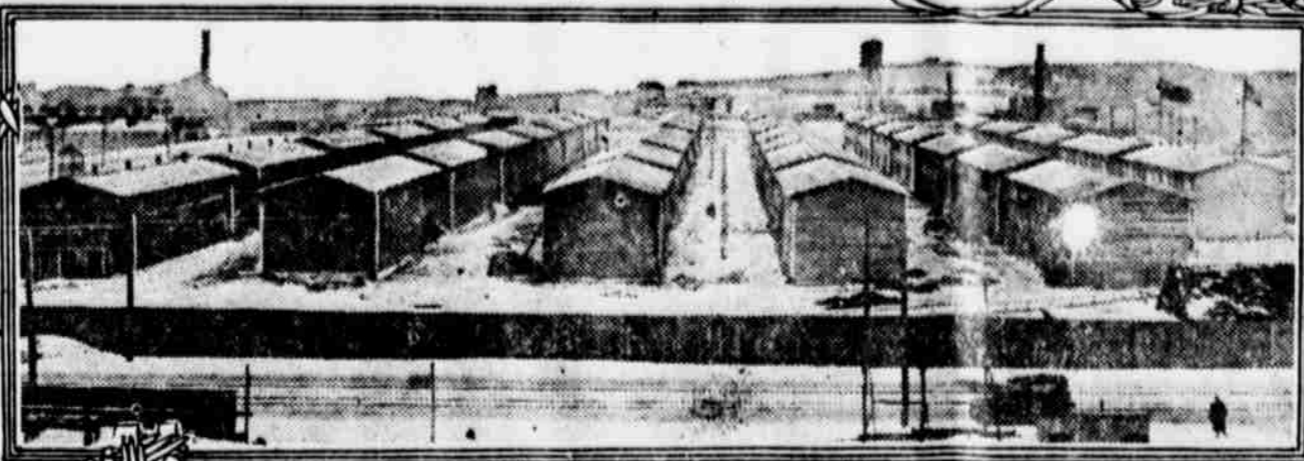


T. SHERMAN ROGERS, CHAIRMAN  
HALIFAX RELIEF COMMISSION

# New Halifax Rises From Ruins



TEMPORARY BUILDINGS  
ERECTED TO HOUSE THE  
HOMELESS

## Handsome Homes Replace Those De- molished in the Great Disaster That Wrecked Big Area One Year Ago

**A** YEAR ago, on December 6, one-fifth of the city of Halifax was blasted off the map by the explosion of the steamer Mont Blanc's cargo of TNT. About 2,000 people were killed, between 5,000 and 6,000 were wounded, 36 were made totally blind, the sight of about 350 people was seriously impaired, a large number of dependents were left uncared for, and about \$35,000,000 worth of property was wiped out in a few seconds.

A year has passed. What has been done for Halifax and what has Halifax done for itself?

A generous and sympathetic world handed Halifax \$3,500,000 to aid in alleviating its distress. The British government gave \$5,000,000 and the Canadian government, already under vast expense because of the war, gave \$5,000,000 shortly after the TNT explosion occurred, and later added \$7,000,000 more so that Halifax would be assured of a square deal.

The sum totals \$20,500,000—one of the greatest contributions ever made by a big-hearted public to a stricken city.

What has been done, or is being done, with this vast sum? Many people who opened their hearts and their purses to Halifax would like to know, and this article is designed to supply the information.

The figures given above tell in part what was done for Halifax, but what Halifax has done for itself is a far longer story. Although the victim of a disaster which at once ranked her among the great tragedy cities of the world—Pompeii, Martinique, Galveston and San Francisco—Halifax staggered to her feet a few seconds after the titanic blast had laid waste her streets, destroyed her homes and littered the snow with her dead, and went to work to fetch order out of chaos.

"From a spectacular and heroic point of view," declared George MacDonald of the Canadian Press, "this continent has never produced such a daring set of civilian heroes as sprang up at the call of duty in those bleak December days in Halifax. History teems with horrors—recent history particularly—but no parallel exists for the sequence of affliction with which Halifax was deluged. Swift and appalling death from the withering explosion, mad panic at the fear of a worse disaster from a magazine disruption, horror from the fires which greedily devoured the ruins, torture from the rapidly changing weather conditions which went from blizzard to rain and from rain to zero conditions in the three days succeeding the day of the catastrophe. Fate seemed to have ceased its assaults only when it had exhausted its repertoire of calamities.

"Set against this appalling challenge was the unknown and untried courage of Halifax's citizens. How they battled through the combination of anguish and misery, almost alone for a week, is one of the most inspiring dramas of history."

