pier. He went to the telephone and phoned to the fire station and an immediate response was made by Chief Condon, Deputy Chief Edward Brunt, Engineer Peter Broderick and Firemen Hennessey and Spruin, who arrived in the motor Patricia and the chief's automobile. They arrived at the entrance to the pier just as the explosion occurred and are believed to have been killed instantly.

Martin Upham was at his brother's side when the latter telephoned for the firemen. He and his brother and the young lady employees in the store, not knowing the nature of the steamer's cargo, had no fear of danger. Martin left the store to continue his deliveries of groceries and had only proceeded up Kaye street a short distance when the explosion occurred. Those who remained at the store were killed.

Martin Upham was directly in front of his own home when the house collapsed, killing his own wife and burying in the debris two children whom he managed to get out without much injury.

Alonzo Bezanson, reported killed but whom his brother assured me is quite alive, tells a graphic story of the explosion. In common with many men working in this section, Mr. Bezanson saw the Mont Blanc on fire before the explosion occurred. He told his brother he noticed puffs of smoke coming from the Mont Blanc. It was not a raging fire but intermittent gusts of flame, blue and black, as if oil were burning. The men began to think of running for safety, but they had no warning of the fearful contents of the French steamer. The next he remembers he was flying through the air and blown clear over the sugar refinery fence and back towards Pier No. 6. A tidal wave of which little has been written, followed the explosion and Mr. Bezanson can just remember the salty water splashing his face. He came down near a huge log. He put one arm around this and remembers floating with the timber held in close embrace. One finger on the hand which grasped the log had been blown away, but his grip was sufficiently strong to hold him from being swept back with the receding tide, and when found two hours later it was some time before the crippled hand could be pried loose.

A naval officer just stepping into a boat on the water front, was blown half a mile by the explosion and recovered to find himself stark naked in a field.

The tidal wave was one of the most curious phenomena of the explosion and has been almost overlooked in the record of

the disaster. Survivors of the explosion say that the crest of the advancing wave swept across Campbell road, more than twenty feet above the level of the harbor, caught some firemen as high up as the armpits and carried them back across the hill to a watery grave. Tugs, it is reported, touched the bottom of the harbor in the recoil. One small steamer was blown clear over No. 6 pier. The steamer Picton was left a desolate sight, swept clean of funnels and deckhouse and with loosened plates. Of her crew but one man remained. The Halifax Herald published a story to the effect that this boat was also loaded with munitions, that fire broke out following the explosion on the Mont Blanc, and that a Halifax citizen, understood to be Captain Harrison, realized the danger which would come from another explosion still closer inshore, that he himself hacked the steel cables and turned the craft adrift in the stream, picked his way forward over the bodies of the dying and the dead, and with the aid of the sole survivor extinguished the fire.

That Mysterious Camera

Terrible though it was, the great disaster was not without its humorous incidents. A navy man on board his ship in the harbour, saw the Mont Blanc on fire and went to his cabin, secured his camera and prepared to take a picture of the burning ship. He grasped the camera firmly in his hands and pressed the lever that operates the shutter—Crash! At that instant came the explosion and the man was thrown backwards, striking his head on the deck. He was placed in his bunk and when he recovered consciousness three hours later, he swore vengeance on the coward who placed the “infernal machine” in his camera. Not until he had left his cabin and seen the wreckage about him, could he be convinced that it was not from his picture box that the shock came.

Duty First and Always.

Examples of heroism were not lacking. Jack Ronayne, a reporter for the Halifax Echo, went out to secure news of the fire as soon as it was reported and was caught in the whirling eddy of death as he approached the pier, thinking only of his duty. Of Mr. Ronayne's death the Halifax Chronicle said:

Among the dead the City may well mourn is “Jack” Ronayne, a young man of splendid promise, of sterling worth and high character. For several years he had been a member of The Chronicle and Echo staff, and had endeared himself to all his associates by his unfailing courtesy and kindness, his enthusiasm for his work, his fine ideals and his clean living. Mr. Ronayne was assigned to the waterfront for his special work, and on Thursday morning telephoned to the Echo that he was going up to get a story of a munitions ship then coming up the harbor, before he reported at

the office. After the explosion the Echo made enquiry and search for Mr. Ronayne, but to no avail. Late in the day his body was found at the Infirmary by one of his former deskmates, and in every newspaper office in the City there was genuine sorrow over the loss of this bright young member of the profession. Mr. Ronayne met his death in the willing attention to his duties that characterized his brief career. The Chronicle and Echo, along with innumerable friends, tender their sincere sympathy to his family in their sad loss. Mr. Ronayne was only in the first flush of young manhood, nevertheless his death is a distinct loss to the City as well as to the newspaper profession.

An act of supreme duty was that of the 72nd battalion of Ottawa in charge of the magazine here. When the explosion occurred the first thought of everybody was: "It will be the turn of the magazine next." Had it been detonated or fired it would have meant the end of Halifax and everybody in it. The area set on fire was on three sides of the magazine and the heat from the blazing buildings soon became intense. The thing to do was to flood the magazine, though this would take time.

Lieutenant Olmstead, the officer in charge, called for volunteers to pump in the water and stand by until the work was completed. Every man in the battery volunteered.

Not until all danger of the explosion of the magazine was over did they leave their posts to take part in the general rescue work.

At Richmond station Vincent J. Coleman, operator, was on duty and, although he seems to have realized from the first the awful danger, he remained at his post. He gave the first message of the disaster to the outside world. Just after 9 o'clock the C. G. R. operator at Truro caught the message from Coleman's key:

"Munitions ship on fire in the harbor—Good Bye." The rest was a blank. Coleman's body was found the next day with part of the face blown away. His wife was seriously injured and at last reports was still in hospital.

Heroic work was done by Arthur Beamis, a chauffeur, who, with a broken rib, drove his car with wounded all day until, collapsing, he had to be taken to the hospital and operated on. Another man, who declined to give his name to the hospital authorities, because he claimed that he had only done his "feeble best," was stunned, recovered and with half his face blown off, toiled amidst the ruins, rescuing survivors. The soldiers detailed off to handle the bodies in their terribly injured condition, in many cases fainted, but upon being revived kept at their tasks until they became more accustomed to their work.

David Hinch, Sr., boiler maker, when he reached home after the explosion, found his home entirely destroyed, it hav-

ing first collapsed and then burned to the ground. In the ruins were his wife, and three of his children: John, aged 11, his eleven-months-old daughter Catherine, and Harold, aged seventeen. Leo Hinch, sixteen years old, who was saved is a messenger boy for the Canadian Press.

David Hinch, Jr., was working at the exhibition grounds and on hastening home found his wife and child to be among the missing. Later his wife's body, cut in two, was discovered in the ruins. His infant child, Gerald, was recorded as missing. His home, 24 Richmond street, was blown down. The case of the Hinchs is only characteristic of hundreds of families.

Cora, wife of John Matheson, who is at the front with the R. C. R., is in hospital with both legs broken and a dangerous wound in the head. When the explosion occurred she left her father's home and was knocked down. When she recovered, her fur coat had been taken from her.

A beautiful story is that of little Lola Burns, eight year old daughter of John Burns, Granville street. She was saying her morning prayer with a rosary clasped in her hands when the explosion came and was found in the middle of a devastated room, glass in fragments all about her, still offering prayer, but quite uninjured.

Captain James Murray, formerly master of the C. P. R. Steamer Empress of Britain and recently added to the naval staff as officer in charge of convoys, died at his post of duty on one of the piers.

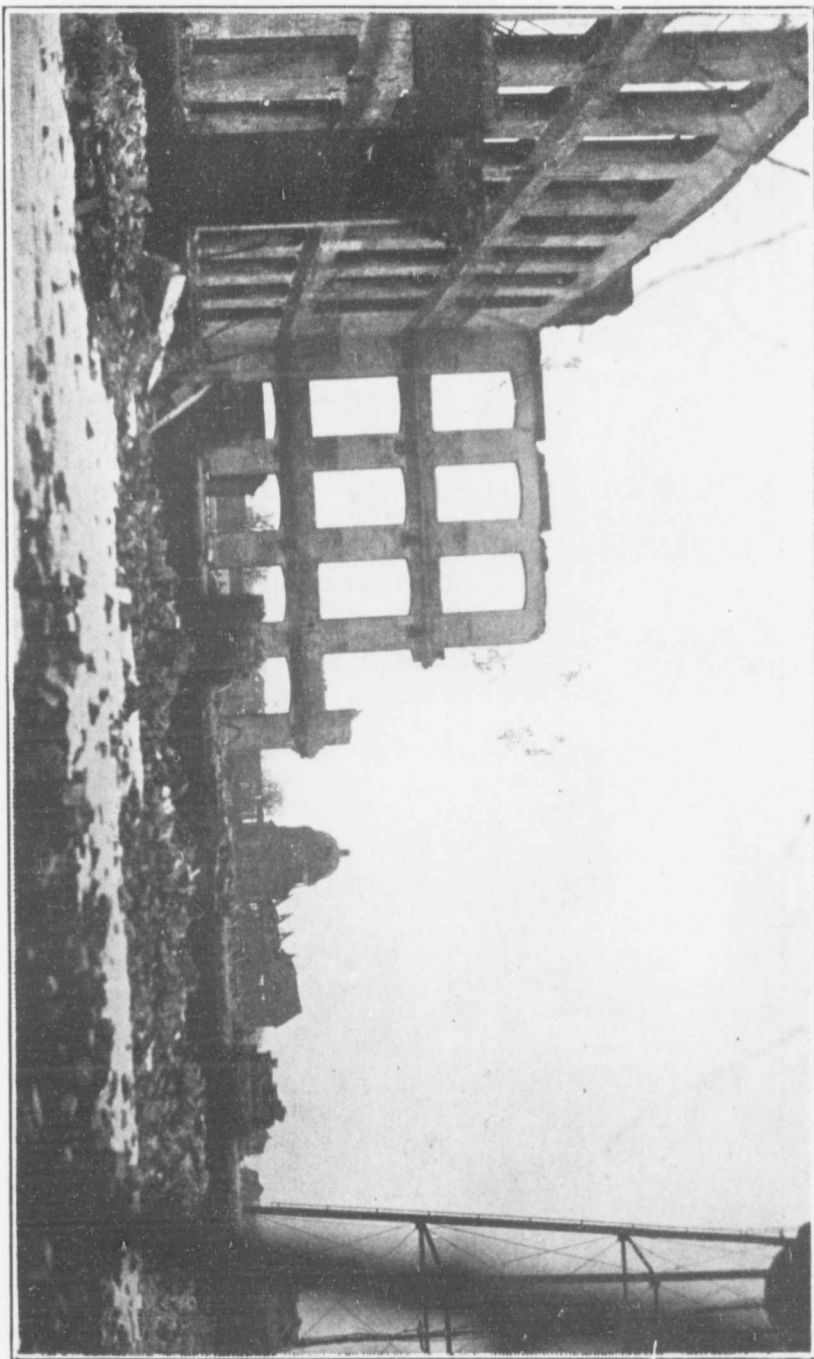
Captain Horatio H. Brannen, a veteran in the naval service, commander of the tug Stella Maris made an heroic effort to reach the Mont Blanc and tow her to a place of safety and was killed on board his vessel when the explosion came.

Some of the Best Known Dead.

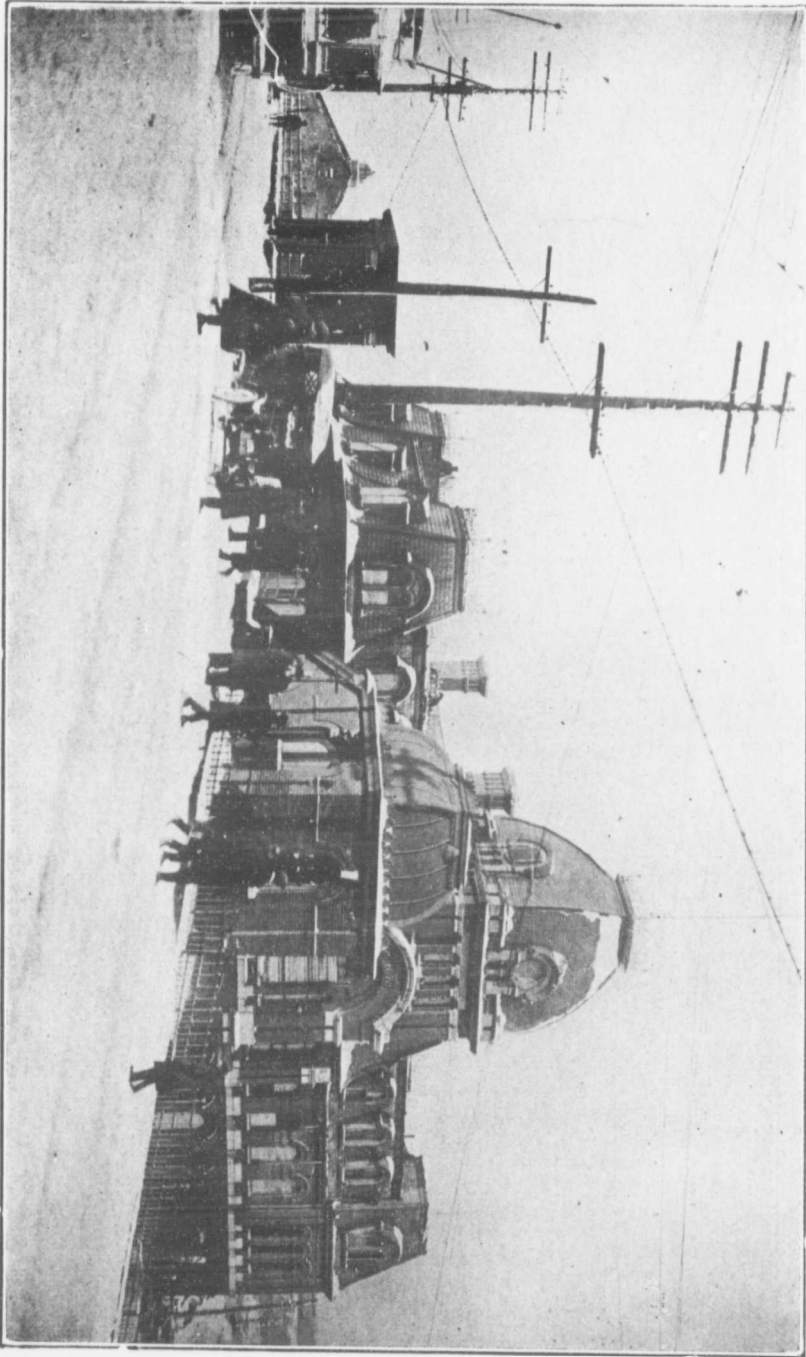
Saturday's Recorder said of the dead: "Of the killed there has been no better known citizen of the North End than Isaac Creighton, who had always been looked upon as a leader in Ward 6, and who represented the ward in the city council. He was a splendid type of a real man, sincere, faithful and true.

"William McFatridge is another of our oldest and best citizens, who had represented ward 5 in the city council. He was one of the most prominent merchants, and besides was one of the best patrons of thoroughbreds on the running turf years ago. He was a man who will be sadly missed, and whose death will be widely regretted.

"Another of our best citizens who met his death was former Controller Geo. F. Harris. No man could be held in higher esteem. He was beloved and respected by all who knew



Ruins of Cotton Factory—Dominion Textile Co., Demolished Exhibition Buildings shown in the distance.



North Street Station.—Entrance from street. The glass roof was blown in and many people injured and killed.

him. He was a most important factor in the success of the Lorne Club for years.

"LeBaron Coleman of the Dominion Express Company was particularly well known to the business community, who heard with much sympathy of his death.

"Alex. Bond was for years one of the best known milkmen, and had taken part in forward temperance movements; he was liked by all who knew him.

"John R. Ronayne, a young reporter of the Daily Echo, died in discharge of his duty. He had telephoned to his office that there was a fire on a steamer and that he would not be down for a while. He was caught in the explosion and killed.

"He was a bright young man, clever and energetic and gave great promise as a newspaper man.

"Peter Burgess, inspector of the Nova Scotia Tramways and Power Company, also died in the discharge of his duty. He was on a car at Richmond when the explosion occurred.

"Chief Condon and the members of the crew of the motor engine also gave their lives in carrying out their duties. Chief Condon had not only been prominent as a fireman and an engineer, but years ago was a well-known runner. John Spruin was a veteran of the fire department, one of the best fire fighters in the city from the old volunteer days. Assistant Chief William Brunt, Captains William Broderick and Maltus were also splendid firemen and good citizens.

"No more popular citizen has lost his life than Conrad G. Oland. He was a man of great geniality, good nature and large heart. His death has caused a great pang of sadness among his friends. His wife died a short time ago."



Auto Trucks pressed into use at funeral of unidentified dead.

CHAPTER II.

Fire, Flight and the Storm.

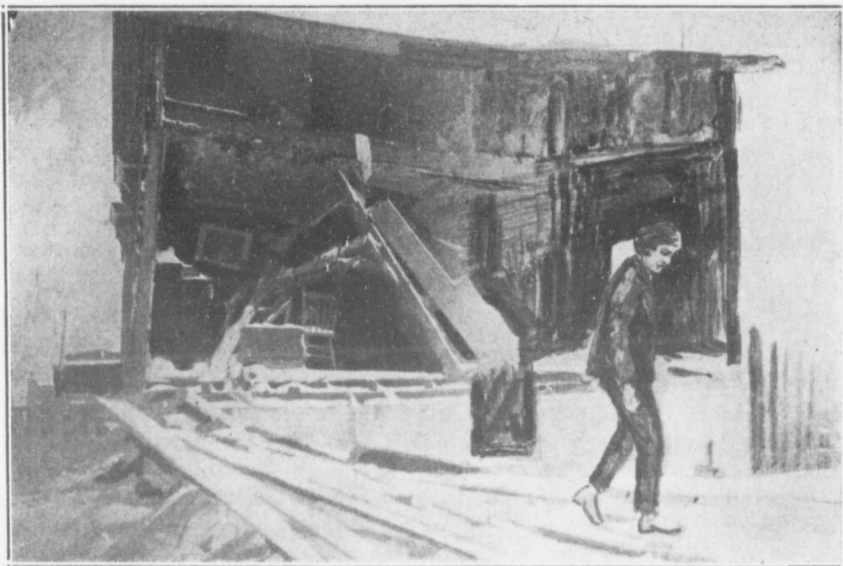
WHILE the fire fiend, springing rapidly from the ruined homes of Richmond threatened to engulf the whole city, a new and horrible danger arose. Until the soldiers, as related, so bravely undertook the flooding of the Wellington Barracks magazine, the military authorities feared a second explosion even surpassing the first and the alarm went out for the evacuation of the entire North End and business sections of the city. Moscow was no more deserted before Napoleon than were the shattered streets of Halifax when this flight had been carried out. Visitors, coming in on the first relief train from Truro, wondered almost if the catastrophe were not some divine dispensation and the entire population had been spirited away as the beginning of the end of the universe. The story of this flight cannot be better told than in the words of Frank Leonard, Nova Scotia advertising representative of the Imperial Tobacco Co. Ltd., who was through it all and whom I greeted as an old friend on reaching Halifax.

Mr. Leonard's moving story follows:

"Luckily for me," he said, "I arose earlier than usual and got away from my lodging house in the North End before 9 o'clock. Afterwards I found the place had collapsed and several were killed. I was walking down Barrington street when the crash came, and was just in front of a tobacco store in which worked a friend of mine—Frank Hanrahan, son of the chief of police. The windows were blown in and, looking in, I saw him stretched across the counter with blood spouting from a dozen wounds. Knowing something of First Aid, I ran in and bound him up as quickly as possible. Crowds by this time were running by and a few took time to snatch from the window some of the cigarettes exposed for sale though on the whole I believe there has been very little thieving. The shock seems to have touched the hearts of the most hardened. When Hanrahan was able to be moved I went out and in the streets I saw many wounded. It is a mistake to suppose there were not any seriously injured in the business district. Some men were killed at their desks—girls lay on the street corner with their life blood ebbing away. I took one of them into a ruined drug store and sought from the shattered stock to stem the tide which flowed from the failing heart.

The Quick and the Dead.

"Later on, I was to see dead bodies, scattered about on



Boy Found Searching in Ruins of Home.—His mother was killed, father and sister seriously injured, now in hospital.

every hand, legs, arms and heads lying about, but this did not have the same effect as the sight of those wounded in the streets we had so long walked so blithely without a thought of danger.

"The quivering, palpitating flesh, the warm blood spurting out, matting the loosened hair of the women, the cuts which disfigured some prominent men for life—these were sights which tried the heart far more than gazing upon the temple from which the soul had fled, no matter in what shattered form it remained.

"Right in my own office Leo Currie, standing at his desk, had his head split open with two sharp pieces of glass from the window and fell in a pool of his own blood. A piece of the other window struck the railing above the head of Miss Smith, one of our stenographers, and ricocheted over her completely, striking the floor on the other side of her with an awful crash. She was unharmed.

"Soon came the warning from military parties in automobiles for the population of the entire city to flee to the Citadel hill and southward to escape a second explosion expected if the fire reached the Wellington Barracks magazine. Now ensued a scene which baffles description and which would have been a disaster in itself if not o'ershadowed by the greatest catastrophe which lurks still beneath those smoking piles of brick and mortar in the North End.

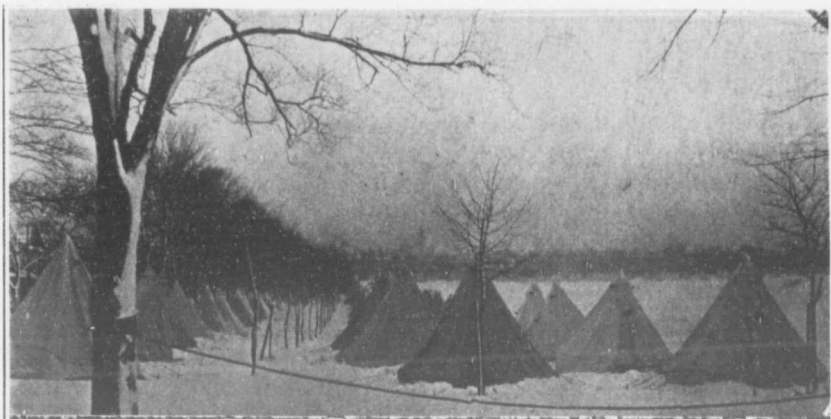
"Men, women and children in every sort of conveyance, walking, running, gasping for breath, looking back now and then over their shoulders as if to detect at any moment signs of the upheaval they had been led to expect. Imagine the feeling of suspense after the first explosion had filled the air with flying fragments and shattered every building through this section of the city and when it was known that a second and far greater shock was due at any second. Women were fleeing, clad only in their night clothes. Many were bleeding from a dozen wounds. Some from the devastated area in Richmond were stark naked and blackened; their clothes stripped from them in the mighty rushing wind which came with the blast from the Mont Blanc. Little children toddled along, dangerously near the hoofs of plunging horses. For half an hour the exodus went on and the entire business section was left deserted. Some did not check their headlong flight until they had left the city far behind and sank exhausted in the woods which skirt the city. Citadel Hill was black with the terrified thousands. Pleasant Park, to the south, was a haven of refuge. These people, as they looked to the northward to see the rolling flames which then engulfed the fallen houses of Richmond, must have felt that their own homes and their fine city with its historic buildings was entirely doomed to destruction.

In an hour, as the explosion failed to materialize, the venturesome began to trickle back. Others remained throughout the day, refusing to budge from what they believed a point of safety.

Picking Up the Dead.

"I soon joined my employer in his car and we whirled to the burning district to see of what assistance we could be. Reaching the North End station I ran down the steps and the first sight that met my eyes was two railway men, lying there in the last sleep. We used our car for the wounded and blood covered the cushions, and ran across the floor to trickle out the doors in little streams. All that day and all that night this work went on. Military ambulances were driven at break-neck speed—back and forth. The drivers must have been men of herculean strength and great staying power.

"Perhaps it was with them as it was with nearly all of us. The emergency nerved us to the task. Such prodigies of labor and valor and chivalry would seem impossible under ordinary circumstances. As the scantily clad women on the Citadel Hill shivered beneath the touch of winter, already in the air, officers stripped off their great-coats and British warmes and



Soldiers and Refugees in Tents on Common.

went quietly on, not pausing to ask for their return or to leave their address. The military stores were thrown open and a generous distribution made to those actually suffering. Discipline was relaxed for once. A soldier might have a sergeant's or an officers' coat, or an officer stripped to his shirt might be grappling with some desperate situation—forgetting all else but that he was a man and that this was a situation which required to be dealt with by real men.

"Many people were still in the streets on Thursday night, others sleeping in the park and common without protection, though the Academy of Music was thrown open as well as the Y. M. C. A., Windsor street school and other places, and these were filled with a bloody, grimy mass of humanity."

Everyone appeared glad to help, yet there were exceptions. A soldier told me of how he commandeered a baker's wagon to carry wounded to the hospitals. The driver seemed to be enjoying the excitement but making no effort to assist. "I asked him to remove the boxes from his wagon," this soldier told me—"but he informed me that he had to take his horse back to the stable. It was no time for parley. My closed fist instinctively met the point of his chin and he sprawled on the ground. His boxes followed, then with the assistance of willing hands, several of the wounded were placed in the wagon and a new driver on the seat."

A party of soldiers met a man with a very useful looking automobile. They advised him to drive to Richmond and assist as so many others were doing. "Oh, I got a new car and don't want to get it all blood," he replied. They immediately took possession of the car and left him standing in the street.



Gottingen Street looking south at corner of Bilby Street.

It is well that such cases were not many.

With the assistance of the firemen from outside points the flames were, with exception of isolated buildings, checked at Gottingen street on the western edge of Richmond, and practically burned themselves out, coming south to the Wellington Barracks. Africville was devoured.

The work of rescue went on all Thursday afternoon. A later chapter will tell of the scenes in hospitals and morgues. As night closed down many people were homeless; some far out in the fields, too dazed to find shelter. Many slept on the common—not all in the shelter of tents. Doors of many institutions, some of them mentioned above by Mr. Leonard, were thrown open and here the stricken people were cared for though many were in a terrible state of anxiety and suspense as it was days before families were re-united, even though all had escaped.

The fateful day had been fine with a moderate temperature but Friday dawned grey and sombre with promise of storm. By 10 o'clock a few flakes appeared driven before a gale and within an hour the storm had burst in all its fury upon a homeless population. Men who have been in the west say they never experienced a fiercer blizzard. The driving wind carried the snow through the open windows and heaped it high in the living rooms of hundreds of families. In certain rooms in city hall the snow was allowed to collect, in others the



Soldiers Searching for Victims.

work of relief and succor went on. Although in Richmond the work of recovery of the bodies was hampered and mutilated forms were taken out encrusted with snow and charred by fire, yet it seemed almost a gracious providence which buried from the sight of those that remained, the fearful scenes of horror.