So much for what Halifax started to do, from the pen of "one who watched this heroic battle" as a press correspondent. Chief among the plain business men of heroic mold was Robert T. MacInreth, an ex-mayor of Halifax, who had organized an emergency relief station at the city hall within an hour after the Imo had rammed the Mont Blanc and let loose the devastating explosives pent up in the hold of the latter ship. MacInreth and his loyal associates not only got on the job at once, but stayed there, practically without rest or sleep for ten days, succoring the wounded, housing the homeless, feeding the destitute, caring for the dependents, providing fuel and transportation, fighting fire and burying the dead.

Every man of force and initiative and managerial ability went to work without a moment's delay. The private car of George E. Graham of the Dominion Atlantic was partly wrecked by the blast, but General Manager Graham at once became a leading spirit in the great task of organizing temporary relief and his railroad gave invaluable assistance in the crisis.

In a week the emergency shelter committee, directed by W. S. Davidson, chairman, housed 6,000 people and a large number were even cared for the very first night. Hospitals were established and 4,000 patients treated in an incredibly short time. Two thousand bodies were handled by the mortuary department.

The reconstruction committee, headed by G. Fred Pearson, a newspaper proprietor, lost no time in organizing the work of building temporary homes for the homeless to cover the period which must elapse before permanent construction could be inaugurated. Mr. Pearson asked Col. Robert S. Low, the man who built the cantonments for the Canadian army, to give Halifax the benefit of his experience, and the colonel went to work at once with plenty of energy, and without pay, to put roofs over the heads of thousands of Halifax people. When he had struck his stride, the man who built Valcartier camp for the Canadian ex-



IN THE STRICKEN AREA AFTER THE EXPLOSION



SOME OF THE 400 NEW HOMES ERECTED BY RELIEF COMMISSION

peditionary force in record time, was finishing a four-room apartment, with bath, every hour. His apartment houses were much like the cantonment buildings at the army camps in Canada and the United States, and housing accommodations were soon ready for 5,000 people.

These various forms of temporary relief caused the expenditure of about \$4,000,000, and while this imperative task was being performed plans were formulated for the rebuilding of the devastated area, the settlement of claims and the care of dependents.

The Canadian government, after receiving full reports of the property losses and the needs of Halifax for permanent pensions, rehousing, etc., announced that although no legal liability rested upon the crown, nevertheless the explosion was an incident of the great war which had done enormous damage to Halifax and its environs and for which Halifax was in no way to blame. Steamers loaded with great cargoes of explosives sought Halifax harbor to secure convoy across the Atlantic to the seat of war, and in numerous instances the people of the city whose homes had been destroyed did not even know that they were living on the edge of a volcano. In view of the fact that the French steamer Mont Blanc was "using the harbor in pursuance of the common purpose of the allied nations in carrying on the war," the Canadian government determined to pay all legitimate property losses and establish a pension fund to care for those made dependent by the disaster. The sum of \$5,000,000 had already been appropriated, but an additional sum of \$7,000,000 was at once placed at the disposal of the stricken city and the Halifax relief commission was appointed and given extraordinary powers to expend the money and afford the necessary relief.

The commission, consisting of T. Sherman Rogers, K. C., chairman; Judge William Bernard Wallace and Frederick Luther Fowke, with Ralph P. Bell as secretary, has been hard at work for months straightening out the tangled affairs of the devastated district, paying claims for damages, erecting new homes and providing permanent pensions for those who were made dependent. The broad powers of the commission were granted by two orders in council and by an act of the Nova Scotia legislature. There were so many complicated matters to settle that the commissioners were empowered to use their own judgment in settling individual claims, in awarding pensions, in expending all the money contributed with the exception of special sums donated for certain purposes, and in replanning and rebuilding the devastated area.

Through the generosity of the Canadian government, every individual who lost his home valued at not more than \$5,000, has already had or is having built for him, free of charge, a new home better than the one destroyed by the blast. Claims exceeding \$5,000 are being settled by the commissioners, and over 15,000 claims for household and personal effects have already been paid. Five hundred people are receiving permanent pensions and disability allowances.

The Halifax relief commission, upon taking office, secured the services of a first-class firm of architects, and also employed a town-planning adviser. There was a splendid chance to put over a town-planning scheme, architecturally and otherwise, that would be a credit to both Halifax and to Canada, and the commission did not overlook the opportunity confronting it. One thousand homes, not only thoroughly practical, but beautiful, have been planned by the architects, new streets and avenues have been laid out in the devastated area and the replanning and rebuilding program is being carried out with the idea of making Halifax more beautiful than ever.

Months ago contracts were let for 400 houses which were to be completed before winter set in. This work has been done and the remaining permanent homes needed are also under way. The new houses are artistic in design, and of many

different types. There is a natural granite procurable in Halifax, and a hydro-stone material closely resembling this is being used, as well as cream-white stucco and rough textured brick.