Through the blizzard of this second day the work of searching the ruins went on; many soldiers being engaged, in addition to the civilians' committee. Several were taken from the ruins living, and this, taken as a fearful indication that others, not reached in time, were dying a horrible death by inches, spurred on the workers to fresh efforts. In one cellar was found a child, living and unhurt, with a little puppy snuggled up close, imparting life-giving warmth.

A little before noon a squad of seven men of the 63rd, under Sergeant-Major Davies, were at work searching for bodies among the ruins. In a cellar at Richmond they saw a soldier in uniform frantically digging. He called to them for assistance. They found it was Private Henneberry, a former resident of Devil's Island, who had been overseas with a draft of the 63rd, and had recently been returned home wounded. "Here was my home," said Private Henneberry, "and I am sure I heard a moan a minute ago." The soldiers listened intently and again came the faint moan of a child in pain. With desperate energy the men dug away in the still smouldering debris. Under a stove and protected by the protruding ash-pan they found little eighteen months old Olive Henneberry. The child was in a semi-conscious condition. Her mouth was slightly cut and there was a little mark on her face. When taken to Camp Hill Hospital she recovered quickly. The lads



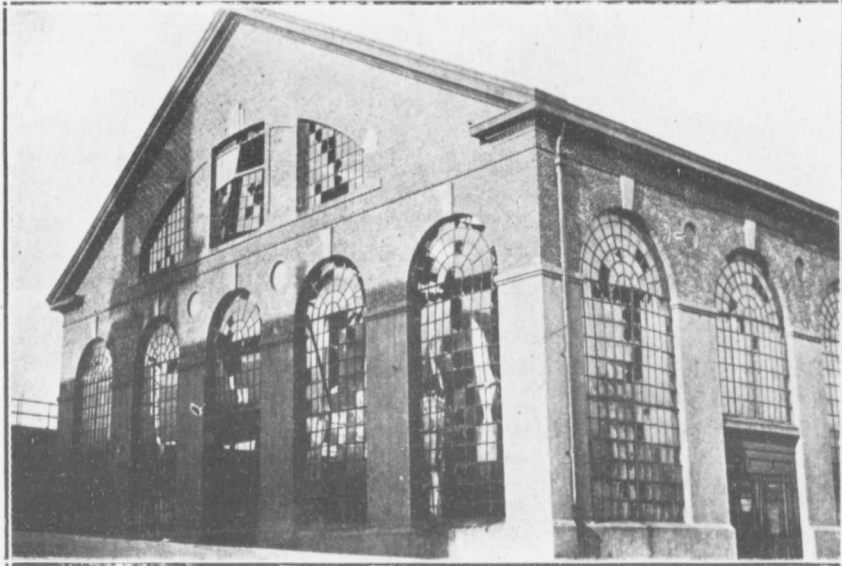
Alexander McKaye School.—Though badly damaged, it was used as a relief depot, where food was supplied to sufferers.

of the 63rd kept on with the work and found the remains of Mrs. Henneberry and her five other children.

Early in the day organization for the work of relief began to take definite shape. Special food depots were opened at four points for free distribution and all classes came with baskets and other receptacles. These depots were at the City Hall, Armouries, Alexander McKaye School and at the Cook Construction Company's warehouse.

The registration bureau, opened at City Hall, was productive of most distressing scenes. Harrowed looking men and women would lean over the counter and inquire anxiously regarding little children. A minute description of the missing one was taken—sometimes gladness came to the heart of the enquirer, for there was a record of the missing child in hospital. One did not wish to linger there very long to listen to the anguished tales of mothers and fathers. One man, as he described his child, was interrupted by a woman, herself a mourner—with the information that a seventeen-months old child, —the age of the one he was seeking—was in the Cogswell street hospital, and could only say "Papa" and "Mama." The man turned and ran with the swiftness of the deer.

Time and again when the record reported the finding of the missing one, there was the brief entry: "No clothes."



City Market.—In business section, over two miles from explosion. Part of roof, windows and doors blown in.

A call from the Deputy Mayor brought representative citizens together at the City Hall and a Citizens' Relief Committee under the competent chairmanship of Ex-Mayor R. T. McIlreith, K. C., was organized. This committee was composed of the following: R. T. McIlreith, Chairman; R. P. Bell, Secretary; Hon. R. G. Beazley, Ald. R. B. Colwell, Controller Murphy, J. L. Hetherington, W. S. Davidson.

Finance Committee—Judge Harris, Chairman; G. S. Campbell, R. H. Metzler, George Henderson.

Transportation Committee—Ald. Gillis, Chairman; W.A. Black, Controller Finlay, J. Norwood Duffus.

Food Committee—J. L. Hetherington, Chairman; H. G. Bauld, M. P. P., C. P. Wood.

Shelter Committee—Controller Murphy, Chairman; W. S. Davidson, Ald. J. E. Furness.

Clothing Committee—W. Stetson Rogers, Chairman; C. W. Ackhurst, W. E. Hebb, W. J. Clayton, E. Gaboury.

In Charge of Dead—A. S. Barnstead.

Deputy Mayor H. S. Colwell was a member of all committees, ex-officio, Mayor Martin being at that time absent from the city.

The work of systematizing the various avenues of relief work in Halifax was completed with the appointment on the Wednesday following the disaster, of permanent executive, managing the other committees.

Upon the executive was the lieutenant-governor of the province, McC. Grant, the premier of the province, Hon. Geo. H. Murray, and the mayors of Halifax and Dartmouth.

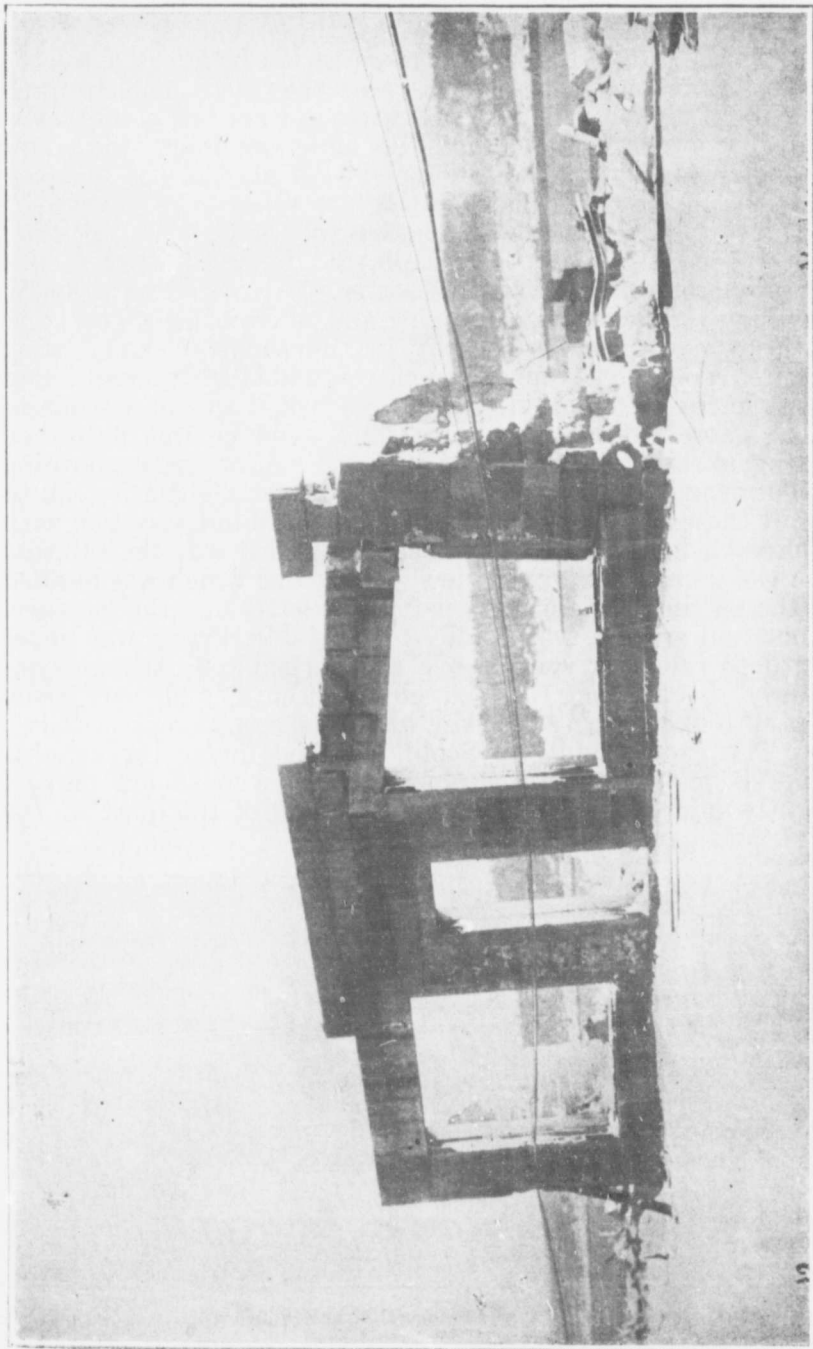
The managing committee consisted of the following gentlemen: R. T. McIlreith, K. C., chairman, member of the board of commissioners of public utilities for Nova Scotia, and an ex-mayor of the city; Ralph P. Bell, secretary; G. S. Campbell, a well known financier and chairman of the Victory Loan committee which raised \$20,000,000 in a few days; Hon. R. G. Beazley, member of the legislative council and a controller; D. MacGillivray, president of the Halifax Board of Trade and chairman of the Nova Scotia Shipbuilding Commission; H. R. Silver, importer; W. A. Black, shipper and financier; G. E. Faulkner, member of the provincial government; John F. Moors, American Red Cross; A. C. Ratshensky, vice-chairman of the Massachusetts safety committee; G. Fred. Pearson, chairman of the construction committee.

The following statement was given to the press Friday by Mr. Justice Harris, chairman of the citizen's finance committee:

"A committee of the citizens of Halifax was appointed to make a public statement on the damage to the city of Halifax and the town of Dartmouth, and after as careful a survey as possible of the damaged area the committee reported that while every building in Halifax and Dartmouth was more or less damaged the devastated area is found near the scene of the explosion and embraces chiefly districts occupied by workers and the poorer classes. Between three and four thousand such dwellings have been completely destroyed by the explosion or by fire. The number of those affected is estimated at 25,000 and while, of course, the circumstances of all or even most of them cannot be ascertained until each one's case is investigated, yet it is feared that the destitute poor in the area will number upwards of 20,000 and their actual loss and the estimated cost of their temporary maintenance will reach between twenty-five and thirty million dollars. It is to be clearly understood that in this estimate only the persons rendered destitute are to be considered and this is the portion of the population of Halifax and Dartmouth least able to bear the loss and must be immediately relieved by the generous assistance of their fellow citizens throughout Canada."

A Wizard of the Wire.

Total isolation of the stricken city from the outside world the day following the disaster, was prevented largely through the ability and perseverance of one man. This was A. C. Fraser, Maritime superintendent of the C. P. R. telegraph system. Mr. Fraser, who did not have his clothes off between



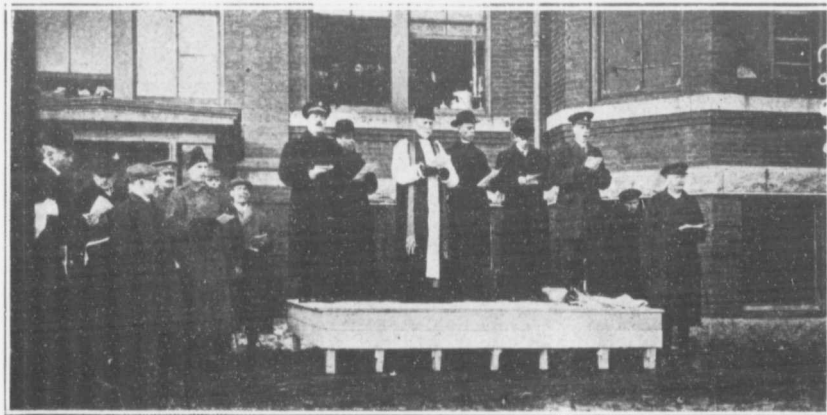
Richmond Printing Company's Building.—About thirty girls and several men, employed, were killed.

Thursday and Sunday, quickly organized a staff which was the last word in efficiency.

The Western Union was more seriously affected by the explosion and when the storm came they were helpless for a day and a night. The C. P. R. wires did not fail at any time, though for one brief period it is understood but one single strand remained to carry the message of need to the generous hearts ready for the call.

He was able to put through before 3 o'clock Saturday morning to The Daily Telegraph, St. John, the first special dispatch sent out after the disaster. His real test came in handling the messages of inquiry and offers of help and sympathy which piled up literally in thousands. Though Boy Scouts, cadets and young women responded to the request to assist in the distribution of messages, yet it was impossible to reach those not in their homes and a notice was published asking all expecting messages to call. On Saturday morning 2,500 messages had accumulated and it was a gigantic task to assort these as they were called for. A card index system with even each letter of the alphabet subdivided was the solution and the inquirer wrote on the slip his name which was handed to the girl in charge of that particular letter and the message, if one had arrived, was readily found. Mr. Fraser was never heard to raise his voice above the normal tone though constantly about among the men, girls and boys employed and he himself took his turn at the key when the situation was critical.

The cadets and Boy Scouts worked under the capable supervision of Captain R. Robinson Black who, though himself slightly injured in the head, took charge of this part of the work and gave wonderful assistance.



Protestant Service at public funeral of unidentified dead.

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Refugees Sheltered in Tents.

CHAPTER III.

Angels of Mercy.

AS the second night fell, nearly all the refugees were housed. Only isolated parties, ignorant of the accommodation provided were exposed to the elements. Late Friday night in the midst of the blizzard a St. John relief party, quickly lending their services, found a group of seventeen people isolated in the second story of a house with the stairs blown away, the second story windows out, and three children lying dead in the middle of the room. The men in the party, perhaps, might have contrived something to have enabled the party to escape, but they were dazed by the shock. They were taken to the Academy of Music which was filled to the doors with homeless families.

A railway crew, hearing moans, investigated and found close to the track a shack which had collapsed upon a party of twenty persons huddled together beneath it to secure warmth. In a few hours they must have frozen; but the railway men placed them all in a car, attached it to an engine and turned on the heat.

With the arrival of relief trains, bearing surgical equipment, food, clothing and building materials, the situation began to improve and on Saturday the people were greatly cheered by the arrival of a Boston Red Cross train, co-incident with the announcement of a grant of \$5,000,000 from the United States Congress. The Stars and Stripes renewed

afresh in those first trying days at Halifax its allegiance to the common cause of humanity. An American hospital ship, recently put in commission, arrived at Halifax soon after the explosion and at once took on board many desperate cases. The sailors landing, assisted in the work of recovering bodies, maintaining order and equipping the temporary hospitals. Order of arrival of the various units as given in a resolution adopted by the managing committee of the Halifax Relief organization follows:

"In view of the noble manner in which, in the first place, the American Red Cross appreciated the grave character of the Halifax disaster of Dec. 6, 1917, and the remarkable promptness and efficiency, in the second place, with which it despatched workers and supplies to Halifax, the executive of the Halifax relief committee, on its own behalf and on behalf of all the people of the stricken city desires to place on the records of its proceedings a grateful expression of heartfelt thanks.

"This acknowledgement is tendered first to W. Frank Parsons, director-general of American Red Cross civilian relief, Washington, who instantly set in motion the activities which, by 10 p. m. on the evening of the disaster, had despatched from Boston a special train with supplies and six expert workers on its errand of mercy to Halifax. These workers were John F. Moors, the chairman civilian relief committee of Boston, in charge, who during his stay gave most valuable assistance and advice to the committee; Miss K. MacMahon, New England directress of the case work, who is still with us and whose kindness and services can never be forgotten, Miss Marion Rowe, C. C. Carstens, William Pare and Prentice Murphy; all expert social workers, who rendered invaluable services.

"In this place it is proper to state that every possible assistance and direction was given to the outfitting and despatch of these first relief workers by Mrs. William H. Lothrop, Boston, directress-general New England division, civilian relief, American Red Cross.

"At a later date, Christian Lantz, of Salem, came to Halifax under the same auspices and continues in a most generous and whole-hearted fashion to assist and devise in the work of registration and rehabilitation.

"Following in order, and within an amazing short time of the disaster, came the Boston Red Cross hospital unit with Dr. W. E. Ladd at its head, and comprising twenty-two doctors, sixty-nine nurses and fourteen civilians. This unit came by special train with complete equipment for a 500-bed hospital.

"There next arrived the Providence hospital unit, under Major Hough. It came by special train and numbered fifty-two doctors, fifty-two nurses and three civilians.

"On about the same date there arrived a special train of supplies from the New York City American Red Cross, Atlantic division, E. Russell, who is still in Halifax, coming in charge, and with whom were four trained workers. Dr. E. A. Godman, an eminent specialist of Boston, with ten doctors, four nurses and nine civilians, arrived about the same time and attached themselves to the American Red Cross.

"It is not inappropriate that in this record should be also gratefully mentioned that the state of Maine, that portion of the great republic territorially nearest to us, promptly sent to the relief of the Halifax sufferers a hospital unit under Major C. M. Elliott, who with twelve doctors, thirteen nurses and eleven civilians, came by special train in the early days of the disaster."



Entrance to New Camp Hill Hospital, which was filled to the doors with hundreds of injured.
Copyrighted in Canada 1917

A Halifax expert is now at work compiling an official record of the relief work and it would be impossible here to attempt to give the dates of arrivals of various trains from all parts of Nova Scotia. One train left Truro almost immediately after the explosion which was heard at that point, carrying doctors, nurses and firemen. Another was dispatched in the afternoon with food and clothing. I was told a train came in via the D. A. R. arriving at 4.30 Thursday afternoon. In my personal story I tell of the first St. John party and their trip. This party was followed the next day by forty commercial travellers who took off their coats and went to work with a will. Dr. F. H. Neve, of St. John, who followed later, established a system of district dressing stations which enabled those with minor injuries to obtain treatment without going to the already crowded hospitals.

Dr. A. E. Macaulay, Dr. F. T. Dunlop and Dr. J. H. Allingham, Dr. W. F. Roberts and Drs. A. P. Crocket and I. N. W. Baker, the two latter eye specialists, all gave their services at different times.

Horror Lingers in the Hospitals.

It was in the hospitals that the horror lingered. Drs. White, Addy, Thomas and Hedden of St. John, who arrived

Friday, were operating all day Saturday. There were dozens of amputation cases with legs and arms crushed beyond repair. When Dr. Hedden came to the Halifax Hotel to dinner Saturday his shirt sleeves were tinged with blood of humans which had seeped through his operating outfit. The night of the disaster the new Camp Hill Military Hospital, pressed into service before completion, was a veritable shambles—rivers of blood would best express it. The precious life fluid was dripping on the steps. There were horrible sights here. One young woman lies in agony, an attenuated form, both legs burned off close to the body. A soldier was brought here. His skin had gone with his clothes, but he was breathing and living and joking.

"Has anyone here a cigarette," he whispered, as a St. John party stood waiting near, and as Carson Flood, of St. John, placed a cigarette between his blackened lips, a smile came over his face and he settled back happy, quite determined to live. No wonder the Canadians saved the line at Ypres.

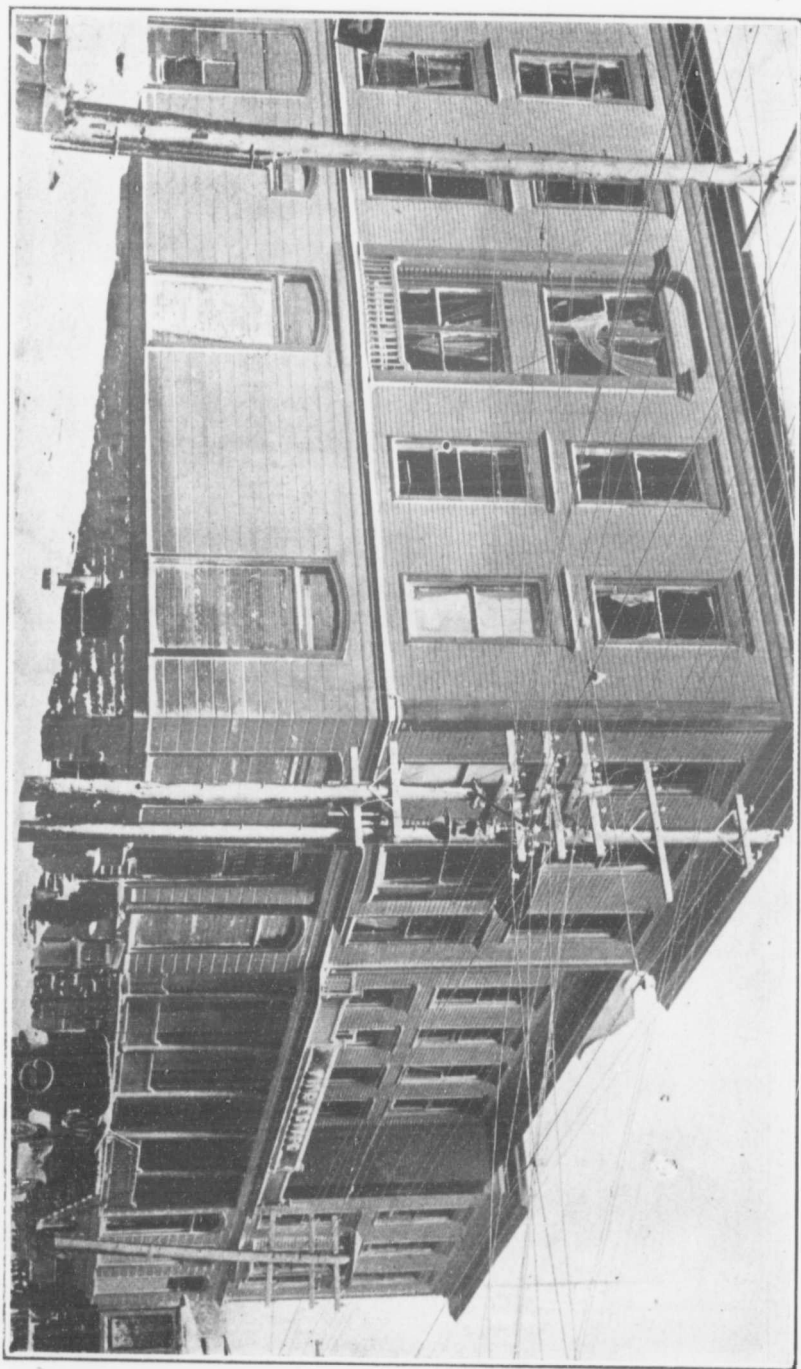
One woman suckled a tiny babe, with both eyes torn from their sockets, the blood still finding its way in a thin, trickling stream between the breasts which gave her offspring life.

Dr. Hedden told me the reports of desperate eye injuries were in no way exaggerated. One New Glasgow doctor, operating Saturday afternoon, alone removed twenty-five injured eyes. A Sydney doctor took eleven sightless optics from their sockets.

Sir Frederick Fraser, principal of the Halifax School for the Blind, later estimated there were 500 eye injuries and that 200 would be totally blind, asking for a special fund of \$500,000 for the rehabilitation of these unfortunates.

The greatest need of the doctors in the early hours was for surgical equipment. Operations were performed with bare hands and there was no sterilization of instruments. Long cuts were sewed up with a needle and ordinary cotton thread. Much draining became necessary, particularly with the glass wounds, but to the credit of the doctors and nurses it can be said there was no serious outbreak of gangrene. V. A. D. workers as well as trained nurses came from different places and worked heroically throughout.

Many of the patients came to the hospitals horribly blackened. It seemed to some of the voluntary workers an endless job to scrub them white again. Little children were listed as "Colored" only to find later that they were really Caucasians. One of the duties of the nurses was to remove daily from some patients many pieces of glass. One doctor—a man of experience too—was quite overcome when a woman of education



King Edward Hotel—opposite North Street Station. An employee in dining room was killed by flying glass.



Chebucto Road Mortuary—Showing one room. Bodies awaiting identification and burial.

and culture came running up to him in the hospital and cried out in a beseeching tone: "For God's sake, Doctor, save my sight, save my sight." Her eyes were closed with the inflammation which had followed terrible glass wounds, and when he told her there was no hope she gave a cry which left him fainting and nerveless.

There were many confinement cases to be treated—new citizens of Halifax prematurely opening their eyes upon a world gone awry.

*Gruesome Scenes at
the Morgues.*

The morgues—there were two, Snow's mortuary chambers and Chebucto Road school—were not pleasant places to visit.

At the Chebucto road school there were at first hundreds of bodies in the basement. They laid in rows about the walls, ticketed and covered. It seemed to me as I stood there that I would never see a blanket-covered form again without thinking of those scenes in that dimly-lighted cellar.

Beneath the blankets many bodies were naked—all were blackened. One figure reposed with mighty arms outstretched and head thrown back as if in supplication against the horror visited on the unsuspecting people. A woman gazed at the face and seemed uncertain of recognition. Perhaps the shock had dazed her, perhaps she was but a friend or distant relative and had not the gift of love which might divine behind the rigid features the soul which had fled.

On one rude bench was a form which ended suddenly at the waist with the blanket falling in folds in horrible drapery. A pair of thin long legs and low shoes—not much more—bespoke the school girl of the "awkward age," and brought my heart to my throat with a gulp as the thought came of the little girl at home in St. John. Some piles beneath the covering, were pitifully small. The shoes and what they contained—some child's feet—offered the only means of identification in one case.

At the entrance a sled drew up for its desolate load. The following colloquy ensued:

"What have you there?" asked the soldier, checking.

"Nos. 12, 13, 14, 15, 16 and 17," came the reply from the undertaker's assistant.

There were but two piles on the sled and the soldier asked for a check.

"Here is No. 12, said the assistant, "and here," indicating the other pile, "is 13, 14, 15."