In the Gottingen street area the houses are grouped around courts, and lawns and playgrounds are part of the general development. The architects have considered the devastated area as an entirety for development purposes, and as the commission backing them has full power to carry out its ideas, the result should be a very interesting experiment in housing and town planning.

The new main boulevards laid out by the commission are 80 feet wide, and the secondary streets vary in width from 50 to 60 feet. Fort Needham, a very picturesque spot of historic interest, has been taken over for park purposes by the commission, and throughout the new development large spaces have been set apart as places of amusement and recreation.

The dominion and imperial government owned the waterfront property which bore the brunt of the Mont Blanc explosion, and the reconstruction of this area is in charge of governmental departments. Part of this section of the devastated area is now the site of a new steel shipyard employing about 5,000 men, who are engaged in building steel steamships of 10,000 tons. This new industry, of vast benefit to Halifax, was established following the disaster, and, no doubt, because of the disaster.

In view of what she has suffered and overcome in the past, Halifax may well lift with pride a head "bloody but unbowed," and say with W. E. Henley, the author of "Invictus":

"Out of the night that covers me,  
Black as the pit from pole to pole,  
I thank whatever gods may be  
For my unconquerable soul."

## Keeping Workers Amused

"The greatest problem with war workers is keeping them amused," says J. H. Connor, who is in charge of the welfare work at the United States Explosives Plant "C" at Nitro, W. Va. "Unless the workers are able to find entertainment they won't work."

"At the present time there are 15,000 workmen at Nitro and it is planned to increase that number to 40,000. But despite the high wages it is difficult to keep the 15,000 there. Wages are almost unbelievably high. For example: Office boys are started at \$75 a month; stenographers at \$150, and I have seen the weekly pay envelopes of many carpenters with more than \$100 inside. However, it is an actual fact that 20 per cent of the workmen who are transported there at the expense of the government disappear en route and more than 50 per cent of those who arrive do not stay more than two or three days.

"You see, Nitro is a new town about twelve miles from Charlestown, W. Va. It's in a dry section of the country with absolutely nothing to attract workers except high wages. And as soon as the majority of workers save a bank roll they depart for pleasanter and wetter climes. That's why a welfare department has been established at this plant, where a million pounds of powder will be manufactured daily when everything is in operation. It was found that unless the men were amused when they finished their work they simply wouldn't remain—no matter what wages were paid.

"Of course we do all the welfare work that is being done in the most modern plants. We have various kinds of hospitals, free medical attention and all that sort of thing. We even fill the teeth of the workmen free of charge. Houses are being built so that the workmen may bring their families and there is everything for their creature comforts, but that isn't enough. The workmen miss the excitement of life in the big cities—they miss the lights, the rush and that feeling of being 'in the swim,' so to speak. While they were merely onlookers they felt that they were taking part in the day's events. When they get to Nitro they soon become dissatisfied and depressed.

"A person who has never worked in a place of this kind cannot appreciate how essential amusement is to his well being. But I must say that we are doing everything possible to keep the workers happy and contented. I'm here in New York to recruit a band and arrange for the appearance of a few musical plays. Of course the summer months will not be so depressing, for we have built scores of bath houses on the river near the plant and hundreds of rowboats and canoes have been ordered. It's the dull winter we're most afraid of."

## QUITE SO.

Kaiser—I say, Max, what does Wilson mean by all this talk he's giving us?  
Max—He means, Ah Highest, to say, "If you'll come down, we won't shoot."

## BURIALS AT CROSS ROADS

Events That Led to the Interment of the Suicide With the Executed Criminal.

In pre-Christian days, suicides were terribly frequent, and it was generally agreed that a man might escape the burden of life in this manner, without discrediting his memory. Christianity with its higher code of morals, taught the wickedness and cowardice of self-murder, in the strongest terms. When consecrated churchyards were set apart as the resting place of the Christian dead, it was felt that those who died in deadly sin, in flagrant rebellion against their Maker, had cut themselves off from the faith, and had no right to await the resurrection with faithful Christians. They were believed to have put themselves outside of society, and to have forfeited their right to share its burial privileges. In those early days, before churches could be built, it was the rule to preach and conduct divine services at the cross-roads. Wooden and afterwards stone crosses were erected to mark the situation where services would be held. Some of these have been preserved to this day, being memorials erected to the dead, or dedications of thanksgiving. Since suicides might not be buried in the churchyard or other consecrated ground, pity suggested that the next most holy spot was the ground near the old cross, where service had once been held, or was then held. They buried the poor suicides there, because they were unwilling to relinquish hope for them. Afterward, for the sake of greater publicity, the gibbet and the gallows were set up at the crossroads, and criminals were buried beneath them after their execution. The law decreed that suicides should lie with these criminals, in order to mark the detestation in which the crime of self-murder was held. And so what was once a signal of Christian hope and charity, became a legal indignity imposed upon the dead bodies to mark an immensely serious breach of the law of the country.