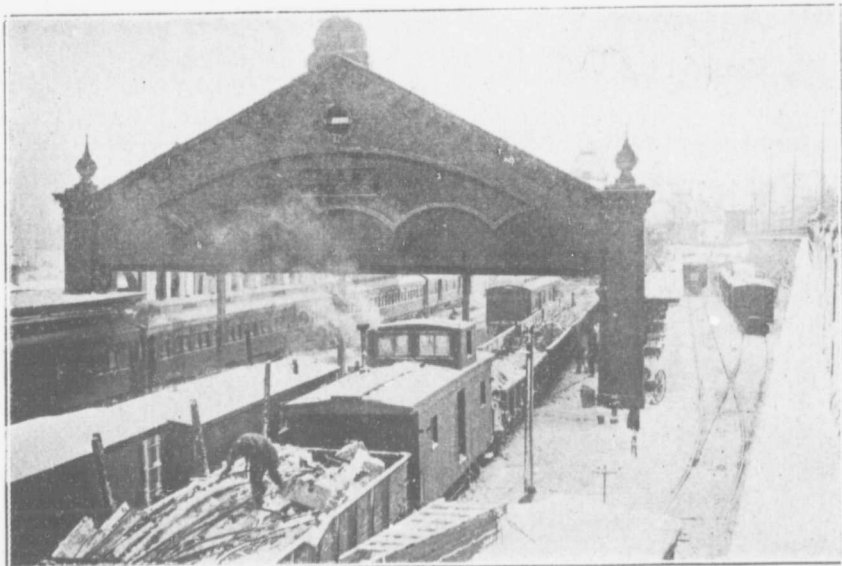
Cox Bros.' Studio.—Showing destruction wrought by explosion.

"And where," asked the soldier, "is 16 and 17?"

"In that box," was the reply, as the assistant pointed to an ordinary sized cake box. "They are the members of the Thomas family."

Three rooms were thrown open in Snow's mortuary chambers and here the same horrible sights were repeated. The bodies came in baskets, some horribly mutilated. One form was there with the head lying beside it; from another the whole side of the cheek and one eye were gone. A baby's body reposed in a corner, another was dead at the breast of its naked mother from whom life had also departed. In the upstairs room a school bag was laid carefully by one covered form, mute evidence that here was a child of school age and offering the only means of identification.

One of the first bodies brought here was that of ex-Controller Harris. On the second day the bodies still littered the floors of the downstairs rooms and fresh parties arriving with further corpses, as they entered, stepped gingerly over the bodies already laid out. Washing the bodies proved a terrible task and volunteers who attempted it often desisted after five minutes work and went hurriedly out into the open air. As the bodies were identified they were cofined and piled out on the sidewalk, this gruesome array extending far down the sidewalk almost to City Hall.



North Street Station.—View from rear, showing cars loaded with debris.

CHAPTER IV.

The Human Element.

SEVERAL days elapsed before the world grasped the real significance of the horror. Not until survivors had themselves carried out the terrible story—told more impressively by their blanched faces, trembling limbs and dazed senses than in mere words did those whose loved ones still remain safe in sheltered homes awake to a realization of what the catastrophe had meant in the sum of human agony and suffering. Prompt measures had been taken to deal with the material needs of the homeless and the medical wants of the injured, and to begin the work of repair and re-construction with generous money gifts. But back of all this were broken hearts and crushed lives which could not even be touched by the outpouring of practical sympathy and the work of relief. The call went out for sociological workers and many of these came in, not only to bind wounds but to pour oil upon the troubled spirit and bid the stricken ones to look up in the name of a Higher Power and begin life anew. The most effective agency, however, in preventing a breakdown of the morale of the whole population was the herculean efforts of civic leaders and members of the relief committees whose

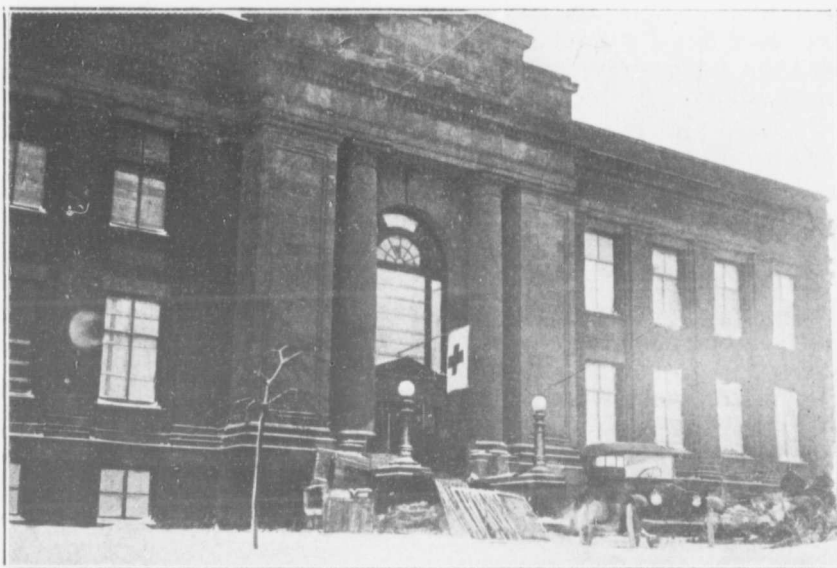


Bodies Taken from Ruins of Fire Area.

names are given elsewhere. These men on duty day and night for the greater part of the first week succeeded in infusing new life into the people and were ably seconded by the Halifax press which, recovering quickly from the disaster, gave invaluable assistance not only as a medium for dissemination of necessary information but editorially inspiring the people.

As has been said men and women, working under pressure, performed prodigies impossible of accomplishment under ordinary circumstances and it was some days before the breaking point came. By Monday some of the men who had been working almost ceaselessly from the first, collapsed at their work or took on every appearance of nervous wrecks. This was the case, not only with the Halifax men, but with visitors who had gone in at the first. Fortunately others came to take their places and there was no interruption in the salvaging of the noble city and its stricken people. As soon as possible after the tragedy, relief trains carried away many families—or the remains of families—who had friends elsewhere to give them a welcome or who were going perhaps to make a new start. One train, leaving Halifax Saturday evening, was crowded with refugees and while it waited in the yard at the South Terminals many of the cars were without light and heat.

An hour spent among these people, listening to the awful stories which fell from their lips was enough to render one immune for the tortures of Dante's or any other inferno. Be-



Nova Scotia Technical College.—Converted into Central Medical Supply Depot for twenty-five hospitals and thirteen dressing stations.

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fore the train started the supply of water ran out and suffering was intense.

Such a small thing as a nursing bottle stood between one baby and complete happiness. The mother, with both hands bound up, carefully guarded milk to last the journey in a battered tin cup but the most urgent persuasion failed to induce the little one to partake. What did the little mother do but insert the rubber nipple between the child's gums and pour gently in, drop by drop from the cup, the life-sustaining fluid. She had other children too, and as she attended the child she gossiped of the catastrophe. Their home was shattered to pieces, the furniture thrown out in the yard with the table cloth wrapped securely about a post. The baby had been upstairs or it would have been killed, the mother said; her own wounds came from an unconscious effort to save her face from flying glass.

Across the aisle a man whose nervous voice rose to a thin quiver now and then, belying his eyes which, befitting his calling as a horse trader, could never be anything but merry, explained over and over again that he had searched all day for his two children but had found no trace. "If I could only find them," he repeated over and over again. "If I could only find them."

A Truro citizen had one eye bandaged. He had chosen the fatal day for a business visit and, walking along the street, was cut both above and below the eye with flying glass. The piece above tore his eye lid and he feared the worst.

Here and there some women sat in absolute silence, staring stonily ahead with a despairing gaze. No need to ask what had happened to these. Their faces told the story of a lost child somewhere beneath the smoking ruins or a husband, perhaps, blown to atoms on the water front.

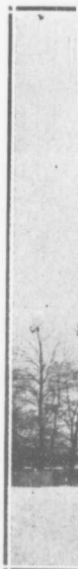
One woman told of a neighbor, Mrs. Louis Marr, whose house was shattered, and who ran out, clasping what she believed to be one of her own children. Waiting to find the other, she found to her horror, that she was guarding a strange baby blown from somewhere near by the awful shock. Her husband at first listed as killed, was found later practically unhurt, but the children have not been seen.

*Struck by Piece
of Ship.*

J. Duggan, formerly of Rockland (Me.) was going through to St. John with his wife. They had a truly thrilling tale. Living in Stairs street, half a mile from the water front, they, with two others, were the only survivors out of a house-full of eleven. Spending the night before at a party, Mr. Duggan did not go to his work in the dockyard, as usual, and was in bed when the first shock came. He sprang from his bed in a second and as the window blew in turned again to stretch out protecting arms to his wife. As he gathered her close to him the roof fell through, injuring them both. Mr. Duggan found that a piece of a ship, possibly the Mont Blanc, which exploded, had come through the roof and he carries this as a terrible souvenir. He believes it struck him in the back. His wife was badly cut on the thigh as she lay in his arms. They left his mother in a hospital, badly injured, and are proceeding to Maine.

William Constable, formerly of St. John and Moncton, was working in the dockyard. He was on a flat car and all he can remember is that he suddenly found himself under it. There was no sign of his mates. His wife who escaped with a scratched nose, and two scared looking children completed this party.

The Dreskins, of St. John, were more fortunate. Alex. Dresken, of 553-555 Main street, came from St. John to learn of the fate of mother, sisters and brother. They lived at the corner of Wilton and Robie streets and while their house was



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Cotton Factory of Dominion Textile Co.

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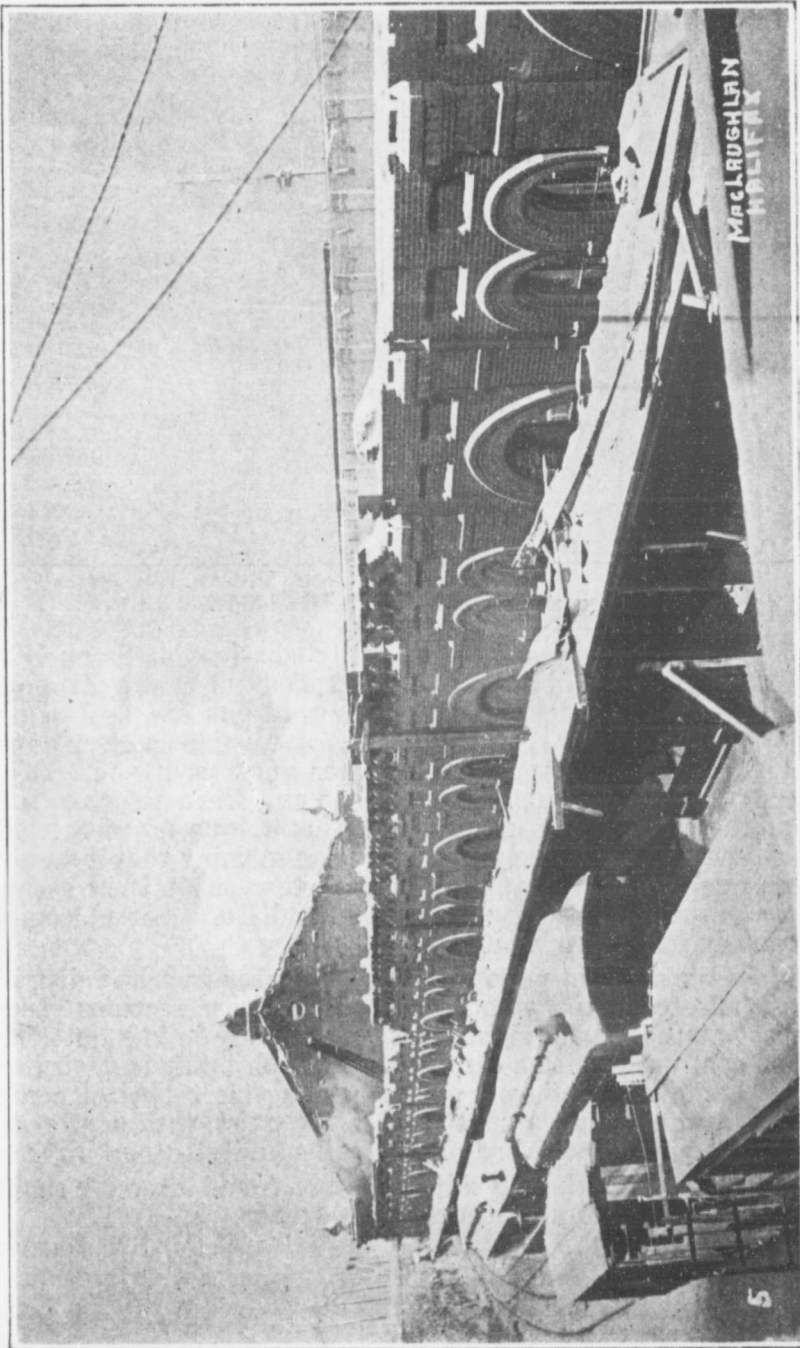
not totally destroyed it was badly shattered. Samuel F. Dreskin, the son, at the first shock called out that a Zeppelin raid was on and pulled his mother toward him just as a heavy door fell against her. One sister, Dora, was blown clear down a flight of twenty steps and had her knees badly cut. The family then took refuge in the cellar and when they realized that the damage was general and that it was no mere raid, they ventured forth only to receive the warning that a second explosion was likely to follow. They then made their escape in an automobile, the two girls, Eva and Dora, both bleeding copiously from their wounds.

As the stricken population fled in terror from the district most affected, those who met them in other sections stood aghast at the fearful sight. One man living in the outskirts when confronted with a car of passengers dripping in their own gore, hesitated a moment before opening his beautiful home, but as a woman appeared, naked to the waist, with one breast severed as if by the sword of a Hun, he hesitated no longer.

The piano in the Dreskin home was found after the shock blown upstairs through the shattered floor.

Aid From the Blind.

Edward Davis, a West St. John lad, studying at the Hali-



North Street Station.—Exterior view, showing roof blown off.

fax School for the Blind, told a graphic story. At this institution the doors were wrenched from their hinges and windows blown in, but no one seriously hurt. Miss Fraser, a teacher, sustained a severe cut in the neck. The Davis lad said he was practicing music at the time, and the piano first gave a slight lurch towards him. He pushed it back, wondering what had caused it to move, when the second gigantic crash came and this time the piano dealt him a mighty blow and sent him hurtling across the room. His story of the treatment rendered the sufferers as they came to the school was a touching one. Trained to their task the blind children marshaled to attend the dead and dying and the sensitive hands of the sightless gently closed the eyes which would see no more as the cessation of the heart beats told the waiting watchers that life was extinct.

I talked with Edward Lee, son of T. C. Lee, of St. John, cadet at the Halifax Naval College, who was also on this train. He was only slightly injured. With him was George C. Marler, a former Rothesay C. S. boy, son of W. M. Marler, Montreal, who also got away. Cadet Miles, son of W. R. Miles, of St. John, has a gash in his neck and a twisted wrist, but neither is serious. Cadet Lee assisted Miles to the ambulance and went to the hospital. Cadet Richardson, son of Bishop Richardson, was slightly injured. The boys say there was no loss of life at the naval college. Also on the train was A. D. Wood, Moncton, student at the Dental College, Dalhousie, who was also returning. This building, he told me, was quite badly damaged but there was no loss of life. Miss Doris McCully, a Moncton girl, dietician at the naval college was slightly injured, but was soon able to go home. Misses Naomi and Esther Stevens were returning in care of George Harriup. Miss Naomi was attending the Halifax Ladies' College, and said the building was badly wrecked.

Fred Watson, of Marsh street, St. John, was returning, after finding his sister, Mrs. Mildred Moore, Bell street, had escaped with her family, though their home was badly shattered.

Miss Dorothy Fraser, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. W. J. Fraser, St. John, also returned home soon after the tragedy and told a graphic story of scenes following the disaster. The college building was not seriously damaged, and, escaping without injury, Miss Fraser, accompanied by a friend was able to make a survey of the city the afternoon of the explosion.

As an illustration of how long it took to care for even the most obvious cases, so many were there, Miss Fraser mentioned one case she saw that afternoon. On the curbstone of the street she found a tiny girl, who could not have been more

than four years old, covered with blood which still oozed from wounds in her face. In her arms the little tot clutched the still form of a baby, apparently dead. A passing relief automobile was hailed and the children rushed off to a hospital.

One of the workers told her of finding a man pinned beneath a fallen stove, with his arm broken and his leg injured. "I'm all right," the man gasped, "go and look after some one who needs help more." His instructions were disregarded and he was taken to a temporary hospital.

In one case which came to her notice an eight-year-old girl was playing on a sofa with the baby of the family when the house was wrecked and they dropped from the second floor to the basement. When they were found on Friday morning, the little girl, although suffering from a broken arm, had huddled the baby into a corner of the wrecked sofa, protected it with the warmth of her own body, pulled some cushions around them and saved both lives. The mother was found alive but injured, in another part of the house; the father is missing.

A twelve year old girl was found in the streets badly cut and taken to their home by some friends of Miss Fraser's. After first aid treatment she was taken to look for her own home. Through the wrecked district they passed until they came to a blackened heap of ruins. "This was my home," the child said. No trace of any member of the family could be found.

Dropping into the Academy of Music towards evening, the building was found filled with the homeless to whom the doors had been thrown open. Scarcely a person there but had lost members of their family or who still were torn by anxiety regarding them. A little boy of four years was all alone and kind hands prepared a place for him to sleep. "How can I sleep when I don't know where my mamma and daddy are?" was his pathetic plea.

*From the Mouths
of Little Ones.*

These childish sayings were most affecting. At a relief station a little boy was given a pair of mittens. His first comment was "They fit me pretty well, don't they, mama?" Then a moment later the little face saddened and he lisped out; "Oh, I fordot, I haven't any mama any more."

On a train to St. John a little lad accompanied by elders had his head bandaged and seemed perfectly willing to talk

of his narrow escape. "One good thing about it," was his comment, "my mamma and daddy are safe." A sorrowful shake of the head behind the child's back conveyed to the questioner the news that the little lad was in ignorance of the real fate of his parents.

Equally distressing was the fate of the young soldier, whom I saw on the train going to Halifax, crying over a snapshot of a fair, young girl. It was the photograph of his sweetheart taken but two weeks before when love had shone from the eyes which would never see again—for she was blind and in hospital.

Another story vouched for is that of an injured woman on the first train out to Truro. She held to her breast what, in her dazed condition, she believed to be her living babe, but when she was preparing to leave the train, discovered her offspring dead with a part of the head blown away.

Such tales have outstanding points of grief that lacerate afresh in the telling. The poor young sailor, himself but 23, who found the headless, burned body of his young wife of 22 in the ruins of their little home and later discovered the severed head of the one he loved so dearly, somehow appeals even though the heart seems dead within from accumulated horrors. Or the poor soldier whose wife and two little ones are missing and who says in a woe-deadened tone, "I am all right, I've got to where I can eat now, but I can't yet sleep. I don't mean to be selfish, I know that others have just as much trouble and more, but after all this is my own family and I can't rest for thinking of it." No one who has heard these stories direct from the sufferers can ever forget or ever get out of touch with humankind again.

Wonderful Escapes.

Among other wonderful escapes is that of a woman living on Gottingen Street, who with her baby in her arms, was blown out into the yard, yet sustained only slight injuries. The child was badly cut about the head and face. Through the city and out to Point Pleasant Park, clothed only in her silk pyjamas, she ran with her child in her arms, in terror of another explosion. Another woman from the same house ran through the streets with an apron tied over her night robe.

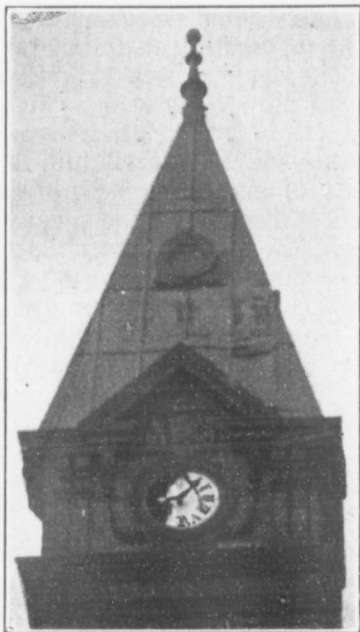
CHAPTER V.

Surveying Ruins.

AFTER surveying the whole city two days after the disaster I prepared the following summary, including a description of the ruined area:

The business section from North Street Station south is not irreparably damaged nor is the damage confined to the mere breaking of windows,

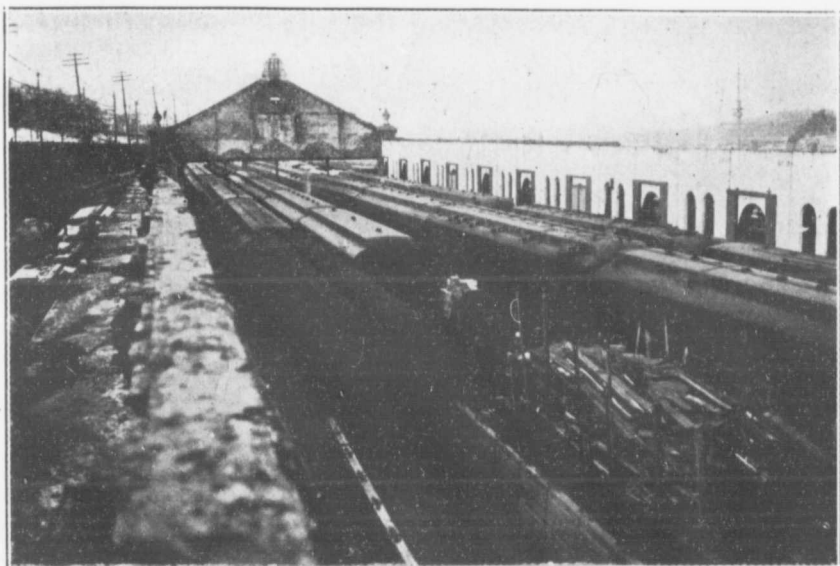
The doors of the New Casino were blown in and much interior damage caused, and the interior of many fine stores totally wrecked. Drug store supplies were pretty well broken up. The city hall itself is something of a wreck. The face of the clock, though this building is over two miles from the scene of the explosion, is blown in and the hands register the hour and minute at which the horror fell upon the city.



City Hall Clock—stopped at 9:06

Doors downstairs are wrenched off or hanging from one hinge. While the relief committees were carrying on their great work in some of the rooms, melting snow was heaped high in others. The public library at one end upstairs was open to the elements with the snow drifting through on the well-read volumes.

On the hill Moir's great factory seemed to have escaped lightly and the sprinkler tank had not fallen as reported. In lower Water street and Hollis streets the damage was not so great as first believed. Many firms will soon be able to use their stores and warehouses here. Going up Barrington street no building escaped the loss of glass, many are badly wrecked. The Maritime Merchant plant is badly damaged. Clayton's big clothing factory presents a picturesque appearance with every window gone. The city market, farther up the hill, is in much the same condition. A big poultry show was in progress here at the time of the explosion and the birds were still



North Street Station.—Interior view. The new South End Terminals were used until wreckage of this station was removed.

in the wrecked building, making a noise which sounded much like a long-delayed supper. There will be some frozen combs here too. It is reported the entire exhibit has been looked after by E. S. Tracy, a local fancier, and that he is returning all the birds to their owners. The roof of St. Patrick's church is caved in on one side of the ridge-pole, and there is great damage in the interior. Looking across to the C. G. R. elevator it is seen this structure had a narrow squeak. Pretty well up on the northern end the whole wall between two floors is missing, and the remainder of the way up has buckled out.

Coming to the North Street Station, so well known to the travelling public, there is a sad scene of wreckage. The iron girders over the gates to the train-shed fell, pinning down Le-Baron Coleman, a former St. John man. On the roof of the train-shed was working Benjamin Hartlin, a carpenter. He fell through to the floor with the wreckage but was uninjured. The interior of the building is shattered throughout with the stands and ticket office overturned in the middle of the floor. The King Edward Hotel is a total wreck and is unoccupied though the walls are standing. The same can be said of the Revere on the opposite corner.

Now we come to the ruins. A telephone pole, snapped off short below the cross-trees, and a shattered street car still



Gottingen Street.—St. Joseph's Convent and St. Joseph's Church on left.

standing on the track as when the crash came, mark the dividing line between the ruined area and what is left of the town. Barrington street becomes Campbell road at this point and to the left is a grassy mound beneath which, on Thursday morning last, lurked potential death for such citizens of Halifax as escaped the terrible explosion of fuel oil, T. N. T. and benzine on board the Mont Blanc. This was the Wellington Barracks and its prompt flooding saved further disaster. The barracks itself is a badly scarred building. Men were injured in all parts of it on Thursday. The walls are standing with the front a jagged edge. From this on as far back as the eye can reach over the hill there is not a building standing.

Richmond Area is Swept Clean.

To enumerate the destroyed buildings of this area would mean copying the Halifax street directory. Clear up through Richmond and Africville the whole is a smoking snow-covered waste. The fire was burning as I saw it yesterday afternoon (December 8) and a soldier patiently played the hose on the ruins of one building while a working party sought bodies in another across the street. By the side of the roadway unguarded, attracting little attention, beneath bright colored calico, was a form with stumps of arms and legs. Farther along two soldiers came toward a waiting conveyance with a pile of charred bones in a blanket and on top a baby's body—almost untouched by fire. One of the party struck his toe against an object and thought at first it was a stone but, looking down he discovered it was a human heart—frozen hard now, three days before pulsing the warm spurting blood through the arteries of some poor mortal.

Going down towards the railway tracks and water front



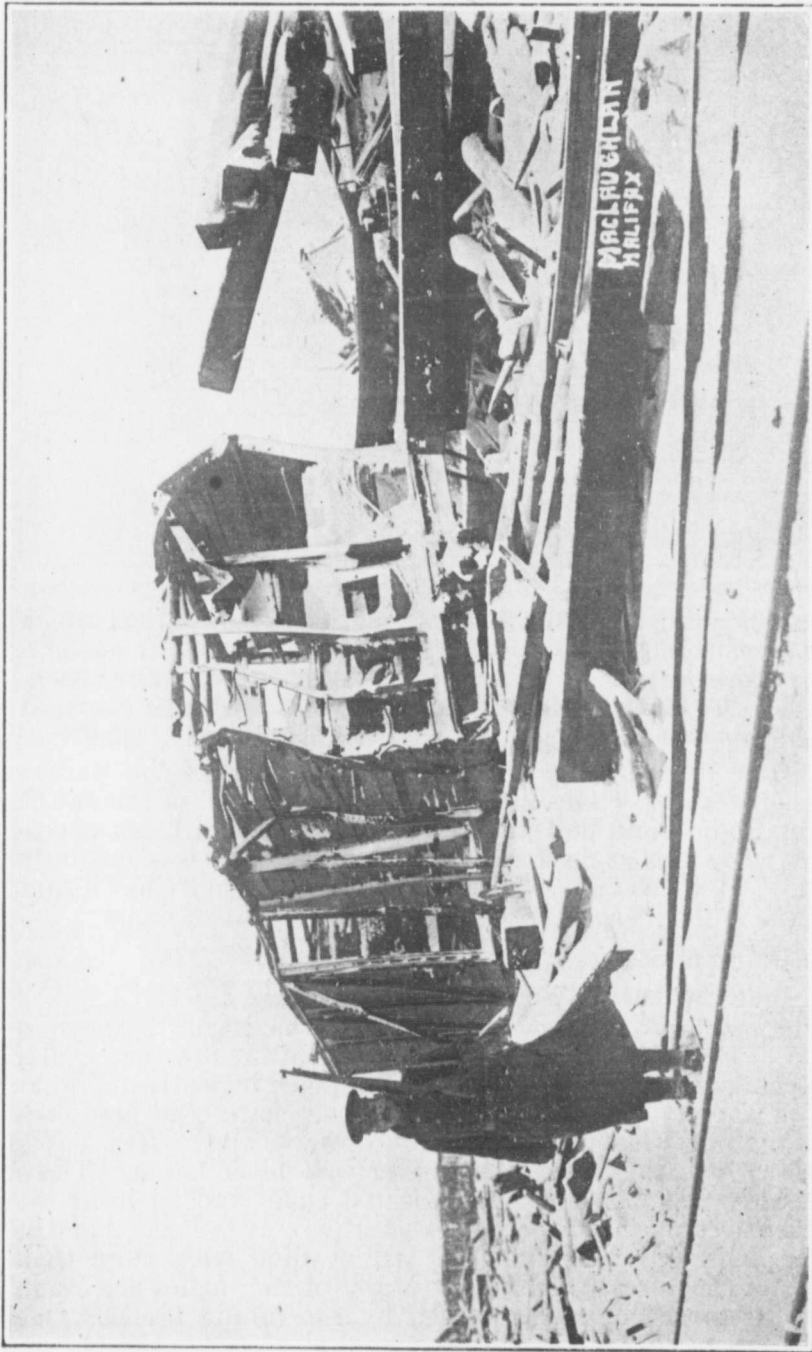
Imperial Oil Company Tank Wagon.—Dead horses in foreground. Tank blown twenty feet.

I myself made a fearful find. Lying loosely on a deal which had come from the face of pier No. 6 were the five fingers of a man—torn rudely across the knuckles and lying palm downwards. A powerful hand it was, that of a veritable giant—a mighty man of valor perhaps, sailor, soldier, fireman, what-not!

Here lie the ruins of the "Patricia," pride of the Halifax fire department. This had responded to the call of fire on the Mont Blanc—and had just reached the scene to begin operations when the explosion came and every man was instantly killed. Here also died Chief Condon and Deputy Chief Brunt rushing to the scene of action without a thought of danger.

Like Group of Statuary.

Like the work of a master sculptor is a group in Campbell road, just above this point. Turning the corner a splendid team of horses on an oil tank were dashed high in the air and one came down with its proud head doubled beneath and broken off short. The other lay across its mate, the hind legs straight out with the cart upside down. Thirty feet across the way was the tank. The driver was never found. These are the sights which will be repeated again and again as the work of recovering the bodies goes on. It seemed that the fringe had only been touched last evening with more than 1,000 bodies already counted. Many of the bodies are found close in to the chimney, buried by the falling bricks. One



Wreckage of Cars in Freight Yard.



Ruins of old Acadia Sugar Refinery on right.

form taken out was recognized as that of an old woman, merely by her grey hair.

Going down to the docks one passes hundreds of C. G. R. box cars riddled beyond repair. Some are turned topsy-turvy, others blown from their trucks. One, lifted clear of the trucks, was blown across the harbor and is visible above the water, near the Dartmouth shore.

Three Piers in Ruins.

Pier 6 is a heap of timbers like a brow of logs rolled down criss-cross from the top. Piers 8 and 9, mostly used for loading lumber and not regarded as so important as those lower down, are also in ruins. On pier 9 it is reported sixty-eight men were working and only one was saved, he having been blown many feet in the air and coming down in the harbor, later drifting ashore to safety. The dockyard is a total wreck and one steamer in course of repair is shattered. S. M. Brookfield, president of the drydock company, is authority for the statement that out of 246 men on the roll only 120 have been accounted for at time of writing.

The old Acadia Sugar Refineries' plant is a heap of ruins—not a very big heap at that, as most of it seems to have been carried away. As many as sixty-two lost their lives here. A large warehouse, rented by Richard O'Leary of Richibucto, N. B., was, with its contents, swept out of existence entirely. Two of Mr. O'Leary's men were killed and one wounded.

Just below lay the H. C. M. S. Niobe, now used as a training ship. Reports of loss of life here vary widely. The men were at morning prayer. The deckhouse was blown off, one funnel carried away entirely, and the others scalloped irregular-

ly around the top. A sailor who was alongside in a boat with four others and was overturned into the harbor, all escaping with their lives, told me half the men were killed, but the official list gives ten or twelve names and reports fifteen missing. One man died here with a bolt driven through his forehead, pinning him to the deck. The drydock is a wreck.

Loss to Shipping.

Altogether, besides the Mont Blanc and Imo, seven steamers were destroyed or badly damaged. They were: Curacua, Colonne, Middleham Castle, Raguse, Stella Maris, Hilford and Picton.

A fragment of the side of the Mont Blanc lies on the shore near the Richmond pier. The Imo is beached on the Dartmouth side of the stream. The Curacua, which was at Richmond pier and which drifted across the Narrows after the explosion, is beached inside Bedford basin. Her foremost mast has gone. The Colonne, which was also at the Richmond pier, is a torn and twisted hull. The funnels of the Middleham Castle are gone and her superstructure is badly battered. The Picton has been sunk in the eastern passage after suffering from three fires in her deck cargo.

The Raguse, a new steamer, was moored at the Acadia Sugar Refinery pier. She received the full force of the explosion and there are only a few remnants of her left. The Stella Maris, the tug boat, appears to have been lifted clean out of the water, ripped to pieces and blown some distance, because parts of her were found mixed up with those of the Raguse.

The Hilford is on top of one of the piers, having been partly blown and partly carried along by the tidal wave.

Damage to Railway

Property.

A prominent railway official a few days after the tragedy summed up the situation and the damage to the railway property very clearly in a brief statement as follows:

The track was damaged more or less from Fairview to North Street, a distance of three miles, cars blown to pieces and tracks literally covered with remains of cars, their contents, collapsed buildings, etc., including the heavy steel overhead bridge, which spanned the yard at Richmond. At North Street Station the train shed roof was blown in for about two-

thirds its length and the remaining portion had to be pulled down.

The work of removing obstructions to clear the main lines for service required the services of two large wrecking cranes and more than 100 men, working day and night for three days.

Every room in three floors of the station building was wrecked and windows blown in, doors destroyed, finish and plaster blown off, making it necessary to clean up and refit various offices, waiting rooms, etc., before business could be resumed.

The large power plant at this point, which heats the building and cars was put out of business, pipes broken and water supply cut off. At the time of the explosion, the equipment on hand consisted of ninety-seven passenger cars, which were all blown in, every pane of glass broken and the greater portion of the doors blown off. These cars had to be hauled out and sent to Moncton and Amherst to make room for equipment on the way to replace it.

Fifteen engines which were working at various points throughout the yard were put out of commission temporarily, four being damaged so seriously as to necessitate their being sent to Moncton for heavy repairs.

At the deep water terminals, where are located the local freight shed delivery, grain elevator and piers, the damage was not so serious. The local freight shed was damaged slightly. An expert elevator man was brought here from Montreal and the work of repairs is now under way. Temporary repairs were made at once to save 250,000 bushels of grain stored there and the work of boarding in and saving seventy-one cars of grain in the yard is well under way.

The million dollar concrete pier, known as pier 2, had every window and door blown in. The second floor has been in use as a military clearing hospital so that it has been necessary to refit it immediately. Some 250 men are at work doing this and men are being housed there at time of writing.

The wood piers, 2, 3 and 4, are also badly damaged at deep water.

At Richmond, where the explosion occurred, the destruction is complete. The station building is gone so that it would be difficult to tell where it stood. Piers 6, 7, 8 are completely wrecked and pier 9 badly damaged. On piers 8 and 9 were two large sheds, which were blown to atoms.

In Richmond yard there are 331 freight cars, more or less damaged, a great many completely destroyed with their contents. All this wreckage must be cleaned up, loads transfer-



Roome Street.—School on left.

red to other cars and wreckage burned. This work is now well under way.

At Willow Park, where engine house and repair facilities are located, every window and door in the engine house, machine shop, power plant, car shop, planing mill and stores building was blown out. Water tanks at Willow Park and Richmond were badly damaged. The work of repairing all these buildings was started immediately and is now under way.

All telephone, telegraph and despatch wires were down for three miles, thus adding to the difficulty of operation. These wires have been partly restored and work will be completed within a short time.

Some of the features that made operating difficult were the temporary loss of rolling equipment. So far as we have been able to ascertain to date 331 freight cars and 97 passenger cars, including approximately 30 sleepers, 10 diners, 5 commissary cars and 20 tourists were damaged or destroyed.

The local operating staff was seriously affected from the district superintendent down to the car cleaners and other general help, thus necessitating temporary re-organization.

One of the departments most affected was the sleeping and dining car department. It may not be known generally to the public that this department has its complete organization, complete staff and commissary organization in the North Street Station, which was so badly damaged that it made uninterrupted continuation of the work impossible.

Out of this staff of some twenty clerks more than half were injured, including principally those in charge of the various branches of the department, such as the sleeping cars,

dining cars and commissariat. It might also be mentioned that a large majority of the sleeping and dining car employees resided in the devastated area, thus rendering their service impossible.

After considerable effort it was possible to get the sleeping car service going fairly well, though considerable difficulty was experienced in securing help. The dining car service has to be temporarily discontinued on account of the large number of damaged diners and demoralization of the dining car crews. A large number of dining car employees even on the road found it necessary to abandon their cars and rush to Halifax to take care of their dead, injured and homeless families. Fortunately conditions are being restored to such extent that regular dining car service is again in operation.

Grateful to Public.

The management of the Canadian Government Railways take this opportunity of expressing its deep appreciation to the general travelling public for its co-operation and patience under the existing conditions, realizing that although the terrible catastrophe extends only over a distance of approximately three miles, its effect owing to the relation of Halifax to the entire system, particularly, the matter of passenger train service was practically paralyzed.

The management's primary object has been to relieve the suffering of the injured and homeless, and every effort was first concentrated on the point as evidenced by the large number of relief trains which poured into Halifax during the first five days after the catastrophe.

So soon as first aid in this respect was rendered the railways' organization turned its attention to the reorganization of the train service with the result as above noted.

So soon as a telegram could reach Moncton, General Manager C. B. Brown and Superintendent Brown, H. H. Melanson with their staffs hastened here and have been on the job ever since. Night and day these men have worked and spurred on the efforts of their assistants. Too much cannot be said of the skill and tact of the management in handling a most difficult situation.

Behind the Citadel.

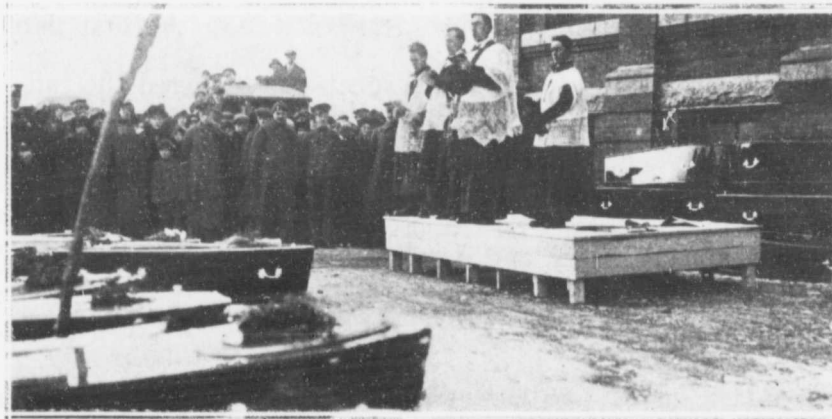
Complete destruction did not extend far into the western section of the city lying behind the Citadel and skirting the Commons. Several churches, however, are badly wrecked with greater damage than broken windows and the Chebucto

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Road school is also shattered. Fortunately in many of the schools only one higher grade had assembled but at St. Joseph's in the North End and at the Protestant Orphanage there was great loss of life. In Lucknow street Archbishop Worrell (Anglican), was slightly injured by striking against some furniture. His son-in-law, N. R. DesBrisay, district passenger agent of the C. P. R., St. John, who went over on the St. John relief train and worked wonders, called to see the prelate Friday evening and found in the wall of the room a piece of glass still so tightly wedged that he could not remove it.

Lieutenant-Colonel B. R. Armstrong, of the military staff, Halifax, was struck in his home by a piece of glass which penetrated his uniform and inflicted a long though not serious gash on his body. He worked away during the day without asking to have it dressed. Truly a wonderful experience was that of Dr. Murdoch Chisholm, the noted surgeon. Reported killed on Friday he was in reality at the Victoria General Public Hospital suffering intensely from glass cuts but, the next day, swathed in bandages he worked heroically in the operating room.

The banking district was not seriously damaged, some of the plate glass remaining. Much of the glass is gone from the Provincial building. Fronting Grafton Street Park educational institutions such as the Halifax Technical College are, with exception of doors and windows, practically intact, and from here south the damage grows lighter.



Roman Catholic Funeral Service.



Desolation in Dartmouth—A few of the many residences destroyed.

CHAPTER VI.

Across the Harbor.

CONSIDERED apart from the greater catastrophe across the harbor the destruction of Dartmouth would have been in itself a great disaster and deserves a separate chapter. The scene at North Dartmouth baffled all description. As in Richmond, to add to the horror of it all, fire broke out and for a time it looked as if the entire district would be swept by the flames.

The heavens seemed to rain shot and shell—in reality a barrage of fragments of ships and buildings and in this way many were killed and injured. Pieces of boiler plate resembling nothing more than the “sharps” which make the soldier’s life a nightmare, but weighing many pounds, were carried more than a mile over Dartmouth and buried in the ground many feet. Back of this district, fully three miles, was found the gun from the Mont Blanc. This, perhaps more than any other incident gives a true idea of the real force of the explosion. The danger from this “flying death,” however, did not interfere with the work of rescue. Those who escaped uninjured and those able to walk, though slightly injured, worked heroically to save those still breathing and remove the bodies



Emmanuel Church, Dartmouth.

of the dead from the houses in the path of the fire fiend. Those engaged in the work say that in some houses badly-wrecked, afterwards destroyed by the fire, no trace of the occupants known to have been there could be found. They had been blown to atoms.

The flames continued unchecked, almost without resistance until they burned themselves out, as nothing could be done in this respect by the helpless population. From the Dartmouth rink north to Bedford on the Halifax side, even in the more sparsely populated streets the houses were laid in ruins. Even the summer bungalows and little country houses at Tuft's Cove were shattered by the explosion. The rink itself was badly wrecked, coming down in a heap, and the houses on the west side of the street were levelled. Emmanuel church, at the corner of Emmanuel Road and Dawson Street, was totally ruined, and all the houses in this district, comprising George, Pelzant, John, Jamieson and Hester streets were wrecked beyond repair. Mrs. A. C. Pettipas, looking from the window of her home opposite Emmanuel church miraculously escaped injury and the house itself stood while buildings on every side crumpled and fell. The tidal wave which engulfed Richmond and swept across Campbell road on the Halifax side of the harbor seems to have also drenched the Dartmouth side. Tons of sea water were lifted and carried

right into the ruined houses, really proving the most effective agency in checking the flames which followed, as the fire would be seen flickering about the overthrown stoves in ruined homes, only to die out as the greedy tongues were turned back by the dampened boards.

*Distressing Death
of Boy Hero.*

Leonard Donahue, a former St. John man, had just completed a new house and his family had been living in it only a short time when the devastating explosion in the harbor snatched from him, not only his newly constructed house but also the lives of two of his children.

When the explosion occurred, Mrs. Donahue was doing the house work and the three children were in the house with her. In the kitchen with her she had her youngest child, James, a baby in arms. In the next room was her son William (Billie) and her daughter Margaret. The vast explosion knocked every one in the house down, blew down a partition upon Mrs. Donahue, overturned the stove and everything else in the house. In fact the house became an utter ruin.

The concussion blew every stitch of clothing from Mrs. Donahue and she was bruised badly by the furniture of the room which shot about in every direction. She seized her baby and climbed out of the window to get out of the house, calling to her other children at the same time. All at once Billie came running to her and said: "Oh mother, Margaret is under the stairs." Then she went back into the house and found her daughter in an unconscious state under the stairs. They brought her out of doors and then Mrs. Donahue asked Billie if he were hurt.

He replied, "Yes, mother, I'm sick."

"Oh, Billie, are you going to die?" asked the frantic woman.

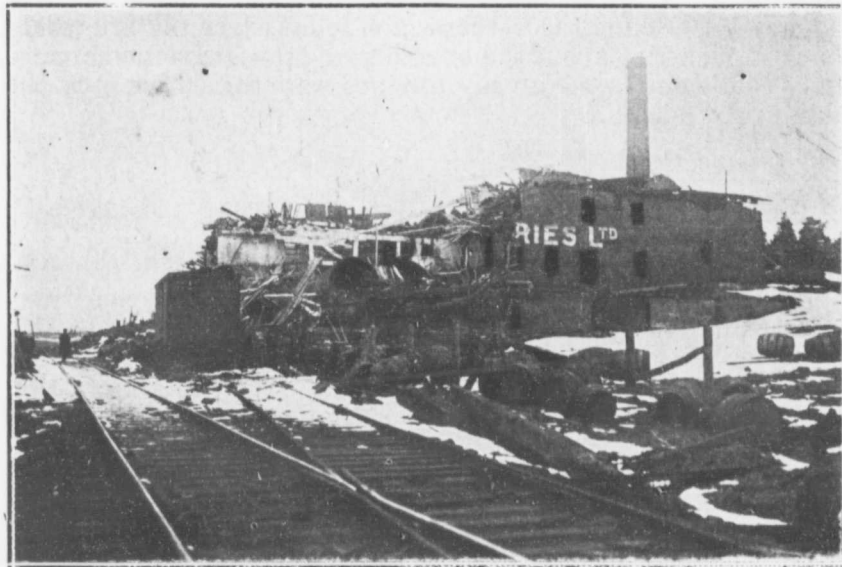
"Yes," lisped the little one, "I'm going to die now," and with those words on his lips the six-year-old hero toppled over and died before his mother's eyes.

Then the little girl, who had partially recovered consciousness said:

"If Billie is going to die I want to die too, I don't want to live if he doesn't."

The poor girl was later taken dying to the Victoria Hospital. The unfortunate woman dragged her children to a grass plot a short distance from the ruins of her home and got aid to have them taken to the hospital.

Mr. Donahue's brothers, William and Harry Donahue, of St. John, unable to secure any news of the stricken family



Ruins of Oland's Breweries.

hurried to Halifax and brought Mrs. Donahue and the youngest child to St. John. Mrs. Donahue has since given birth to another child.

W. E. Garden, who was through the Dartmouth destruction, told me the injured women and children went for hours without attention as all doctors were hurried over to Halifax.

"I found a grass plot crowded with gravely injured women, bleeding copiously from a hundred wounds. One woman had her arm slashed open from shoulder to wrist. One child had two holes in its throat, one on either side of the jugular vein. Applying the principles of first aid, which I learned as a fireman in the west, I did what I could towards staunching the flow of blood in many cases but the suffering was great."

Fearful was the loss of life in the Halifax brewery, located on the Dartmouth shore almost opposite the point of the explosion. Very few escaped. The building was completely wrecked, portions being blown half a mile each way and the railway track north and south completely blocked. The work of removing the bodies from the brewery was most dangerous. Parts of the walls of the building were left standing ready to topple over at any minute. The bodies of John Hartlen and William Demerick were blown across the railway track. It was not until some hours after the explosion that the body of Cornelius Oland was located at the bottom of the wreckage. It was then impossible to remove it because of the dangerous

condition of the remaining parts of the walls standing. It is believed that when the explosion came Mr. Oland was working in the cellar. He was evidently killed by the falling of the brick walls. His body was almost completely covered with debris.

Wild excitement prevailed at the plant of the Consumers Cordage Company. Few in the building heard the explosion because of the noise of the machinery. Some of the workmen were outside when the explosion came. When the first rumbling began they ran into the building to warn others. At once a great cry of danger rang through the building and from all directions men, women and young girls were seen making their way to the entrance. Before they had reached the opening the huge brick structure began to crumble but fortunately none were killed, though a great many of them were seriously cut and injured by the falling of bricks and the shafts of the machinery.

The great plant soon tumbled and in a few minutes was a complete wreck. It is doubtful whether it will be possible to re-commence operations for a year or more. The manager had a piece of glass driven into his eye and it was found necessary to remove the eye.

From the Dartmouth Rink south along Water Street, including the entire business centre and east and south, buildings are badly wrecked. The plants of the Starr Manufacturing Company, Dominion Molasses Company and John P. Mott were badly damaged.

At Eastern Passage, six miles distant, windows in most all the houses were broken and much damage was done to the buildings. The explosion was also severely felt at Waverly, where houses were partly blown down, people injured by flying glass and much damage done to barns.

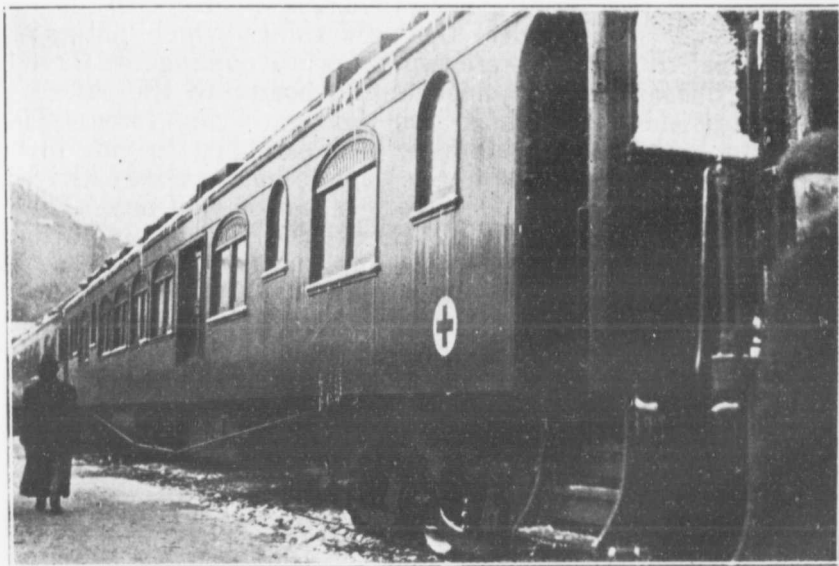
CHAPTER VII.

Covering the Story.

GREAT experiences, like honors, are often thrust upon us. When it fell to my lot to make the journey to the stricken city of Halifax I little thought what was in store for me. No sooner was I on board the night train than I discovered that the angels of mercy were already spreading their protecting wings over the homeless, the starving, the wounded and the dying. By a fortunate co-incidence H. A. Milburne, representing the Canadian Red Cross and Foster Rockwell and J. S. Ellsworth, of the Military Relief Section, American Red Cross, were all in St. John at the time of the explosion. They were immediately notified by their respective organizations to proceed to Halifax and report on the situation there. Mr. Milburne received his wire at 10 o'clock in the evening and was able in a hurried visit to the Canadian Red Cross depot at St. John to gather a large supply of blankets, children's clothing and surgical supplies.

The American Red Cross was but one train behind. Word was received of relief trains leaving New York that afternoon. At 11.20 Dr. W. W. White had received a 'phone message from Colonel A. H. H. Powell here informing him surgeons were greatly needed in Halifax. Dr. G. A. B. Addy got the same word and Dr. H. Hedden, superintendent of the General Public Hospital, earlier in the evening, had been asked to go over by the hospital commissioners tendering their offer of support to the Victoria General in Halifax. He had been able to enlist the service of the entire staff in the rolling of antiseptic bandages and had with him hundreds which proved of incalculable value the following night. The train was due to leave at 11.30 o'clock and Dr. White was there at that hour. Dr. Addy was not far behind and there was little delay in starting. A hastily organized St. John committee had filled three cars with provisions and clothing. Some wholesale places had been practically cleaned out. A large North End porkpacking plant gave every ham in the place.

St. John men on this train—members of relief committees or on special missions arising out of the disaster, were Mayor Hayes, T. H. Estabrooks, A. H. Wetmore and R. E. Armstrong, president and secretary respectively of the board of trade, H. G. Weekes, F. J. G. Knowlton, D. W. Ledingham, T. E. G. Armstrong, R. M. Fowler, E. P. O'Toole, A. P. Davidson, J. R. Haycock, W. B. Stewart and N. R. Desbrisay.



First Hospital Train, with about 250 injured, leaving for Truro hospitals.

The Conductor's Story.

Quite soon I noticed the sleeping car conductor, W. D. Ross, a manly little chap, unusually pale and quiet. It did not take long to find out the cause. His wife and two children were in the ruined, fire-devastated region, and he had no word from them. With considerably more men in the car than there were berths for, his was a task which required tact and forbearance. He went through it all bravely and I cannot resist the temptation to leap ahead in my story to a little scene at Shubenacadie Station some forty miles from Halifax. Mr. Ross had just alighted from his car when a woman's form catapulted itself into his arms. The world which to him but a moment before had seemed such a dark and forbidding place suddenly assumed a rosier hue, and when his wife—for it was she—sobbed into his ear that the two little children were also safe, though the home was gone, the sun broke through the clouds altogether and brought warmth and comfort once more to the anxious heart. The baby, she said, was seated on the floor in the kitchen and showers of glass, the ruins of the room, pieces of stove itself fell all about it but miraculously it was unharmed. Her brother had heard the explosion from Shubenacadie and had made a quick run to Halifax in his car to find his sister and family.

It was evident from the first that the train would be late.

The heavy cars of supplies and provisions which made imperative an early arrival were the very things which mitigated against fast time. We were two hours late coming into Truro, and the blizzard which added untold horror to the suffering of the homeless in Halifax was then gathering force. The confusion attending the disaster had extended to this town sixty miles away, and 260 of the wounded had already arrived there by special trains. A curious situation had arisen here with regard to the treatment of the injured. So many doctors and nurses had responded to the immediate call from Halifax that there were not enough left to treat the patients brought back to Truro. As the trains came in an attendant went through asking nurses going to Halifax to volunteer to remain over at Truro where they were greatly needed. Several responded and the need was filled. Even here one met victims of the disaster. Several had slight cuts and all had that strange dazed expression which I was to see on so many faces before the day was out. Breakfast here proved to be also luncheon. As the storm grew in violence the long heavy train, which some thought should have been divided, kept losing time and it looked for a time as if we would be stalled absolutely. At a little station along here I made my first effort at filing copy. A rotund agent held the key and he welcomed me cordially, but I am sorry to say his smile was a delusion and a snare. After two days in Halifax I arrived home about the time this first despatch came through from Stewiacke.