## Share and Share Alike.

The Russian revolution was not without its lighter side, as the following account of what happened in Petrograd will show:

A woman communist was holding forth, asserting that all were equal and all wealth should be divided equally. On this a man in her audience produced coins amounting to about a dollar and one-half from his pocket. "I agree with you," he remarked. "You have convinced me." Turning to a bystander he asked him to change one of the pieces for him. He obtained two notes.

Facing the lady orator, he said: "This is all the money I possess. I will have it with you," and he held out the seventy-five cents. She had to take it, and was about to commence her oration again when her questioner continued: "No, no. How much have you in your purse? We must now divide that, since we are to share equally in our wealth." Reluctantly she produced her purse. It was opened and found to contain twenty dollars. The man pocketed ten dollars of this, thanked her for her interesting lecture and withdrew.

## Latest Infant Prodigy.

The latest "infant phenomenon" hails from Philadelphia. Her name is Edith Gruenberg. At the age of eight months Edith, from the confines of her cradle, mimicked the call of the quail with such conviction that the bird would answer back. At the age of two she could distinguish all the colors of the spectrum. One month later she was discovered in the act of humming Schubert's "Serenade," and at three and one-half years she could recognize 100 popular airs. Three months later Edith's favorite composers were Tschalkowsky, Wagner, Leoncavallo, Handel, Rubinstein, Liszt, Sullivan, Puccini and Beethoven. Edith could pronounce all these names without slip.

## Two Canine Heroes.

Two French war dogs, which well deserve the honor, have had their names and numbers posted up at all the French army kennels for a deed of valor. The story is that, at the time of the German offensive, the dogs' keeper stayed in the rear to the very last moment, waiting for his dogs to return with an important message. When they did come, the only way left to escape capture was by swimming the Marne, and the man could not swim, so he compelled the dogs together, and clinging on to their iron chain, was dragged across the river by them, the three escaping unhurt in spite of a rain of bullets from German rifles.

## Clouds.

"The height maintained by clouds is very variable and is generally less than you might suppose," writes Jean Henri Fabre. "There are clouds that lazily trail along the ground; they are the fogs. There are others that cling to the sides of moderately high mountains, and still others that crown the summits. The region where they are commonly found is at a height varying from 500 to 1,500 meters. In some rather rare instances, they rise to nearly four leagues. Beyond that, eternal serenity reigns."

## Beet Sugar Cement.

An interesting by-product of beet sugar is cement. The scum which collects in boiling 100,000 tons of sugar beets contains about 6,000 tons of carbonate of lime. When this calcium carbonate is mixed with clay and burned, a very good cement is obtained.

## HOW MRS. BOYD AVOIDED AN OPERATION



Canton, Ohio.—"I suffered from a female trouble which caused me much suffering, and two doctors decided that I would have to go through an operation before I could get well.

"My mother, who had been helped by Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound, advised me to try it before submitting to an operation. It relieved me from my troubles so I can do my house work without any difficulty. I advise any woman who is afflicted with female troubles to give Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound a trial and it will do as much for them."—Mrs. MARIE BOYD, 1421 5th St., N. E., Canton, Ohio.

Sometimes there are serious conditions where a hospital operation is the only alternative, but on the other hand so many women have been cured by this famous root and herb remedy, Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound, after doctors have said that an operation was necessary—every woman who wants to avoid an operation should give it a fair trial before submitting to such a trying ordeal.

If complications exist, write to Lydia E. Pinkham Medicine Co., Lynn, Mass., for advice. The result of many years experience is at your service.

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Headaches, Bilious Attacks, Indigestion, are cured by taking May Apple, Aloe, Jalap made into Pleasant Pellets (Dr. Pierce's). Adv.

## Eccentric Woman.

"I've heard that she walks in her sleep." "Fancy! And they with two automobiles."—Boston Transcript.

## Invents Device for Bugs.

A farmer of Jersey county, Illinois, is the inventor of a device with which he claims to have caught 35 bushels of grasshoppers in a single day.

## Draft Dodger.

"The prima donna is on the war-path again," said the stage manager. "What's the matter now?" asked the impresario.

"She says she feels a draft in her dressing room."

"Um! She'd better consult that young husband of her. He's the most successful draft dodger I know."

## Matter of Pronunciation.

The preparations for the Raleigh commemoration bring up once more the question of how Raleigh should be pronounced. It is very common to hear the name spoken as if it were the Greek Rall, yet Sir Walter, though spelling his name Raleigh as often as not, quite often spelled it Rauleigh and Raulwy, showing quite plainly that however it was spelt, and there were something like seventy variations of the name, it was never anything but Rauley to the ear. However, the matter is an unimportant one, though most people will admit that the owner of a name should be the person to decide as to its pronunciation.

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