First Signs of Danger.

In the early twilight, hastened by the swirling snow driven before a forty mile gale, we ran along the shore of Bedford Basin. Ten miles from Halifax the windows were blown from the summer houses. Lying low in the water, close inshore some of them—we saw ship after ship in this natural anchorage all safely beyond the range of the explosion. By this time we began to meet people who had been through the hell of Thursday. One man with a strained face sat dumb and stricken as a friend who came out to meet him told him as gently as possible of the death of his entire family. His wife, five children and aged mother were all gone,—the mother struck in the breast and mortally wounded by a flying piece of metal from the cooking stove, over which she was bending to prepare the children's breakfast.

In all the time spent at Halifax I saw nothing which brought home the tragedy more than my first sight of the refugees at Rockingham station, three miles out. These people had fled from the Richmond section, had spent the night in

the open and were now packed into the little station and overflowing out on the platform where the driving wind cut like a knife and the soft snow clung to their apparel in sticky dabs. Hopelessness was in their faces and their sufferings were intense. They were waiting for trains to carry them to points in the country where they had friends. Here again I noticed that strained, staring look which was on every face as I went about the ruined streets the following day. If I saw a normal, healthy face I was pretty sure to find out that the owner had not been in Halifax on the fateful Thursday—but had come in afterwards to render assistance or learn the fate of friends. Few evidently escaped the awful shock, if they did actual bodily injury.

Physicians say it will be a long time before many of these people will recover. Men and women, as they talked, clasped each others' hands unconsciously, still seeking protection, perhaps, from that awful blow full two days before.

It seemed a gentle irony that those on a relief train bearing carloads of provisions should themselves be on the edge of hunger. A long delay at this little station aggravated the situation. A few fortunate ones had brought along supplies and these people were most popular. Some loaves of brown bread and white bread were produced by provident nurses but it went very much against the epicurean taste of certain doctors to lunch from the heel of a loaf without cheese or butter. I satisfied myself with one-third of an apple.

At last we were told we were to be honored by being attached to a special train carrying to the scene Sir Robert L. Borden, premier of Canada, but I was unable to find out whether or not we actually trailed him in. At any rate we made the record of having been the first passengers carried to the South terminals by the new route skirting the western side of the city. Fallen houses could be seen lying by the track. The face of the embankment along the water's edge was gone. One mighty gash had all the appearance of a shell crater in Flanders with the effect heightened by the huge pile of earth and stones which had been heaped up several yards ahead, the lip of the crater itself extending to the harbor front.

One railway track, close to the edge, was badly damaged, and before we left the water front vanished altogether, the protruding rails left dangling over nothingness.

It was now pitch dark and the blizzard had reached its height. At 6 o'clock—ten hours late—the train came to a halt, we were told, for the last time. There is no station here, the explosion anticipated the use of the new terminal from a passenger standpoint by at least one year. As I waited at one



Gottingen Street.—Of many beautiful residences only destroyed foundations now remain.

end of the sleeper for the porter to unlock the vestibule doors most of the St. John men made their exit from the other end.

*Blizzard of Great
Force.*

When I stepped from the train I was caught by one terrific gust and turned completely around. One man's cap went whirling past me at a rapid rate and I was just able to capture it and save him perhaps from serious exposure. No one knew just where to go. Many had not been in Halifax before. As there were no street lights there was no guiding star. For one awful moment I was completely alone. Then there was a quick decision to be made. We were told the train from which we had alighted would return immediately to Truro. It seemed almost incredible that the wires from Halifax would be able to carry the load imposed upon them by the additional weight of the storm. In this case it would mean a fruitless night so far as getting any story through to my papers was concerned. At Truro the chances for filing would be indefinitely better and in ordinary circumstances the run to Truro would be made in two hours. Already I had seen and heard enough to fill a book, if necessary. Turning I took two steps towards the warm, comfortable train with the light showing like a beacon through the storm. Then came

the thought of the seven hours spent on that train between Truro and Halifax and a rapid calculation told me it would be well on towards morning before that overworked engine and crew could reach Truro again. I set my teeth and faced the blizzard again.

Where the turn was made from the track into the main street northward stood a woman—outpost in the cause of humanity—come to meet the nurses and direct them where to go. A few vehicles were standing there but they were rapidly filled by official parties, nurses and doctors. I began the long walk of nearly two miles and believe I made it in record time. An occasional pedestrian with a lantern lighted the way but for the most part it was total darkness, going only by the sense of direction. The lighted refuge stations shone forth hospitably and it was a temptation to enter and at once begin the work of interviewing refugees, but there was always ahead the more important task of securing a general idea of the disaster for transmission on the wires that night.

That third of the apple—the core at that, the other fellows got the two cheeks—was demanding company and at a little store where appetizing food was being served to the homeless I secured half a dozen chocolate nut bars. Munching these as I went along I soon felt greatly refreshed and when I finally found the one remaining door of the Queen Hotel—the others being boarded up—I was not more than ordinarily hungry. One of the wonders of the disaster is the fact that the Queen and its neighbor the Halifax kept their cuisine unimpaired with far less ravages than the food controller's orders. Soup was the introduction, salmon provided a little flirtation, asparagus on toast was the entree, roast chicken and pork meant getting fairly well acquainted, plum pudding gave an opportunity for spooning, bread and cheese was the plain married life after the delectable stuff and the finger bowls were there for the christening.

Paper napkins made their appearance the next day but this was the only departure from the routine.

My Search for a Room.

The hotels were not so well provided with sleeping accommodation. The official relief party had rooms engaged but the mere newspaper men had to shift for themselves. I had visions of sleeping close up to the furnace in the Chronicle newspaper office with my snow-wet clothing slowly drying on me. Then an angel appeared. Little R. A. Hirsch, special representative of the Imperial Munitions board, had been on

the train on an important mission and he had, while I dined, been searching for rooms. By chance he found two over a little cafe not far from the Queen. The windows were blown from both but the proprietor had offered to allow us to "fix them up." Hirsch had taken both, not wishing to have a possible spy in the next room, and now he offered to share his with me, closing mine altogether.

Much to my surprise on entering the cafe I saw the stooped figure and narrow face of one Schools, late proprietor of an all night restaurant in St. John, where often I had breakfasted when a late edition went to press. He welcomed me as a former fellow-citizen and as a potential customer. I found I was greatly favored in my room as a once haughty grand piano was one of the pieces of furniture nearly filling the room. Folding doors opened between the two little rooms and after moving all the mats from the floor and the bedclothes from my bed we closed these securely. The next task was to take a hammer and nails which Schools provided and nail mats across the windows through which the snow was driving in. We made a good job of this and a register in the floor gave forth a little heat. Arrangements made for the night, the next task was a visit to the newspaper offices and the supplication to wire wizards. The Western Union did not waste any time. They had no wires and did not expect to have any. No hope there.

When I called at the Chronicle office men were at work boarding up the broken glass transom, and water was pouring down in the lobby as if tons of water had been poured into the building to quench a huge fire. The composing room seemed a wreck, but work was going on and I was told one linotype was working. One lone outside newspaper man had also found his way there and he informed me that chances for getting stuff through were pretty slim. After a visit to the C. P. R. telegraph office in the Dennis building and an interview with A. C. Fraser, maritime superintendent, I had more hope. There was but one wire just at that moment, he said, and that was loaded with the official messages regarding relief. No one wished to side-track these if they could, but Mr. Fraser intimated there would be a partial recovery during the night.

"Write some short, snappy bulletins," he said, "and they will go through."

Later on his prediction proved true. At midnight, he said, there were four wires and he had loaned one to the C.G.R. for the operation of important trains. By that time I had secured something of a connected story with many sensational incidents, and in fifteen minutes a despatch of 1,500 words—

the first to go through, apart from the routine Canadian Press service—was in the hands of the operators.

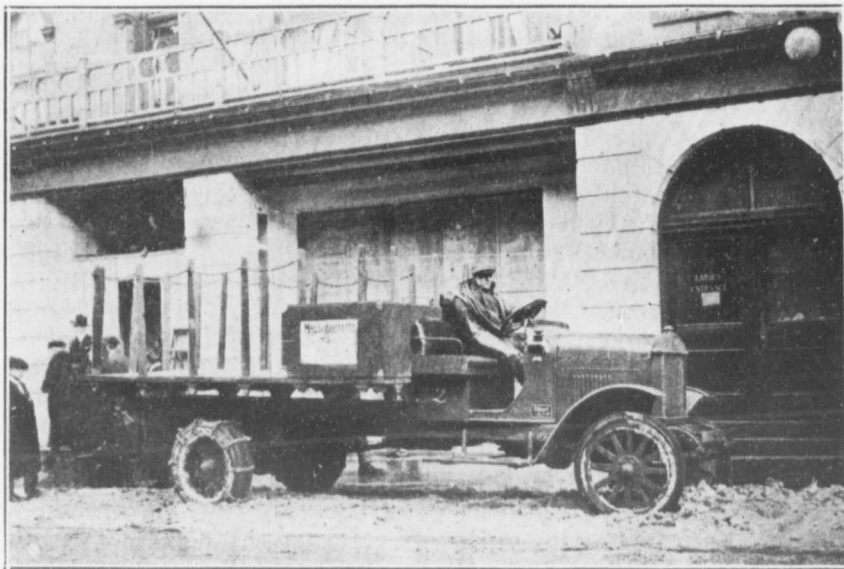
In a Creepy Place.

Just as a precautionary measure, I made an effort to get some outlying places by telephone and secure the filing of some bulletins at different points, the through telephone service to St. John having been interrupted for the last week as a result of a previous storm.

I entered the telephone company's building and found it like a huge, clammy tomb. Groping my way forward I found one telephone booth at the foot of a stairway. I figured the operating room must be on the top floor and tried to find my way up, but after two flights in the darkness—the only sounds my own footsteps and the rustle of the wind as it penetrated the windows and stirred the papers in the deserted office—it got on my nerves a bit and I gave it up. A short talk from the booth with the chief operator convinced me it would be hopeless to try to get any long distance message through that night. I will remember that half hour in the telephone building—the shadows were disconcerting as one thought of stories of ghouls who lurk on the outskirts of tragedy and feed upon the victims of disaster.

Going back to the cafe I was ready for my third meal in Halifax since arrival and at 1 a. m. came the time for retiring. We found the door of our room locked and when we knocked a soldier came out partially undressed. He had been warming our bed. An assistant, not knowing of the previous arrangement, had later rented him the room, which we had made comfortable. Here was a problem. One small single bed and two big men and a little man. As the French say, "One can refuse a soldier nothing," and this man had served his country and was going back the following day. We had my room to draw on, but here the snow was sifting softly through on the silent keys of the piano and there was no register—in the floor, I mean, not the piano. An effort to put the two beds in the one room proved a failure, as contrary to the simple rule of physics that two bodies cannot occupy the same space at the same time. What we did do was to take the mattress, lay it on the floor, and then divide the bed clothes and overcoats. The soldier chose the mattress; it was an old story with him, and with the assistance of two quinine pills I was rather too warm than otherwise.

Deep, refreshing sleep until 9.30 a. m. wiped out the rigors of the day which had gone before and prepared me for a day in which I walked steadily until 6.30 p.m. with but a few min-



One of Ten Auto Trucks Given by State of Massachusetts. A magnificent gift.

utes' intermission. The sun was shining once more, but the snow lay deep in the streets and no street cars were moving. It was impossible to secure a conveyance of any sort. If bribe or persuasion had secured one from the owner it was likely to be taken at the first corner by a member of the relief committee to transport a homeless family to some place which had been provided. What I saw on that strenuous Saturday I have written in the preceding pages.

Through it all I felt curiously detached and not greatly moved by those distressing scenes in morgue, in hospital, in the ruins and at the inquiry stations. I was there for a single purpose and that was to give to such of the outside world as might read my words a living picture of what had actually occurred. Until this was accomplished my own feelings were secondary. I could see and write of these things unmoved, but let me try to tell, now, to a circle of friends the stories so glibly written and I find that I must stop short. So much for the psychological.

Tales of Horror Were Only Too True.

In the newspaper man's way, as I heard the mournful stories entering Halifax, and by hearsay at the hotels and offices visited the first evening. I weighed them carefully in my mind and some I believed and some I did not. But the second day

convinced me they were all true—as true as they were horrible. Incidents related without names were confirmed later by my own observation and sometimes I found and talked with some of the people involved. Just before I left Halifax a curious thing happened. In the days before prohibition a visitor came to my office in St. John and by soft speech and fair promises inveigled me into a loan which would take him to his home in Halifax. It was too much to expect that I should see the money again and I didn't. In the rotunda of the Halifax that evening the same man accosted me. He did not recognize me and will never know I recognized him unless he reads this. I found he had, since his St. John visit, entered my own profession and was looking for information, giving at the same time the news that his own home had been badly shattered and that he had escaped only because he was a little late starting for the scene of the explosion when the fire broke out on the steamer, his competitor on the rival paper having been ahead in the sprint and died doing his duty. The other man is welcome to the money.

I have also written of that train filled with refugees on which I made my journey home. I stayed in the cars with them for an hour, then I wanted to get away,—far away. I dropped off the train into the snow and ran forward to the car next to the engine. The vestibules were closed and a blind baggage car separated this car from the rest of the train, but I climbed precariously up the side of the blind baggage and entered the car. I was greeted by a chorus of negro voices in the soft southern dialect. "What you-all want here," came the cry. "Are you a railway man?"

I was forced to confess I was not a railway man and could not provide the magic which would start the train and carry these boys back to New York—for they were porters who had come down with the relief train and this was a dining car in which the doctors and nurses had eaten.

At the other end of the car the Boston and Maine official in charge informed me that I couldn't ride there but I proved he was wrong by staying right there in that warm, lighted car with my head down on one of the tables until the train reached Truro at 4 a. m. Sunday, and I was able to get a berth in one of the two sleepers added to the train there, making the usual morning newspaper man's nap by remaining snugly in the berth until 11 a. m. Twenty-four hours the journey to St. John occupied and several times we passed splendid steel cars of the American relief trains, rushing forward on their errand of mercy. A memorable journey this, with memorable sights—one that I shall never forget—one that cost eight pounds, the scales say.

CHAPTER VIII.

Pen Pictures.

GEORGE YATES, private secretary to the premier of Canada, who arrived in Halifax with Sir Robert Borden the day after the disaster, at the request of the Canadian Press, wrote a graphic pen picture of the ruined city. Mr. Yates, who is a trained newspaper man, was among the casualties of the big city hall collapse in London, Ont., some years ago. He woke up after that event and found himself on slab No. 23 of the temporary morgue.

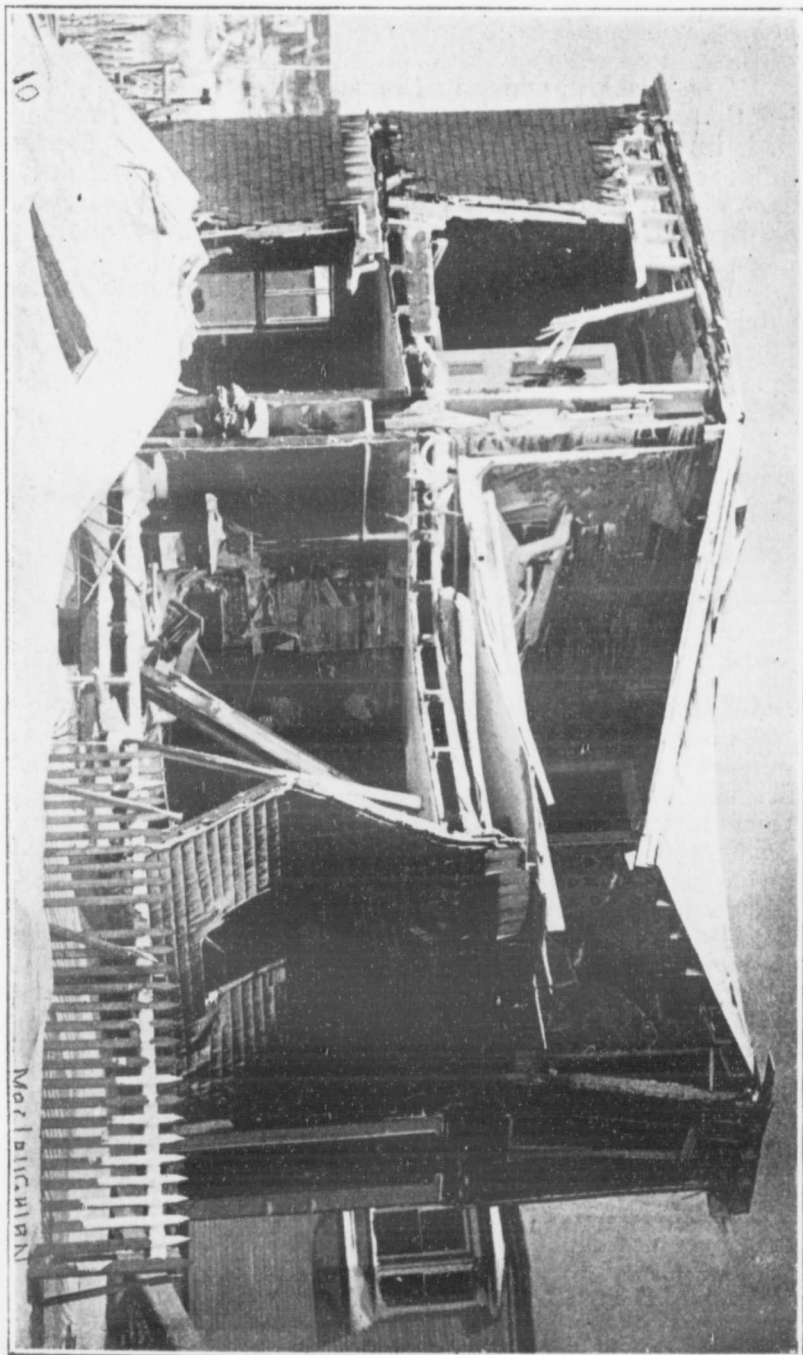
His sketch follows:

The catastrophe is almost too dreadful to admit of description in coherent, matter of fact English, and yet too complete for adequate portrayal by means of the camera. Properly to appreciate it one must be able to conjure up a picture of what once was, in contrast with what no longer is. I have visited Halifax on many occasions, have seen the North Street Station area, Richmond and Willow Park in normal times and when swollen with the abnormal flux of war. I have seen the panoramic beauty of the Dartmouth shore at all seasons, and always in restful contrast to the somewhat sombre, decidedly crowded, and for the most part, frame constructed district that sloped back from the tracks up the hill on which this historic old city stands. It was the home district of the working classes, with here and there an isolated though stately relic of other times. It was this hard working, wage-earning community that Thursday morning's tragedy wiped out.

Wiped out is exactly the proper phrase. In the hard shelled towns of Flanders some walls do stand after the intensest bombardment. Here a single devastating blast passed up the hill and, in the twinkling of an eye crushed the breath of life out of 2,000 people and rendered 20,000 homeless and destitute. This morning I walked over what had been a dwelling, among the debris of which an old man worked alone. It was merely a flattened heap of wreckage, offering no obstruction to the eye and very little to the feet.

What had once been a back yard looked out over the exact scene of the explosion. In the cutting below were the railway tracks, in the foreground the narrows, leading from the harbor proper to the seclusion of Bedford Basin, and, probably half a mile across the Dartmouth shore. In the railway yard scores of men labored to re-establish communications where the tracks had been washed out by the tidal wave that

force of the explosion, though not burned, were absolutely wrecked by the



One of the Homes Destroyed.—This picture shows how houses one or two miles away, though not burned, were absolutely wrecked by the force of the explosion.

followed the explosion, and which left dead fish and other evidences of marine life embedded in the wreckage at the base of the cliff on which I stood.

The blizzard, which had raged for fifteen hours, had doubled the task of the tired and disheartened men. Imagine, ye with intact roofs, and snug double windows, the depressing influence of a terrific gale of wet, clinging snow, sweeping over a city with scarcely a pane of glass intact, and carrying its chill contact in a falling temperature over thousands of beds of pain.

But towards morning the gale subsided into a steady, though bitter, northeast breeze, and now the sun lit up the melancholy scene.

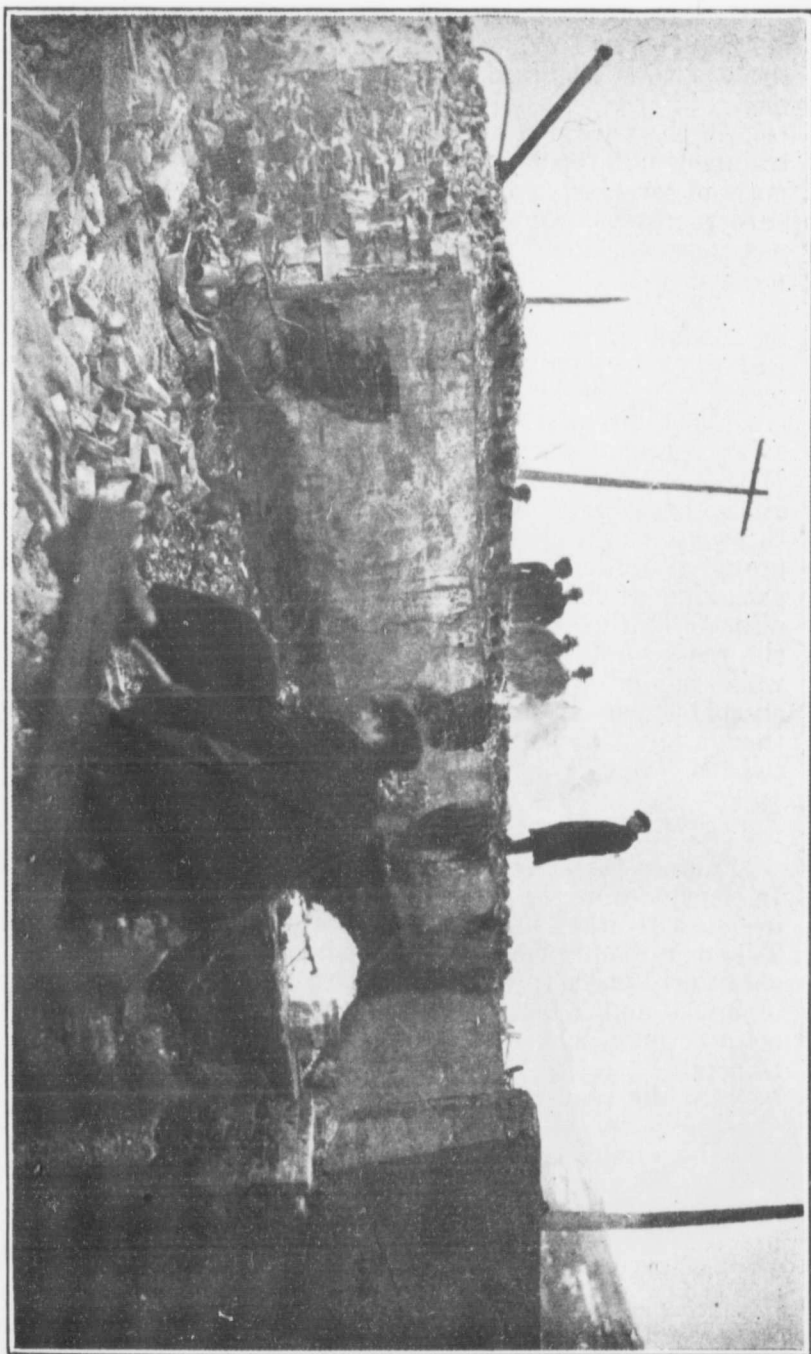
The Two Steamships.

On the shore, less than 200 yards away, lay the war gray prow of a steamer. I was informed it is all that was left of the *Mont Blanc*. To the right, over on the Dartmouth side, hard aground, but seemingly not in bad shape, lay the *Imo*, the Norwegian Belgian relief ship, which collided with the French boat with its dreadful cargo.

To the left a few sunken piles, and one distorted steamer, slammed bodily against a pile of wreckage, which had once been a dock, was all that was left of piers 6, 7, 8 and 9. To those piers had come the fire chief and his deputy and men, when an alarm of fire was turned in, and to the same spot hurried poor Ronayne of the *Chronicle*, who had gossiped cheerily with me at my room in the Queen Hotel when the prime minister opened his campaign in Halifax the other week. Soldiers also hurried to the scene—how many I do not know, but I have talked with one man who told me he and others had found at one point at least a score of bodies of men, who, though stripped of clothing and, in some instances, even of flesh, were quite evidently military men because of the scraps of khaki rags in their immediate presence. It was indeed a rendezvous of death, and death overtook even the man who turned in the alarm.

Every One Here Killed.

But death was no respecter of persons in the neighborhood of the explosion. Yon few blackened timbers along the tracks to the left, represent the Richmond station where every employee was killed. The despatcher telephoned to a confrere



Rescue Party Looking For Victims.—A photographer found a sufferer digging with a small fire shovel—looking for his mother.
Copyrighted in Canada 1917

up the line, "Ammunition ship is on fire in the harbor, and there is likely to be an explosion; I am going to beat it." Just then the explosion occurred and they found his body in the basement.

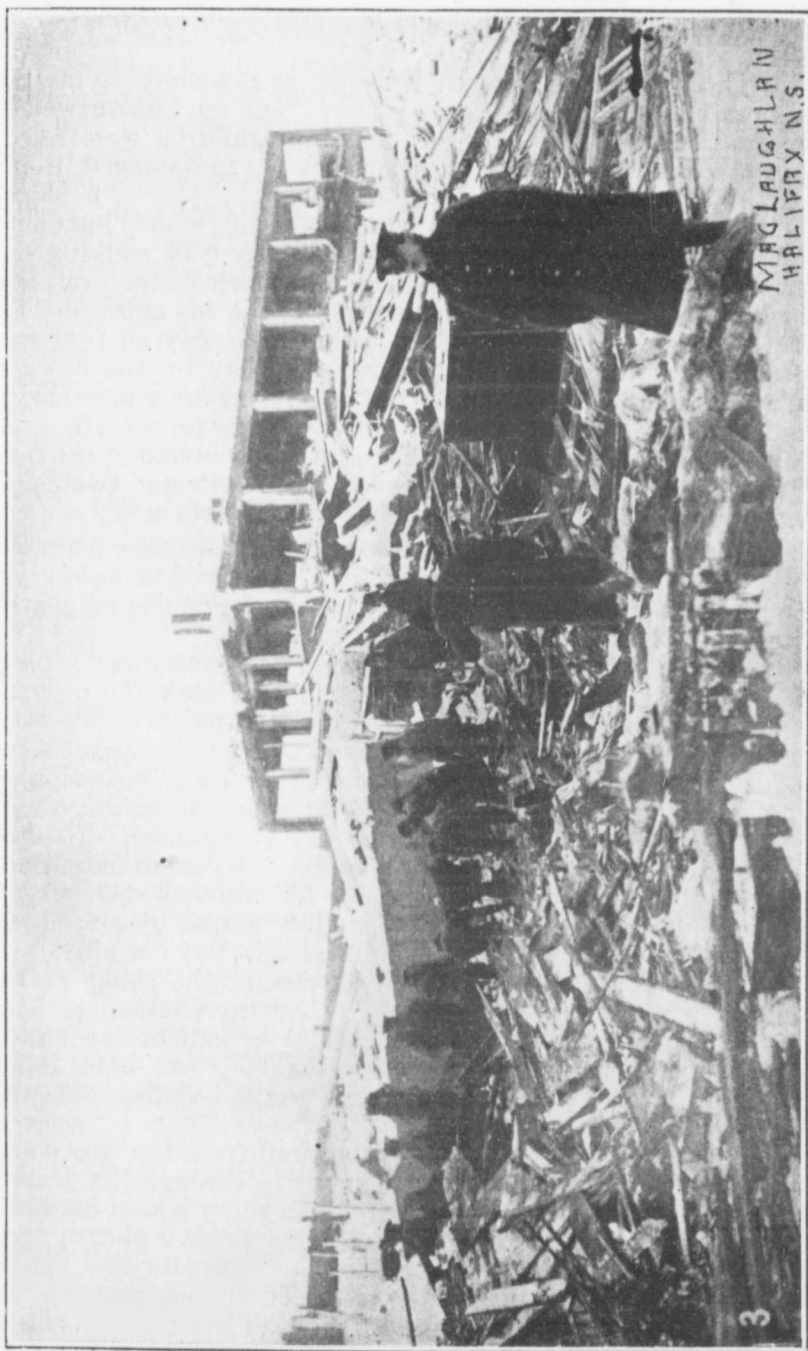
Of the yardmen not ten per cent remain; of seventy spare trainmen not ten had reported for duty this morning. This mass of wrecked and twisted rolling stock in the Richmond yard represents some 400 freight cars, and seventy or eighty passenger coaches have been temporarily placed out of commission.

All that and more was what the eye caught as it swept in a semi-circle along the water-front and railway tracks. But what lay behind and up the hill? It is not necessary to move from the spot to supply detail enough to convey an adequate idea of the scene as a whole. Less than 100 yards away volunteers are searching the ruins of a house for bodies. With sledge hammers, pick axes, crow bars, and levers of all kinds they dug at the twisted wreckage which they hurriedly threw aside. A passing sleigh pauses and a man joins the little group of on-lookers. It is the prime minister of Canada, gathering at first hand the intimate details of the appalling disaster to the city of his youth and early manhood. Along the road comes another sleigh—an open cutter. The driver walks behind and with him walk two downcast men. There are passengers in the sleigh but they are mercifully covered, though not sufficiently to hide the ghastly contortions of their twisted frames.

Tomb of Forty Men.

Across the street is a heavy wagon turned upside down. In the shafts lie the remains of two horses, one completely cut in two with what seems to be a plate from the ill-fated vessel. This team had reached the street from a roadway leading back about fifty yards to what had been a foundry. There a jumble of bricks and a brightly burning pile of coal mark the tomb of forty men, who met death at the bench and lathe. None escaped.

On the roadside lie the remains of two motor cars, torn absolutely to splinters. The old man already referred to is working aimlessly over the wreckage of what had been his home. He threw to one side an artificial limb. "That," he said, seeming to think the incident required explanation, "belonged to the lodger down stairs. He won't need it any more. He was a railway man, and he lost his leg, and they put him on a crossing. He's gone. When my old woman heard that the boat might blow up she went up to the daughter's place on



Hillis & Son's Foundry—Only three men are known to have escaped death.

the hill there. You can see the place, still smoking, from here."

"Did she escape injury?" I asked, as it seemed to me the old man had left his story unfinished. "Oh no," he answered, simply, "she and the daughter and four children were burnt up. It's funny I should find that cork leg undamaged, don't you think?"

Two men approached. One had the usual bandages around neck and face that mark the hundreds of walking victims of flying glass, the other with hollow, lack-lustre eyes, and blackened hands and face, carried a sack on his shoulder. It was of sinister shape and blood-stained, possibly all that was left of his family. I was prepared for that by the story a railroad friend told me, earlier in the day, about a man carrying a small box on his shoulder and inquiring for a train. He seemed dazed, and someone asked him what he had in the box. "That," he replied, "is all that is left of my wife and two children. I am taking them to Windsor to bury them."

On the other side of the street, a short distance from the dead horses, was what seemed to be a bundle of bedding. On the top, as a protection from the snow, was spread some frayed kitchen linoleum.

To prevent the wind from blowing this away was a piece of scaffolding. Instinct warned me not to seek the obvious explanation, but a compelling curiosity caused me to raise a corner of the linoleum. I was relieved to see nothing but some bedding and turned to look at a camera man for a Boston paper who was making a series of photographs in the vicinity. At this I heard a cry of horror from my companion. He had pierced the veil and raised the blanket. I caught one quick glimpse of the bed's dread occupant for which I shall always be sorry, as now my memory is indelibly seared by an impression I would gladly forget. It was enough, but not all.

As we drove back past the diggers in the ruins by the foundry a man came forward and asked my companion if he was going down town, and if so would he call at the undertaker's and have them send out a sleigh. "We have found two more," he said, pointing to two wrapt bundles, one pitifully small.

Tonight they brought the car around from the new ocean terminals to North street. All the way in through the devastated area piles of burning coal (of which there is now an acute scarcity) and still smouldering wreckage throw a ghastly light over a scene of wreckage more complete than starshell lighted No-Man's-Land. I write this on a siding alongside of the North Street Station, familiar to thousands on both sides of

the Atlantic. The platform is sprinkled with splintered glass and the building is roofless, windowless and doorless, while the interior is filled with a confused mass of wreckage and drifted snow. I begin to feel that I now know what war must mean. Close at hand is all of war's dreadful embellishment, but the sentry on the platform alongside spoils the illusion by singing, none too quietly, about his girl, "In Little Ole Ne' York," and the car porter has risen from his first sound sleep to put his head out of the kitchen window and ask him, more in sorrow than in anger, the whereabouts of the sergeant of the guard.

Dalhousie Professor's

Description.

To Professor Archibald MacMechan, of Dalhousie University, we are indebted also for a faithful account of what actually followed the explosion. Writing in the first flush of the horror, three days after the disaster, he sent the following to the Canadian Courier of December 22 last:

Because some one man or several blundered, or a piece of machinery broke down, because sheer misadventure steered two ships towards each other from the ends of the earth, the proud old city of Halifax was laid in ruins in an instant of time. A thousand of her people were slain and not with sword; as many more were maimed and wounded. Millions of money will not repair the damage. Nothing can make good the total of human suffering endured.

Halifax is a long, thin city, built on the western shore of a great harbor. The city is really two cities divided by the huge hill on which the citadel is built. The South End, as it is called, is the residential portion; the North End is industrial. There are the wharves, the dry-docks, the railway station, the factories, the main barracks, the naval department. This quarter was the home mainly of the working class. Their houses were of wood, cheaply constructed. Here is the wasp-waist passage between the outer harbor and the inner, which is known as Bedford Basin. This passage or strait has a deep, narrow channel. Here was the scene of the calamity which struck Halifax like a comet on Thursday morning, December the sixth, 1917.

It was a morning of unusual and surprising beauty. There was no snow on the ground. The air was kind and friendly as in summer. Nothing in sky or on earth portended disaster; but disaster was on its way. Men were getting down to their offices; the morning trains were coming in at North Street Station; the children were assembled in their schools.

Over the still, glassy surface of the harbor, a French ship, the *Mont Blanc*, was proceeding cautiously towards the Narrows. She had four thousand tons of T. N. T. in her hold and a deck load of picric acid and benzol. She was to anchor in the Basin out of harm's way. The Dock Yard officials had a special eye on her, as they must have on all such dangerous visitors.

At the predestined hour, the Belgian relief ship, "*Imo*," conspicuously lettered in red, as is the fashion of such ships, had left her anchorage in the Basin and was proceeding outwards to sea. Both were in charge of regular certificated Halifax pilots. As they neared and neared, those looking on noticed that the *Imo* was disregarding the old established, immutable rules of the road at sea.

About a quarter before nine, the two ships met practically in the Narrows, and the *Imo* rammed the *Mont Blanc* somewhere about the engine-room. Some say the steering-gear went wrong at the critical moment; others that the usual signals were misunderstood.

Almost immediately after the collision, the *Mont Blanc* was seen to be on fire. A tall column of smoke rose like a pillar of cloud through the still morning air. Onlookers remarked that there was a ship on fire in the Basin. The crew of the *Mont Blanc*, well knowing what they had underneath their feet, took to their boats and rowed like madmen for the eastern shore, where the town of Dartmouth stands, opposite to Halifax. The abandoned ship, burning fiercely, drifted towards Pier 8, as it is called, a long, double wharf, where the square-rigged ships load deals for the U. K. Long freight trains bear the sawn lumber from the mills to the wharf.

One observer of the collision was the captain of one of H. M. ships in the harbor, for nothing takes place in the vicinity of a British man-of-war that is not noted and reported. He saw the danger and ordered his commander away in a boat, to board the derelict, anchor her, and get the fire under control. They never reached their goal. Before they got near the "*Mont Blanc*" she drifted into Pier 8 and blew up.

An eye-witness on the citadel curiously watching the huge column of black smoke suddenly saw an immense upward spurt of red flame. And that was the last of the *Mont Blanc*.

There came a burst of thunder sound. Those who have experienced earthquakes thought they were caught in another. The ground rocked, walls swayed and fell, roofs collapsed. There was only one explosion, but most Haligonians heard two reports: first a deep, awful, subterranean rumbling, for earth carries sound more quickly than air; the second was

like the sound of an enormous blast, as when the engineers of the Ocean Terminals explode tons of dynamite in the cuttings.

Immediately all over the peninsula, in every dwelling, shop, factory, office, bank, warehouse, there followed the sound of shattering glass, the splintering of wooden doors, shutters, as locks were burst and hinges smashed, where the whole fabric did not fall in a heap.

The effect of the vast, sudden interference with the air was practically the same as if an earthquake had shaken Halifax to the ground.

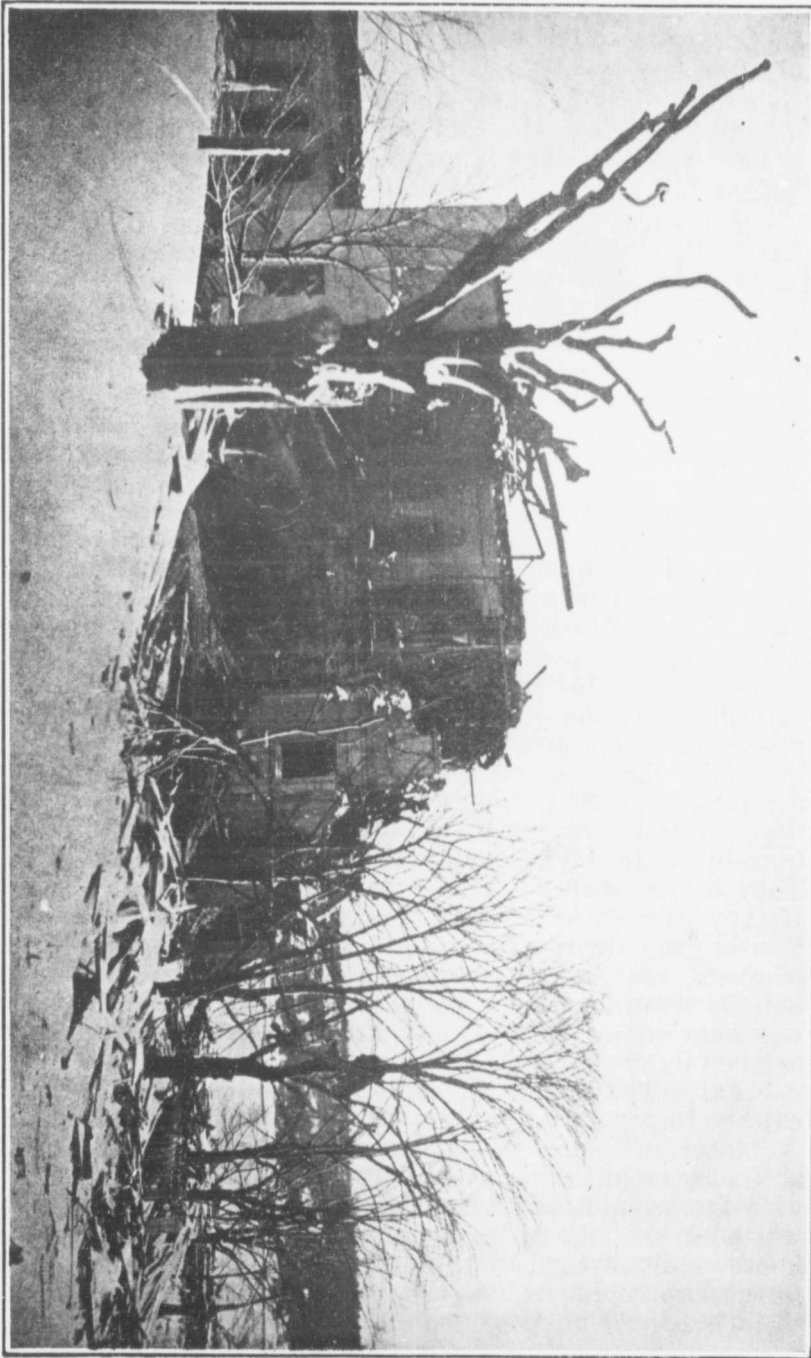
To those who heard those awful sounds two or three similar ideas occurred at once. Most thought, "At last." German ships were shelling the city from outside the harbor. One! two!— When and where would the third fall? Or else it was "An air raid." Instinctively people ran into the open to look for the Zeppelins, or took to the cellar to escape the shells.

Then quiet reigned again. There were no more terrifying sounds. Neighbors began to confer in the streets and make inquiries as to damage and escapes. They also noted with surprise that everyone's house was wrecked as well as their own. In the South End people were calm and unexcited; they were taken unawares, but they were not flurried. Annoyance at the inexplicable damage done was perhaps uppermost, and curiosity as to the origin of the trouble. Blasting at the Terminals and the roar of big guns at practice have been so common here that it takes a great deal to put Haligonians in a panic.

The true story of the explosion soon spread mysteriously from lip to lip. Then practical people began to make repairs. They began to sweep up the broken glass and fallen plaster. If they were lucky enough to have some lumber they began boarding up their windows. If not they put up mats, rugs, blankets, roofing felt, cloth and battens—anything to keep out the weather. This was only true of the South End. It was some time before the city realized the disaster which had befallen it.

Far different was the scene in what the local papers called "the busy North End."

There the incalculable force of the suddenly compressed air had blasted the whole quarter flat. Every house was level with the ground and every tree. The cheap, wooden houses, which covered the hillside, simply collapsed in a moment like houses built of cards. In an instant of time, before the unfortunates could realize the peril, their houses had fallen on their heads. One poor man hunting for his wounded wife



Richmond School, Roome Street.—Here many children perished.

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from hospital to hospital, said, "I was sitting at breakfast, and the two ends went out of the house." Men, women and children were killed instantly by the concussion, and were thrown yards away from their homes. Others were torn to pieces, heads from bodies, limbs from trunk. Others were blinded by the pelting showers of broken glass, or strangely gashed and rent. In all conceivable ways was this poor human frame rent, and broken, and shredded and crushed. The houses collapsed, killing whole families at once, or heavy timbers pinned down living and injured. Their fate was the most fearful for—the wreckage took fire.

In an instant of time twenty thousand people, half the population of Halifax, were rendered destitute. Those who escaped were homeless; they had only what they stood up in. The case of the little children was the most pitiful. Richmond School came down and killed a hundred; the little white crushed faces could be seen through the timbers. Fifty more were killed at St. Joseph's School. All but two perished with devoted matrons in the wreck of the Protestant Orphanage.

Across the harbor the same things happened, but the loss of life was much slighter. Perhaps forty Micmac Indians were killed on their reservation at Tuft's Cove. In Dartmouth itself, twenty-five were actually killed. The flying fragments of the ammunition ship killed many. The plight of the aged, the sick, the infants, the bed-ridden, the crippled, the nursing mothers, the pregnant, cannot be described.

In the immediate neighborhood of Pier 8, the damage was greatest. The pier itself was simply abolished; hundreds of freight cars with their loads were upset, torn apart, and their contents scattered. The station roof came down, killing or injuring all but two. The road was completely blocked. Traffic was suspended. All through the city the trains and telephone service were at an end.

Perhaps nothing illustrates the inconceivable force of such an explosion as well as the case of the "Niobe." As guard-ship, she is anchored head and stern by heavy cables, and also moored to the wharf. Each link is of inch-and-a-quarter iron, in section. The explosion produced a miniature tidal wave eight feet high, which tore her sixty yards out of her place. The wooden deckhouses came down, killing fifteen men. The same wave swept the wharves and put out many incipient fires. At least four steamers had their superstructures demolished and men on board killed. The two sea steamers in the dry dock were badly injured. The dry dock itself was filled with debris. The old sugar refinery, a tall



Ruins of St. Joseph's School and St. Joseph's Church.

brick building near by, subsided into a shapeless rubbish heap, and the syrup-soaked timbers burnt fiercely.

The Dockyard suffered severely. The Royal Naval College with forty cadets in it had the walls blown in. A piece of the Mont Blanc weighing half a ton came down through the roof of the largest class-room and smashed the platform where the instructor stands. The floor of the "quarter-deck" buckled up in sharp angles. The new Y. M. C. A. hut just erected for the benefit of the sailors was smashed into a heap of kindling wood. The officers' quarters were broken open and the interiors ravaged as if by a tornado. All the waterfront suffered damage from fire and water.

The sound of that awful rumbling had hardly died away before the work of rescue and relief began. Every private car, motor lorry, delivery van was soon in use carrying the injured to the hospitals, to chemist shops and to doctors' offices. Before long the Victoria General, Pine Hill, Camp Hill, the Infirmary, were full to overflowing. Then the injured were transported to improvised hospitals—the City Home, the School for the Blind, and such other public buildings as were fit to take them in. The Academy of Music and the moving picture places took in the waifs and strays. Some restaurants served refreshments gratis. Every home left standing was ready to open its doors to those in need. The motors flew screeching and hooting through the streets with extra men standing on the foot-board, and close swathed forms inside. The resources of the city were soon over-taxed, and aid came at the earliest possible moment from New Glasgow, Truro, Windsor, Lunenburg. Most efficient aid came from the American hospital ship lying in the harbor. Within fifteen minutes after the explosion she had two boats with landing parties, surgeons and appliances at the Dock Yard.

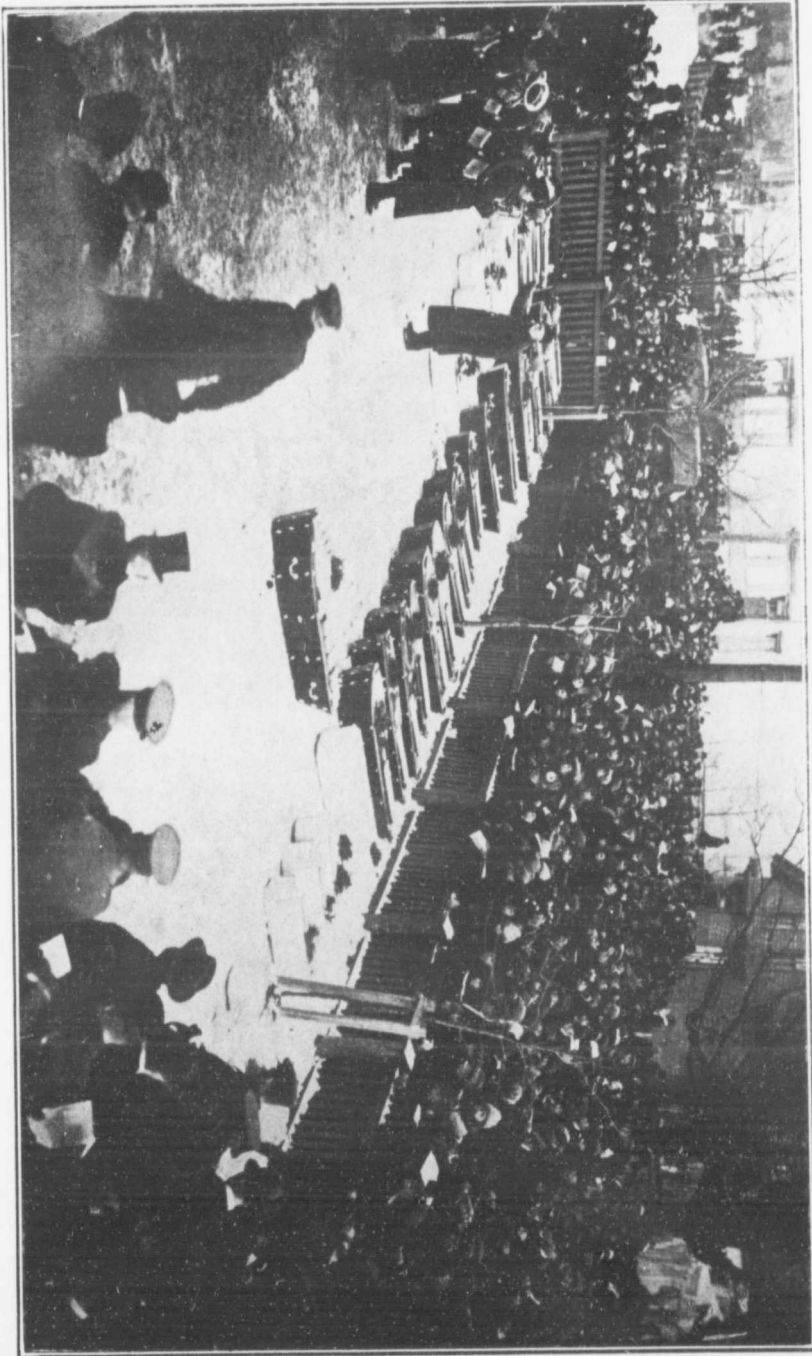
The work of collecting the bodies also began at once. A young officer, invalided from France who had charge of a party of soldiers said the bodies were lying as thick as on a battle-field. Many were found lying on their back, without a bone broken or a mark of injury on them. These had been killed by concussion. Some bodies were naked, having been torn from their beds. Horrible human fragments had to be gathered up—children's heads—scorched limbs. The bodies were piled in tens, to wait for the lorries which were to carry them to the school which had been turned into a morgue.

The wooden smashed confusion had taken fire, and was burning in a dozen places. There were living and injured underneath. All the engines in the city were on the spot at the earliest moment. Unfortunately the Chief of the Fire

Department and his Deputy were killed before they could direct the work. At the alarm of the burning ship they sped in their official motor to the scene of danger. The explosion caught them, flung their car high into the air and buried them both under a heap of earth. There was necessarily some delay and lack of direction at first, but the firemen worked heroically and were reinforced by brigades from neighboring points.

About eleven in the morning the only approach to a panic occurred. There was some danger of a second explosion, and the crowds of refugees and onlookers in the North End were warned to move south to the parks and open places. This order was run through the streets in the same mysterious way as the story of the collision, and there was a movement of the population southward, many abandoning their homes with doors and windows wide open. But time passed, nothing happened and everyone went back to his immediate and urgent task.

Almost as strange as the stories of the strange injuries are the stories of the hairbreadth escapes. Practically every survivor had a narrow escape from death or maiming. A man standing before his mirror shaving had the two large windows at each side driven in across the bed he had just risen from, daggers of glass stabbing it through and through. A woman in bed with her baby heard the heart-shaking rumble and instantly covered her face and the baby's with the bedclothes. The next instant the window frame crashed on them without inflicting a scratch. A girl telephone operator had just come off the night shift and had gone to bed. At the first noise she wrapped the bedclothes round her; the blast flung her out of the house unhurt, whilst everyone else in it was killed. At the Naval College two cadets were skylarking on a table when the same thing happened. They were both hurled through the window and alighted on a bank outside, without sustaining the least injury. Indeed the escape of the cadets is a marvel. They were cut with the flying glass, even got it in their eyes, but no one was killed, nor was the sight of anyone destroyed. The wife of a naval officer was at breakfast with her two children, while the baby was asleep in his cot upstairs. When the shock of the explosion was over she found herself in the middle of the room bending over the two children, the only clear spot where heavy furniture had not fallen. The staircase was smashed. She called the first blue-jacket she saw to her aid; he climbed up the ruin of the house and found the baby still in his cradle, protected from harm by a closet door which inclined across it. Forty-eight hours after the disaster a seven-months' baby was dug out of a smashed house in Richmond. He was



Public Funeral of Unidentified Dead.—Monday, December 17th. Services by all denominations.



Soldiers Searching for Bodies.—Covered bodies in foreground.

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semi-conscious but soon revived with proper treatment. He had been flung under the projecting front of the stove. Every one else in the house was killed.

And so on, and so on. There are as many stories of escapes as there are survivors. Every one begins, "If I had been there ten seconds before," or "after," as the case may be, there would have been no story to tell.

What happened on December the sixth is the worst calamity that ever befell Halifax. The material damage is estimated at thirty millions. The whole North End beyond Wellington Barracks will have to be rebuilt. The physical suffering, the mental anguish from wounds, blinding, crippling, bereavement, cannot be reckoned by human calculation. On Friday it began to snow, softly at first, but soon the wind blew with blizzard force. In the afternoon a pitiful little procession followed a hearse from St. Mary's, which looks like an old Gothic ruin. "We shall have many funerals now," said a sad woman looking on. There are hundreds of bodies blackened, charred, dismembered, awaiting sepulchre. "The visitation of God?"

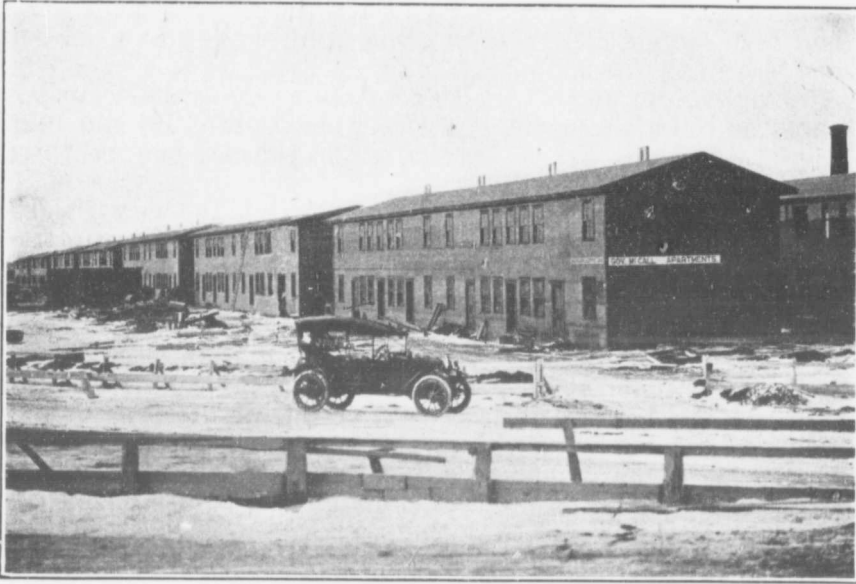
Remarkable Force of Explosion.

Word from Louisburg states that two distinct sounds of the explosion which occurred in this City on December 6th, were distinctly heard at that place shortly after nine o'clock. Two riggers who were working on the aerial masts at the wireless plant heard the sounds distinctly, and it was also heard by Mrs. Johnstone, wife of the traffic superintendent, and by a member of the guard. The commander of the guard, on his arrival at the barracks with his detachment reported the circumstances to his officer, which he thought was target practice out at sea. Louisburg harbor lies to the eastward of Halifax, a distance between 180 and 190 miles.

A 1½ ton boat 36 feet in length was washed or thrown 150 feet up a hill on the Dartmouth side.

A part of the ten ton anchor on the S. S. Mont Blanc was thrown to the exhibition grounds and was found in the main building.

Commander Murray's boat, a craft 65 feet in length which was near the steamer Mont Blanc at the time of the explosion was thrown out of the water on to a pier and through a shed there.



Homes for the Homeless.—Gov. McCall Apartments, Massachusetts Ave.

CHAPTER IX.

Re-Construction and Investigation.

WITH commendable foresight, before the first day passed, those sending out appeals for help, asked that putty, glass and building materials be included along with doctors, nurses, clothing and food. Little could be accomplished towards repair until after the first Sunday, but from this day on, everywhere carpenters and glaziers were at work. Private enterprise did much for the business districts and the plate glass insurance companies, losers to the extent, it is estimated of \$150,000 placed contracts for the larger windows. Col. R. S. Low, who made a high reputation as the builder of Camp Borden, came down to aid the re-construction committee and took charge of the work of erection of temporary houses. It was early decided that the temporary tenements constructed should be on public ground—on the Common and on the Exhibition grounds so that they could not be retained by private interests and made a source of revenue after the final reconstruction of the North End. The first week in January saw seven large tenements of wood constructed on the Exhibition grounds—a week later there were three rows of such

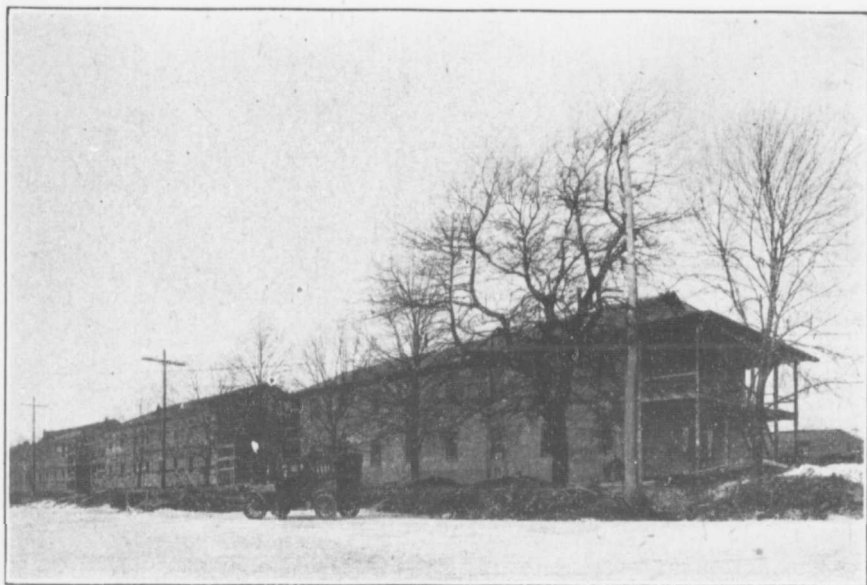


Cook House—for Reconstruction Workers on Exhibition Grounds.

houses. There are to be forty of these houses or units, each of which will have accommodation for eight families. As you walk thru "Massachusetts Avenue" the first street in this new and quite modern village, the first block is known as "Governor McCall apartments," these names having been used in honor of the State that so generously supplied the money and material with which these buildings are being constructed.

A visit inside showed a good sized living room with a soft coal burning stove. In the centre of the room was the dining table, in "Mission" style, with oak finish, and chairs of the same type. The floor was covered with linoleum. Off this is a bedroom also with linoleum and a white bedstead, and fitted out with sheets and blankets, and a coverlet. A second bedroom and the kitchen are also comfortably furnished. These apartments each have a nicely fitted bath room.

The forty buildings will have eight apartments or houses to each building, the whole accommodating 320 families, and the total capacity being 1920 to 2240 persons. The living room is 13 x 13 feet, one bedroom 10 x 13 and the other 10 x 12 feet, while the kitchen is 10 x 12. The buildings are calculated to last for five years without renewal of material. The houses are situated on the race track enclosure, with entrance from Almon street. The rent for each apartment is \$12 per month.



Temporary Homes—Now being erected on Bell Road.

The buildings are being erected in six rows facing east and west on streets forty feet wide, the water and drain pipes leading from mains laid in the rear of the houses.

On the South Common, fronting on the Bell Road are being built twenty-four houses. Twenty buildings are being erected on South Common, facing North Park Street, a similar type to those on the exhibition grounds, though somewhat smaller. The fittings are similar and the rent is \$10 per month.

Then there is another type of building for the garrison football grounds, corner of Sackville and Park streets. This is the apartment type, four apartments opening on a common hall. They contain three rooms, lavatories, but no bath rooms; will be supplied with stoves, if desired, and with running hot water from a heater looked after by the janitor, so that every apartment will have hot and cold water. The rent will be \$7.50 per month. There will be several two roomed apartments for the use of married couples without children and these will rent at \$5 per month.

"Cavicchiville" at the corner of Almon Street and Kempt Road is a splendid example of rapid construction carried on by Cavicchi and Pagano who have the contract for clearing the debris in the devastated district.

As soon as the contract was awarded them, they started to provide sleeping apartments, cook-houses, etc., to accommo-

date the hundreds of men required for their job, and within eight days they had seven buildings erected, and despite delays of material, within a fortnight they had them ready for occupancy. The buildings are from 60 to 175 feet in length, and most of them with 30 foot frontage.

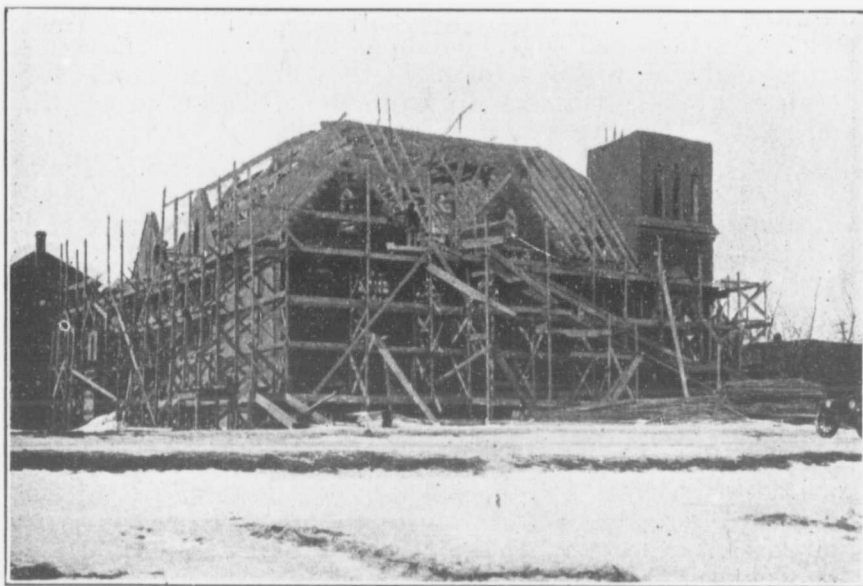
They have now 400 men clearing properties, and others to arrive for whom they are preparing accommodation. Notwithstanding the quick time in which these buildings have had to be erected, every accommodation has been provided. The living apartments are made comfortable with good bedding and blankets, and the building electric lighted. The buildings will be thoroughly cleaned twice a week, and with the lavatory provided, first-class sanitary arrangements are assured.

The cook-house is fitted with boilers, stoves and other appliances, and the dining hall is not only spacious, but everything is new in the way of dishes. The eatables provided are such as to be greatly appreciated by the men, and the rush for the camp at the hour for concluding the day's work shows the pleasant expectancy of the men in finishing their labors.

Contractors engaged in house building include the Eastern Investment Company, on the South Common, and Falconer & McDonald, while Bates & McMahon were putting up buildings for the re-construction committee on the Garrison common.

All over the city the committee undertook the repair of partially destroyed houses in an endeavour to make them habitable for their former occupants and one criticism directed at the work of the committee was that this part of the re-construction work did not receive sufficient attention. However, a visitor returning to Halifax, later in January, after seeing the ruins immediately after the explosion, marvelled at what had been accomplished under difficulties, realizing that it had been a task almost beyond human powers to deal efficiently and fairly with every case of distress, though this was, without doubt, the aim and desire of the heroic band of volunteer workers.

It was with something of relief that on Monday, January 21, the announcement was received that a federal "Halifax Relief Commission" had been appointed by the Dominion Government to take over the work of relief and re-construction, the commission consisting of T. Sherman Rogers, K. C. and Hon. W. B. Wallace, judge of the County Court, two well-known Halifax citizens and F. L. Fowke, ex-M. P., former mayor of Oshawa, Ont. By this time the re-construction work had grown to immense proportions. More than 3,000 orders for repairs to houses had been completed and 80 acres



New St. John's Presbyterian Church—Now under construction.

of glass, 100 acres of tar paper and 30 acres of wall board replaced and supplied free to people who could not afford such supplies. The investment in temporary flats represented \$1,000,000 and it was estimated that nearly 1,000 families would be provided for in this manner by March 1. Altogether 7,500,000 feet of lumber were purchased by the committees. The city's population had been swelled by 3500 workmen, brought to the city, of whom 2300 were directly on the pay roll of the re-construction committee, drawing about \$65,000 a week. In addition to contractors mentioned above, The Cook Construction Co., is engaged in re-construction work.

Visit of Cabinet Ministers.

Prior to announcement of appointment of the commission the Dominion Government had shown a deep interest in the welfare of the stricken city. The federal grant was made \$5,000,000 of which \$1,000,000 was voted immediately. We have seen how Sir Robert Borden hurried to the stricken city, arriving the day after the disaster and remaining over the week end though in the midst of a strenuous election campaign. On the Saturday evening following the disaster he attended an important meeting presided over by Admiral Chambers, called primarily to consider the restoration of the harbor. Assurances were given there by the premier that the placing

of the harbor in commission on its original efficient basis would be a first call on the government's resources. C. A. Hayes, general manager of Canadian Government railways, was there to give a resume of the practical work to be done to restore the regular service and his promises for reopening the docks and railway lines seem to have been amply fulfilled.

Hon. F. B. Carvell, Minister of Public Works, the following week cancelled his election appointments in New Brunswick and spent the week-end in Halifax, going over the ruins and absorbing much information of value for the use of the department. His ready grasp of any situation and his keen insight in administrative affairs also proved of much assistance to the relief committees in certain conferences held.

The third week-end saw five federal ministers in Halifax. Hon. Mr. Carvell returned and with him came Hon. C. C. Ballantyne, Minister of Marine and Fisheries, Hon. S. C. Mewburn, Minister of Militia, Hon. J. D. Reid, Minister of Railways and Hon. A. K. MacLean, chairman of after-war reconstruction. Announcement was made that the naval college moved to Kingston, Ont., after the disaster, would be returned to Halifax in an improved building and that the military buildings, including the Wellington barracks would be replaced with additions and improvements. The minister of marine spoke also of enlargement of dry dock facilities and the establishment of a steel ship-building plant. Further provision of harbor facilities as finances permitted was promised by Hon. J. D. Reid while an announcement of importance also was that Halifax would once more be used as a port for examining neutral cargoes, this practice having been suspended for some weeks following the explosion.

Hon. Mr. Ballantyne met the very insistent demand of citizens generally; the feeling finding expression through the press and in a resolution by the Commercial Club by undertaking solemnly to have conducted a searching investigation into the responsibility for and cause of the collision which led to the disaster.

He announced also that steps had been taken to ensure that no such an occurrence could take place again, though happenings during the third week in January, as revealed at the admiralty inquiry just concluded, would indicate that this promise was not very well carried out—if it be true that on Wednesday, January 16, a munitions ship and an oil steamer passed each other in The Narrows, narrowly escaping collision. Only at this date was it discovered that pilots were taking steamers out without reporting to the naval examiner's office, this having been the case with the *Imo* on the morning

of the disaster. As a result of these disclosures Commander Wyatt, of the naval examiner's office, was suspended pending further inquiry, though in his evidence he maintained that he had called attention to this practice in letters to his superior, Captain Martin. The letters, however, could not be produced.

The following is the text of the judgment:

Sir,—Having been directed by the honorable, the Minister of Marine, to hold a formal inquiry into the cause of the explosion on the steamship *Mont Blanc* on Dec. 6, 1917, I have to report as follows:

That, as directed, I had associated with me as nautical assessors Captain Demers of Ottawa, dominion wreck commissioner, and Captain Walter Hose, R. C. N., of the city of Halifax. I began the inquiry on the 13th day of December A. D. 1917, and having heard all the witnesses that could throw any light on the situation, and having conferred with the nautical assessors, I have reached the following conclusions and desire to report as follows:

1—The explosion on the S. S. *Mont Blanc* on Dec. 6 was undoubtedly the result of a collision in the harbor of Halifax between the S. S. *Mont Blanc* and the S. S. *Imo*.

2—Such collision was caused by violation of the rules of navigation.

3—That the pilot and master of the S. S. *Mont Blanc* were wholly responsible for violating the rules of the road.

4—That Pilot MacKey, by reason of his gross negligence, should be forthwith dismissed by the pilotage authorities and his license cancelled.

5—In view of the gross neglect of the rules of navigation by Pilot MacKey the attention of the law officers of the crown should be called to the evidence taken on this investigation with a view to a criminal prosecution of such pilots.

6—We recommend to the French authorities such evidence with view to having Captain Lamedec's license cancelled and such captain dealt with according to the law of his country.

7—That it appearing that the pilotage authorities in Halifax have been permitting Pilot MacKey to pilot ships since the investigation commenced and since the collision above referred to, we think the authorities, i. e., pilotage authorities, deserving of censure. In our opinion the authorities should have promptly suspended such pilot.

8—The master and pilot of the *Mont Blanc* are guilty of neglect of the public safety in not taking proper steps to warn the inhabitants of the city of a probable explosion.

9—Commander Wyatt is guilty of neglect in performing his duty as chief examination officer in not taking proper steps to ensure the regulations being carried out and especially in not keeping himself fully acquainted with the movements and intended movements of vessels in the harbor.

10—In dealing with the chief examination officer's negligence, in not ensuring the efficient carrying out of traffic regulations by the pilots, we have to report that the evidence is far from satisfactory, that he ever took any efficient steps to bring to the notice of the captain superintendent neglect on the part of the pilots.

11—In view of the allegations of disobedience of the chief examina-



Portable Houses sent from New York.—Mr. Weir, who had these photographs taken especially for this book, is seen in centre foreground.

tion officer's orders by pilots, we do not consider such disobedience was the proximate cause of the collision.

12—It would seem that the pilots of Halifax attempt to vary the well known rules of the road and in this connection we think Pilot Renner in charge of an American tramp steamer on the morning of the collision deserving of censure.

13—That the regulations governing the traffic in Halifax harbor, in force since the war, were prepared by the competent naval authorities; that such traffic regulations do not specifically deal with the handling of ships laden with explosives, and we recommend that such competent authority forthwith take up and make specific regulations dealing with such subject; we realize that whilst the war goes on under present conditions explosives must move, but in view of what has happened we strongly recommend that the subject be dealt with specifically by the proper authorities.

Given under my hand at the city of Halifax this fourth day of February A. D. 1918.

(Sgd.) DRYSDALE, L. J. A.

Concurred in by the nautical assessors respecting all nautical matters

(Signed)

L. A. DEMERS, F. R. A. S.,

WALTER HOSE, Acting Captain, R.C.N.

Court Finding Creates Sensation.

The finding of Justice Drysdale's commission, made public on Monday, February 4, created a tremendous sensation, recommending as it did criminal action against Captain Lame-

dec and pilot Francis MacKey, in charge of the Mont Blanc, as primarily responsible for the collision which caused the explosion, by violating the rules of the road. Commander Wyatt is censured for not bringing to the attention of his superiors violation of the regulations by pilots, but such neglect, the report finds, was not the proximate cause of the disaster. The pilotage commission is censured for not taking action in the case of Pilot MacKey immediately after the disaster.

Immediately after the reading of the finding as above, warrants were issued at the instance of the attorney-general's department for the arrest of Captain Lemedec and Pilot MacKey, with Pilot William Hayes named as the specific victim in the manslaughter charge. The warrant sets forth that "Frank MacKey of Halifax, aforesaid pilot, and Aime Lemedec at present of the same place, sea captain, did at Halifax aforesaid on the 6th day of December A. D. nineteen hundred and seventeen, unlawfully kill and slay one William Hayes, as this dependent is informed and doth verily believe and hath good grounds for so believing."

Chief of Police Hanrahan at once took Pilot MacKey into custody and Captain Lemedec was apprehended half an hour later at the corner of Prince and Granville streets. Both were admitted to heavy bail and preliminary hearing takes place before Stipendiary McLeod who issued the warrant.

In this inquiry, Mr. Justice Drysdale was assisted by Captain Howes, R. N., and L. A. Demers, dominion wreck Commissioner. Counsel engaged in the inquiry are: W. A. Henry, K. C., for the Dominion Government; Humphrey Mellish, K. C., for the owners of the Mont Blanc; C. J. Burchell, K. C., for the owners of the steamer Imo; Frank Bell, for the city of Halifax; Andrew Cluney, K. C., for the province of Nova Scotia and T. R. Robertson, K. C., for the Halifax Pilotage Commission. At the opening of the inquiry, Joseph P. Nolan, of New York, regular counsel for the owners of the Mont Blanc, was extended the privileges of the bar. An interesting legal fight is promised in the suit brought by owners of the Mont Blanc against the Imo for \$2,000,000.

Election Day and M. S. A. Enforcement.

Halifax was spared the upheaval of a war-time election. Immediately after the disaster postponement of the day of polling until January 28 was decided upon and just before nomination day, Dr. E. P. Blackadder, Laurier Liberal, and Ralph Eisenor, labor candidate, announced their withdrawal, allowing Hon. A. K. MacLean and Mayor P. F. Martin to be

elected unopposed. This was a decision generally approved by the large body of citizens intent upon restoring their homes and their city in the midst of the rigors of an unusually severe winter.

Operation of the Military Service Act, about to be enforced as the blow fell upon Halifax, was also deferred by the military authorities and the first call for men to report at the Nova Scotia Depot Battalion headquarters was not made until February 4.

Vexed questions which remain unsettled at present writing, and which come very close to the hearts of the people are those of federal responsibility for damage incurred by the explosion and the liability of insurance companies for the full amount of policies on destroyed properties. The recently appointed Halifax Relief Commission is to deal with the matter of Federal responsibility, having been authorized to report on all matters which fairly come under the province of the Dominion Government to replace. The insurance question is naturally linked up with that of Federal compensation and the suggestion has been made that the government re-imburse the insurance companies in settling claims where liability is not admitted, according to the terms of the policy. As for actual fire losses, claims have been filed, though underwriters, in accepting them, do not undertake to see they will be paid. The Commercial Club has taken steps to have test cases covering all the points arising, filed with the attorney-general's department so that the whole question can be settled expeditiously by reference to the Supreme Court and the expense and inconvenience of individual suits avoided.

J. B. Laidlaw, Canadian Manager of the Norwich Union Fire Insurance Company, after an inspection of the ruins placed the total insurance on property actually burned at \$1,500,000 and total damage, including \$2,000,000 of burned buildings, at \$5,000,000. This, however, is regarded as a very low estimate if Mr. Laidlaw meant to include all public and private property.

A New Halifax

To Be.

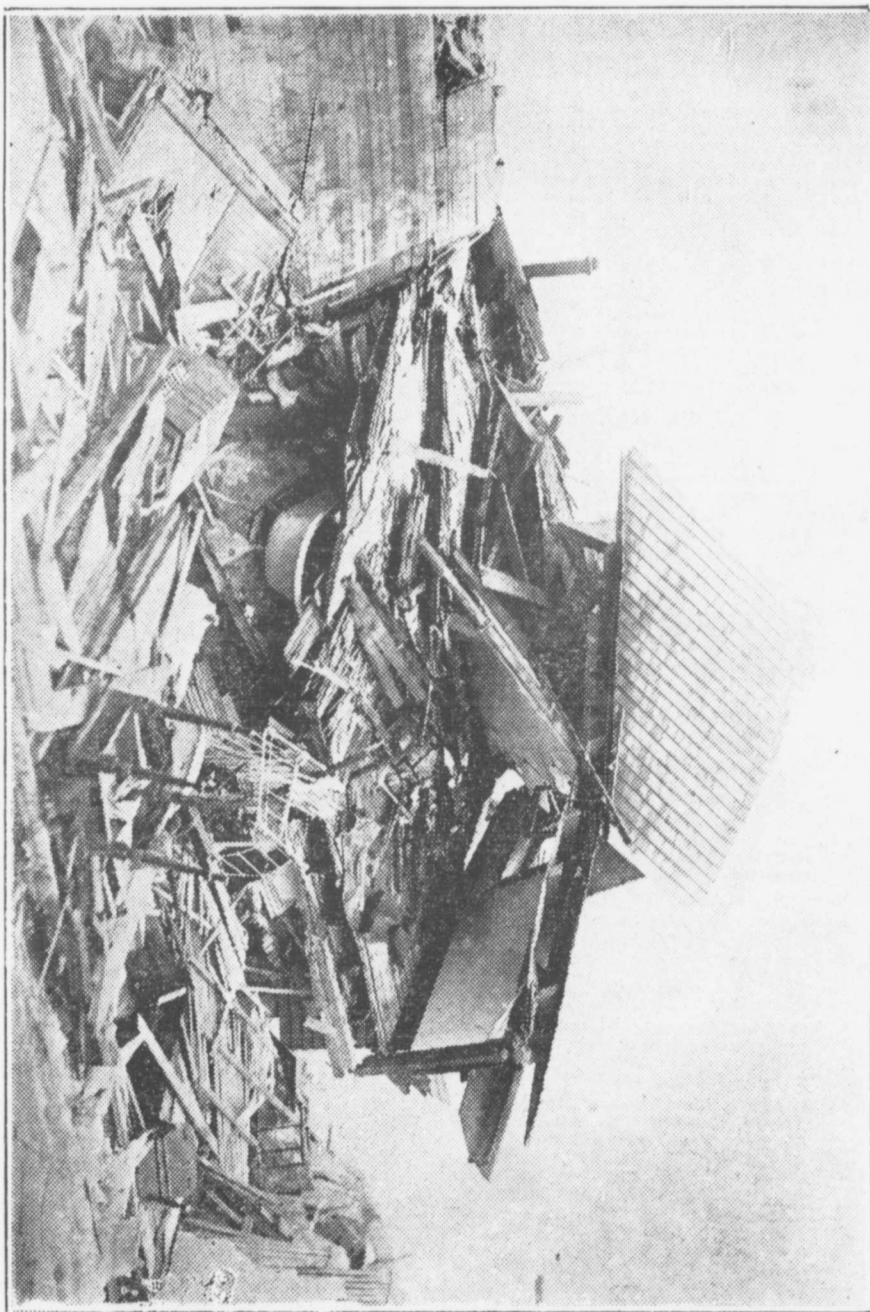
Two months have passed since the disaster and the stricken people generally have taken a fresh grip upon life. Except for those freshly made mounds in the cemeteries and the almost daily finds as the Richmond ruins are being picked over, piece by piece and brick by brick, the horror has lost its first poignancy, though the blind and the crippled will ever remain a constant reminder. With renewed courage and glorious

hope inspired by the generous outpouring of relief and sympathy, the people of the devastated city have resolutely put away the idea of black ruin and despair and are looking steadily ahead upon the vision of a fairer city than has been. God grant that Halifax may rise again from the ashes and the wreckage of the old city to become as before, a sturdy watchtower—shedding alike beams of welcome to the newcomer and farewell to the soldier who goes to fight the battles of freedom, standing forever a sentinel at the portals of Canada—land of liberty.



View from Fort Needham,—showing ground desolation of vast area over a mile from the Explosion

A Remarkable Picture—showing one of the ruined homes in the North end. Note the bathtub and the overturned child's bed.



Descriptions that May Aid in Identification of Unclaimed Unidentified Bodies Which Have Been Interred.

The following particulars obtained from the unclaimed bodies compiled by A. S. Barnstead, chairman of the mortuary committee, may be of value in proving identifications of persons missing since the disaster. Those seeking friends or relatives may perhaps discover items described here that will assist them in their search. Much of the clothing described it has been necessary to destroy because of its condition, but all possible has been retained and will be shown to the parties wishing to follow the clue found here.

GIRLS

No. 184

FEMALE—10 to 12 years. Long brown hair. Light complexion. One tooth out in front, otherwise good. Thin body. Two pair black bloomers. Grey underwear. Black garters and stockings. One black buttoned boot.

No. 191

FEMALE—About 10 years. Long light brown hair. Light complexion. One upper front tooth out. Blue and brown plaid coat. Corsets. White calico apron. Light Stanfield's underwear. Tan stockings. Vaccination marks on left arm and mole below elbow.

No. 256

FEMALE—9 to 10 years. Long dark hair. Light complexion. Good complete set of teeth. Dark heliotrope dress. Light blue bloomers. Red, white and black striped apron. Light flannel petticoat. Two child's handkerchiefs, one with blue border and spots and one with yellow border and pictures of children. Note in office: "Mary Purcell, Barrington St."

No. 299

FEMALE—About 5 years. Brown hair. No clothing. Note states: "From Hospital."

No. 373

FEMALE—About 4 years. Blue and white spotted pinafore. Light striped petticoat.

No. 389

FEMALE—About 2 years. Brown hair. Light complexion. Thin body. No clothing.

No. 401

FEMALE—About 7 years. Brown hair. Fresh complexion. Good teeth. Black bloomers. Light woolen ribbed underwear. Black woolen ribbed stockings. Black strapped slippers with "Mary Jane" buttons. Belt suspender around chest and waist.

No. 411

FEMALE—9 to 10 years. Light brown hair. Grey and black checked bodice with blue trimmings around cuffs, also red buttons. Black and white check-

ed skirt, black bloomers, ribbed underwear. Black stockings. Black buttoned boots. One gold necklace, very thin chain with heart pendant. Some who viewed the body thought it might be Lina Parslow of the Protestant Orphanage.

No. 412

FEMALE—About 12 years. Dark brown hair. Good teeth. Scotch plaid coat with fancy yellow bead buttons. White flannelet undershirt. Ribbed underwear. One gold ring, chased design, with imprint "K&S" on inside, on second finger of right hand, and small clasp pin on dress.

No. 427A

FEMALE—About 8 months (possibly more). Light brown hair. Fair complexion. Good teeth. Plump body. Flannel waist and skirt and pink flannel undershirt. Wrapped in patch work baby's blanket.

No. 465

FEMALE—About 5 years. Short light hair. Light complexion. Good teeth. Only small piece of black coat left. One light cotton undershirt and one white stocking. Note states: "Came from Flynn's Block."

No. 644

FEMALE—About 8 years. Light brown hair. Fair complexion. Good teeth. Black and white coat with red lining. Black skirt, white petticoat and fleece lined underwear. London Life Premium receipt book with name "Hyland." Note states: "From corner Barrington and Duffus streets."

No. 1106

FEMALE—About 5 years. Long brown hair. Light complexion. Blue sweater. Blue velvet dress. Note states: "Found under Flynn buildings."

No. 1121

FEMALE—About 14 years, from 1355 Barrington St. Long brown hair. Black and red checked dress. Grey combination underwear. Black stockings. Black button boots. Fancy set ring with green stone on 3rd finger right hand.

No. 1128

FEMALE—About 10 years. From Flynn Block. Light hair. Light complexion. White undershirt. Black buttoned boots.

BOYS

No. A2

MALE—6 to 8 years. Dark hair. Two front teeth out. Thin body. Dark brown coat sweater with light blue linings. Dark short pants. Black stockings.

No. 54

MALE—About 7 years (or more). Reddish hair. Light complexion. Black and white coat. Dark pants. Fleece lined underwear. Black stockings. In pockets: one "Canada" soldier's coat button and one "N. S. Forces" brass button, a lead pencil and garter.

No. 61

MALE—About 5 years. Brown hair. Light complexion. Good teeth. Body had been burnt but had remnants of black shoes, stockings and garters. Note states: "Covered by Scotch plaid quilt and woman's waist (white with red dots)."

No. 125

MALE—About 12 years—Medium brown hair, prominent teeth, light brown shirt, dark pants, grey medium weight underwear, black heavy wool stockings. Black laced boots.

137A

MALE—5 or 6 years. Light brown hair. Good teeth. Grey sweater with red border and red belt. Corduroy pants. Small signet ring with no name. Note states: "Found due east of Hillis' Foundry."

No. 166

MALE—About 5 years. Light brown hair. Blue eyes. Fresh complexion. Good teeth. Khaki coat. White sport shirt and suit of men's two piece light woollen underwear wrapped around body.

No. 193A

MALE—10 to 12 years. Brown hair. Thin body. Red sweater. Dark blue pants. Light underwear. Black stockings. Aluminum R.C. emblem.

No. 279

MALE—10 to 12 years. Shaggy brown hair. Fair complexion. Pug nose. Prominent upper teeth. No clothing.

No. 282.

MALE—7 or 8 years. About four feet tall. Brown hair. Slight build. Blue sweater. Teeth undershot. Black jumper. Black shoes. Or Male—About 13 years. Brown hair. Dark complexion. Dark sweater.

No. 288

MALE—11 to 12 years. Brown hair. Thin body. Blue sweater, jersey style. White fleece lined underwear. Narrow black leather belt. Black stockings. Black laced boots. Cheap brass ring with oval piece containing Union Jack. In pockets were some papers on which were the name "Albert Walsh" and two envelopes containing various strips of paper with the following names in rubber stamp type: "A Walsh, D. Smith, W. Johnson, M. Elliott, Cecil Finlay, Dorothy Smith, P. Cash, N. Elliott, Wm. Hart" along with other reading "Buy a Victoria Bond."

No. 295

MALE—6 to 8 years. Brown hair. Fair complexion. Good teeth. A bath towel and check petticoat over this body but no clothing. "A. J. Spencer" card on body states: "Found at Young and Gottingen Street."

No. 308

MALE—About 1 year. Light hair. Pink and blue dress. Two red ribbed small flannel undershirts. Pink striped flannel petticoat. Note states: "Body from 1402 Barrington St., brought along with No. 308B (which has since been identified as Miss T. L. Norton)"

No. 316

MALE—About 12 years. Brown hair. Good teeth. Thin body. Blue sweater coat. Light work shirt. Medium weight underwear. Long black stockings. One black laced boot.

No. 337-

MALE—About 12 years. Light brown hair. Fair complexion. Thin body. Light wool underwear. Black stockings. Black laced boots.

No. 362

MALE—About 10 years. Light brown hair. Face disfigured. Black and white coat and vest. Blue jersey. Dark shirt and black garters.

No. 396

MALE—About 11 years. Fresh complexion. Fair hair. Teeth irregular but good. Brown Norfolk coat. Black woollen mitts. White linen handkerchief. Grey sweater with green border. Brown short pants. Long black stockings. Two piece white cotton underwear. Light shirt. Black boots. Long-shoreman's button. Two lead pencils, green and yellow.

No. 426A

MALE—About 5 years. Light brown hair. Fair complexion. Good teeth. Light grey short pants. Blue shirt. Black ribbed stockings. Black laced boots.

No. 458

MALE—About 10 years. Light brown hair. Light complexion. Crooked teeth. Slender body. No clothing.

No. 463

MALE—About 5 years. Light hair. Light complexion. Good teeth. Thin body. No clothing. Note states: "Arrived from Snow's 5 p. m., December 12, 1917."

No. 466

MALE—About 1 year. Light hair. Light complexion. Good teeth. A piece of child's dress with blue collar and cuffs. Body was covered with a soldier's tunic marked "R.C.E." containing letters which indicate it to have belonged to "Sapper Claud Gaudet, Ives Point."

No. 1022A

MALE—About 9 months. No hair, but was light. Light complexion. Blue eyes. No clothing. Died at St. Mary's College Hospital, December 19, 1917. Arrived 11.10 a.m., December 20th.

No. 1023

MALE—About 7 years. Blond hair. Fair complexion. Fair teeth. One long light brown coat. Light brown sweater. Blue pants. Light underwear. One pair braces. Black stockings. black garters. Black lace boots. Body brought from V. G. Hospital with clothing not removed December 20th. Possibly William Gilbert or Geldert, 5 Stairs St.

No. 1122

MALE—About 18 months—from north of Flynn Block. White dress and grey underwear. Probably Maldrie child.

No. 1129

MALE—6 to 8 months—from Flynn Block. Light waist and two pieces light underwear.

No. 1163

MALE—About 13 years. Found north of Canadian Government Railways Cattle Shed at Richmond. Light brown hair, prominent front teeth. Dark blue pants. Blue and white striped flannelette drawers. Pair of cashmere stockings and one extra black ribbed sock on right foot, with bandage around right heel, indicating that he had a sore heel. One pair black laced boots. Owing to bruises; not easily identifiable by facial appearance.

No. 125

MALE—About 12 years. Medium brown hair. Prominent teeth. Light brown shirt. Dark pants. Grey medium weight underwear.

WOMEN.

No. 68

FEMALE—About 45 years. Black hair. Fresh complexion. Prominent front teeth. One piece flannel undershirt, and one piece grey underwear. White stockings and one black buttoned slipper. One plain gold band (wedding) ring, without marks.

No. 81.

FEMALE—Head gone. One ring with two stones missing, and a number of small pearls. Had sum of money and two car tickets in pockets.

No. 86

FEMALE—45 or 50 years. Brown hair. Fair complexion. Teeth decayed. Body spare. No clothing except piece of undershirt and blue stockings. Ring on 3rd finger left hand, narrow slight gold or brass ring with red stone. Came in with head and right arm bandaged from hospital.

No. 107

FEMALE—About 30 years. Light brown hair (short). Light complexion. Body spare. Face disfigured. Body partly burnt. No clothing except grey combination underwear and black stockings. One wedding ring, 14K., no marks. One set gold ring, ruby in centre and two small chip diamonds in each side. Letters "a-a" scratched on inside. Both rings were on third finger left hand.

No. 114

FEMALE—About 60 years. Short grey hair. Light complexion. Black and white striped coat and dress. Blue sweater and striped skirt. Grey short corsets. Grey combination underwear. Black stockings. Thin gold ring on the fourth finger left hand.

No. 138

FEMALE—About 30 years. Long dark hair. Medium light complexion. Good teeth. Plaid coat. White blouse. Light underwear. Black stockings. On third finger of right hand one 10K gold set ring with sides chased, six stones, of which three are missing; the remaining stones are red Pince Nez eyeglass. One Patriotic brooch. (British and French flags with maple leaf on shield in centre), and 7 morning car tickets.

No. 159

FEMALE—About 40 years. Short grey hair. False teeth. No clothing.

No. 183

FEMALE—65 to 70 years. Grey or white hair. Light complexion. The top teeth quite prominent. Thin body. Blue print dress or wrapper with white spots. Ferris waist corsets. Grey and black petticoat with black frills. Black stockings. Blue garters and pink night dress.

No. 190

FEMALE—About 30 years. Long light brown hair. Light complexion. Grey underwear and corsets. No other clothing. One back hair comb, dark reddish bone, set with brilliants. One bone hair pin. One wire hair pin.

No. 199

FEMALE—About 28 years. Long dark brown hair. Fair complexion. Good teeth. Man's black coat over corsets. Grey underwear and brown stockings. Brown lace boots. Pair of man's brown gloves.

No. 336

FEMALE—About 35 years. Short black hair. Corsets. Grey underskirt. Chemise. Black stockings. Two plain gold band rings on third finger of left hand (like wedding rings). One 10K somewhat worn, the other 18K, newer and less worn.

No. 353

FEMALE—About 60 years. Medium long grey hair. Light complexion. No teeth. Stout. Brown print wrapper. Light corsets and light combination underwear. White muslin drawers. Black stockings. One gold band plain wedding ring.

No. 380

FEMALE—About 45 years. Long brown hair. Fair complexion. Bad teeth. Black and white striped waist. Light underwear. Black stockings. Black laced boots.

No. 459

FEMALE—About 34 years. Long dark hair. Light complexion. Thin Corsets, light undershirt and white petticoat. Gold signet ring on second finger of right hand with monogram "EMCH" or "NCH".

No. 476A

FEMALE—About 35 years. Long light hair. Fair complexion. Gold plate on front teeth. Navy blue coat with fur collar. Blue Norfolk jacket. Brown knitted sweater. Grey skirt with black braid. White flannel petticoat. Union suit underwear. Linen chemise. Black stockings. Black high heeled No. 4 boots. One ring on third finger of left hand. Light colour gold plain band (like wedding ring). Tiffany style. One silver link chain—looks like neck chain.

No. 1025

FEMALE—About 32 years. Long dark hair. Dark complexion. Even teeth. Stout body. One plain band gold (wedding) ring. Came from V. G. Hospital, December 20, 1917. (Supposed to be Mrs. Drysdale).

No. 1074

FEMALE—About 20 years. Dark brown hair. Fair complexion. White waist. Brown striped underwaist and chemise. Short corsets. One black petticoat and one blue petticoat. Light ribbed pink underwear. Long black stockings. Patent leather No. 4 lace boots. One narrow plain band gold ring (no marks). One Tiffany style gold wedding ring. One gilt brooch open bar pattern with heart at centre and blue stone in centre of heart. Note states: "Found at 14 Duffus Street."

No. 1105

FEMALE—About 45 years. Dark hair mingled with grey. White waist. Blue serge skirt. Black underskirt. Black and white striped petticoat. Light combination underwear. Long black stockings. Black slippers with fancy button in front. One gold band (wedding ring on inside the words "Solid Gold.") Note states: "Found under Flynn Buildings. Received December 22, 1917."

MEN

No. 3 Special

MALE—Age 26-30 years. Light hair, clean shaven. Ruddy complexion. Body fairly muscular and medium thin. Weight about 155 lbs. Dark pants. Black working shirt (flannel). Black knitted tie. White Stanfield Underwear. Grey woollen socks. Black buttoned boots.

No. 37.

MALE—Age about 38. Brown hair. Teeth, several out in front. Body muscular. Body practically nude. Gold signet ring with initials "W.J.J." Much worn. The last "J" is indistinct.

No. 43

MALE—About 28 years. Fair complexion. Teeth irregular. White coat and pants, black vest and sweater. Fleece lined cotton underwear. Black stockings. Black elastic side shoes. One gold or brass ring—place for stone in centre, but no setting.

No. 48

MALE—Age 27 (or less). Full set of teeth. Dark brown hair. Grey undershirt. No other clothing. Scapulars around neck. Two metal Roman Catholic emblems.

No. 79

MALE—Headless. Fleece lined vest. Dark shirt, Light grey, medium weight undershirt. Black socks. Black laced boots.

No. 103

MALE—Age about 40 years. Dark hair. Fair complexion. Face and body disfigured. No clothing except remains of one sock and one shoe.

No. 108

MALE—Age doubtful, estimated from 14 to 30 years. Medium light complexion. One tooth out in front. Flat nose. Corduroy pants. Heavy grey coat, sweater. Light brown shirt. Grey ribbed underwear. Heavy long black stockings. Black lace boots. One light colored kerchief, with red border.

No. 115

MALE—About 40 years. Brown hair. Grey sweater. Grey ribbed underwear. Black socks and boots.

No. 126

MALE—45 to 50 years. Light hair and mustache. Ruddy complexion. White heavy wool underwear. Heavy grey socks. Heavy tan soldier's boots. Some who viewed the body thought it was Joe Kerby who lived on Kings Place (off North Street) and employed at Dry Dock.

No. 132

MALE—About 30 years. Dark hair. False teeth, two gold crowns in upper jaw, one tooth out. Black shirt. Dark coat. Dark vest. Dark coat sweater. Grey underwear. Black woolen socks. Black laced boots with rubber heels. Pocket comb with celluloid case and metal edge. Two cuff buttons 10K gold. Initials "J. R. D." or "L.R.D." One collar button.

No. 141

MALE—30 to 39 years (possibly less). Light brown hair. Ruddy complexion. Uneven prominent teeth. Brown pants. Blue heavy sweater. Grey woolen underwear. Black socks. Tan laced boots. White handkerchief.

No. 142

MALE—About 28 years of age. Light brown hair. Gold filling in front teeth, and one gold crown. Tattoo marks on right arm with heart, Norwegian flag, horseshoe and female figure, also "Sailor's Grave" and "Good Luck." On left arm the figures of a sailor boy and girl and the word "Farewell." One enamel button with the letters "B. R. T." Dark coat and pants. Blue overalls and brown overalls.

Khaki shirt with blue collar. Heavy underwear. No. 8141. Grey woolen socks. Black low cut shoes. Note on file states: "Probably a Norwegian sailor, a native of Bergen, who was on the lake steamer "Emery L. Ford" last summer.")

No. 193

MALE—About 38 years. Dark hair. Sandy mustache. Two teeth out in front. Tattoo marks of horse-shoe, heart and bunch of flowers on left arm, and of heart, man on horseback and the word "Amen" on right arm. Blue striped working shirt. Dark pants. Gray ribbed underwear. Black heavy laced boots.

No. 196

MALE—36-40 years of age. Black hair slightly bald on top. Full set of natural teeth. Muscular body. Vaccination mark on left arm. Tattoo mark on back of clasped hand underneath the letters "H.M." "A" and "Forget Maggie." Thin unlined, black trousers. One print black striped working shirt, marked on neck "Adams, 844 Argyle St., Glasgow, Scotland.

No. 204

MALE—28 to 30 years. Dark hair and short mustache. Sallow complexion. Note states: "From Richmond." No clothing.

No. 212

MALE—About 36 years. Black curly hair. Rosy complexion. Two upper teeth out. Sailor's heavy blue overcoat with "Peter Shaw" written on a corner. Light blue muffler. Dark vest and pants. Brown sweater. Flannel shirt. Fleece lined ribbed underwear. Black boots with tin toe caps. One long brass key on a steel ring. Note at office states: "Partial identification. Possibly Frank Robicheau, mason. Identified by Peter Fougere."

No. 255

MALE—20 to 23 years. Dark brown hair. Ruddy complexion. Even teeth, but overlapping. No clothing. Body received with bandage on right wrist.

No. 263

MALE—38 to 40 years. Black hair. Dark eyebrows. Dark coat and vest, white shirt, colored tie. "President's" suspenders. Dark trousers. Woolen underwear. Black wool socks. Black laced shoes, nearly new.

No. 284

MALE—About 35 years. Dark hair. Pointed nose. Some upper front teeth out. Body received from Hospital. One 18K gold signet ring with monogram "S.H.B." and one 9K gold, five stone set ring (four stones missing, remaining stone red) marked "J.S." on inside.

No. 311

MALE—About 35 years. Dark brown hair. Two front teeth with gold crowns. Muscular body. Blue work shirt. Heavy brown coat sweater. Dark pants. Grey ribbed underwear. Black woollen socks. Black laced boots. Red handkerchief with white border and white dots. One black jackknife with brown wood handle.

No. 312

MALE—Age uncertain. Dark hair. Overalls. Blue coat sweater. Blue vest and pants. Black shirt. Grey ribbed underwear. Grey socks. Military boots. Eight morning car tickets. Two red handkerchiefs. One package cigarettes. A small enamelled brooch pin with white border on which are the words "Lincoln School" and red centre with the figures "1911". Note states: "Said to be from Dockyard."

No. 322

MALE—About 30 years. Heavy blue sweater. One pair thick grey socks. Black lace military boots. Fleece lined drawers. Light undershirt. One black stocking.

No. 324

MALE—About 30 years or less. Red-brown hair. Light complexion. Gold bridge work in teeth. Heavy blue coat. Black and white pyjama coat. Khaki shirt. Dark pants. Leather belt. Blue jersey. Black socks and canvas and leather, brown, low cut shoes. (A brown blanket with red stripes also came with this body.)

No. 330

MALE—About 28 years. Black hair. Dark heavy eyebrows. Fair complexion. Good teeth. Blue cap. Dark check muffler. Black coat. Dark gray waistcoat. Dark cardigan jacket. Grey vest. Two pairs grey ribbed underwear. Dark socks. Black laced boots. One narrow leather belt. In pockets: large jack-knife with hooked blade, two lead pencils, leather glove, two boxes matches.

No. 345

MALE—About 38 years. Dark hair. Medium dark complexion. Good teeth. Blue overalls. Blue sailor's sweater. Dark gray sweater. Black and white shirt. Brass cuff links. Black pants. One black handled two-blade knife (both blades broken). Gold signet ring on third finger of right hand with monogram "S.S."

No. 347

MALE—About 35 years. Black hair. Small mustache. Presumably a West Indian or negro. Dark complexion. Good teeth. Muscular body. Light blue overalls and one piece of army underwear. Body wrapped in heavy brown blanket.

No. 355

MALE—About 35 years. Dark hair. Dark complexion. Bad teeth, several out in front. Tatto mark on left arm with letter "T" and the representation of a flower. White duck overalls. Blue serge pants with white braces. White shirt. White woollen underwear. One pair of dark socks and one pair of light socks. Canvas shoes.

No. 367

MALE—About 40 years (possibly less) Brown hair. Fair complexion. Good teeth. Heavy blue socks. No other clothing.

No. 383

MALE—About 40 years. Brown hair. Head disfigured. Grey ribbed heavy underwear. Black socks. Brown laced boots.

No. 397

MALE—About 20 years. Brown hair. Fresh complexion. Some top teeth missing. Tattoo mark on left arm and the word "MOTHER" on a scroll surrounded by a Rose and Dagger. Dark grey heavy shirt. Light brown woollen undershirt with number 157721 written with indelible ink. One 18K gold signet ring with plain shield, marked "E and W" on the inside (probably maker's name).

No. 407

MALE—About 35 years. Gray hair. Sandy mustache. Small nose. Face otherwise disfigured. Dark coat, vest and pants. Blue and white muffler. Dark blue coat sweater. Pink and blue striped flannel shirt. White woollen underwear. Brown woollen socks. Black laced boots. One English florin. One American cent. Sixty cents Canadian silver.

No. 408

MALE—Much disfigured. Heavy tweed cap. Dark heavy overcoat. Blue coat. Dark vest. Gray ribbed drawers. Brown laced boots. Brown strap belt. One gold 10K signet ring on third finger of right hand with monogram "J.S." One key ring "The Great West Life Assee. Co." with two Miller lock keys, two Eagle lock keys, one door key and one small key. Gold watch, "Andrew & Co., Winnipeg, Man., No. 1565808," hunting case, 14K Banner No. 29552, with floral design chased on both back and front. One two-blade penknife with brown wooden handle. Six packages Players Cigarettes.

No. 455

MALE—About 35 years. Light brown hair. Light complexion. Good teeth. Small mouth. Pointed nose. Corduroy pants. Gray union suit underwear. Gray heavy woollen socks. Heavy black laced boots.

No. 456(a)

MALE—About 50 years. Gray hair. Sandy mustache. Brown sweater. Gray woollen socks. New tan laced boots. One brown string tie.

No. 461

MALE—22 to 25 years. Brown hair. Light complexion. Some upper teeth missing. Muscular. Tattoo mark on left arm "Mary Kerr Wm. West" with the letters "PW" and two hearts. On right arm letters "M. McC and IW." One black and white striped shirt. One gray woollen shirt. Khaki pants. Gray ribbed underwear. Gray socks. Black laced boots. Narrow strap belt.

No. 473

MALE—About 30 years. Red hair. Fair complexion. Bad teeth. Thin body. No clothing. Note at office: "Died Sunday 9th December. From Snows. Supposed to be Johnston."

No. 478

MALE—About 32 years. Dark hair. Light complexion. Gold filled teeth. Muscular body. Tattoo mark on left arm representing a heart and the letter "E". One heavy gold or gold-plated ring on second finger of right hand. Mark on inside 9ct. or 96.

No 480

MALE—Headless. Age uncertain. Brown or blue sweater. Heavy blue pants. Black and white work shirt. Heavy gray socks. Black working shoes. Four large keys on ring similar to those used on steamships. Three steel keys and two Yale keys on smaller ring. A piece torn from a calendar for November 1917, with the date 19th crossed out with pencil. Small empty leather card case. Small coin case, empty. One black handled pen knife, two blades, one broken. Crucifix and R. C. emblem. One black and white hankerchief marked "P.L."

No 494(a)

MALE—About 32 years. Dark hair and fair complexion. No clothing. Body otherwise disfigured.

No. 498

MALE—Age about 24. Black hair. Dark complexion. Body rather thin and tall. One small gold signet ring on little finger of left hand with initials "J.F.A." Note on file says: "One two-piece white underwear placed on by Snows. Found Admiralty property."

No. 499

MALE—Age about 36. Black hair. Dark complexion. Body large and muscular. Large tattoo mark on right arm of Christ nailed to the Cross. Note on body: "Admiralty man from Snows."

No. 548

MALE—Charred remains of man with part of collar unburnt. "Tooke—17—Hunt Club." Laundry mark thought to be "R 106" or "S 166."

No. 578

MALE—(Formerly 331). Charred remains of man wearing brown vest and sweater coat. Wrapped in rubber cover. Card states "From Dock yard."

No. 592

MALE—(Formerly 334). Charred remains of man taken from Dockyard. Wrapped in ubber sheet with brown overcoat containing broken rule

No. 779

MALE—About 40 years. Brown hair. Blue serge sweater. Gray fleece-lined underwear. Black socks. Note states: "From 1371 Barrington St."

No. 785

MALE—About 43 years. Dark hair. Thin body. Black overcoat. Bib overalls, Khaki shirt. Brown coat-sweater. Gray fleece lined underwear. Black socks. Black laced boots. One two-bladed knife with celluloid handle (mottled yellow and black). Note states: "Found near A. W. Moody's house (Orrs) 47 Albert Street." Another card states: "From vacant house, 1363 Barrington Street."

Charred Remains from the Following Addresses Remained Unclaimed and were Buried at Various Dates.

24 Albert Street.
43 Albert Street (2 lots).
Opposite 74 Albert Street (2 lots).
80 Albert Street (Townsend).
92 Albert Street.
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Arrestrops—back of orphanage.
Barrington Street. House north of Cameron's.
1371 Barrington Street.
1311 Barrington Street (3 lots).
1299 Barrington Street, in front of shop.
1337 Barrington Street (7 lots) Shea's house.
1355—Barrington Street.
1259—Barrington Street.
Lorne Club.
Richmond Printing Company premises (11 lots).

Office Hillis' Foundry (man).
 Blacksmith's shop (English workman).
 North Railway track, opposite Hillis' Foundry.
 Near Cattle Shed at Richmond.
 Southeast corner Hanover and Barrington Streets. House next to Refinery shed Richmond.
 8 Rector St.

Hill ' House Richmond Street.
 1 Roome Street (2 lots).
 3 Roome Street.
 31 Veith St.
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 East Young—near Barrington.

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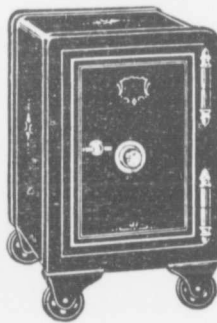
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