

The Halifax Explosion: December 6, 1917

Some facts about the explosion, which devastated the city 86 years ago:

When: Approximately 9:05 a.m., Dec. 6, 1917.

What: Belgian relief ship Imo collides with French ship Mont Blanc, which was carrying a full cargo of explosives. About 20 minutes later, at 9:05, Mont Blanc explodes in Halifax harbour.

Killed: About 2,000.

Injured: 9,000 people: 600 suffered eye injuries, more than half of those lost at least one eye and 38 were blinded. About 30 amputees. About 250 bodies never identified.

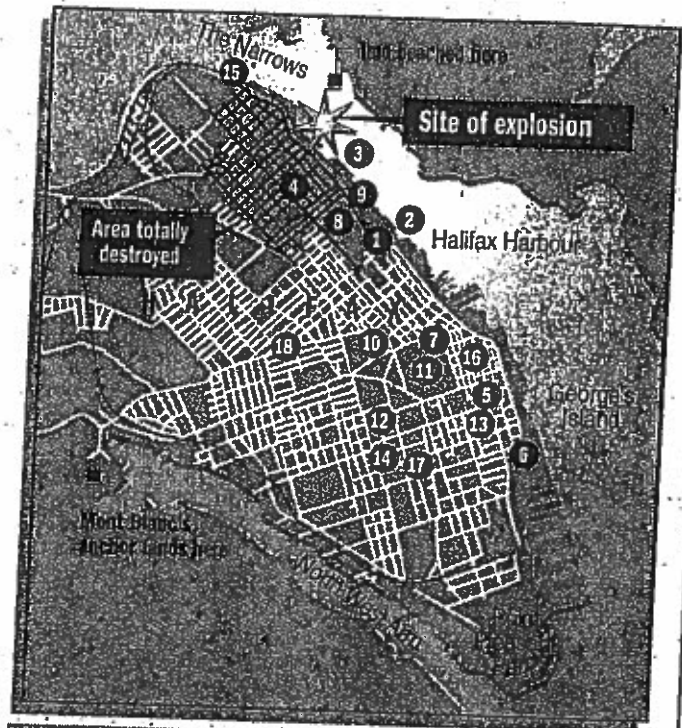
Homeless: 6,000, and 25,000 residents were left with inadequate housing.

Other effects: Premature births soared. Hundreds of children were orphaned.

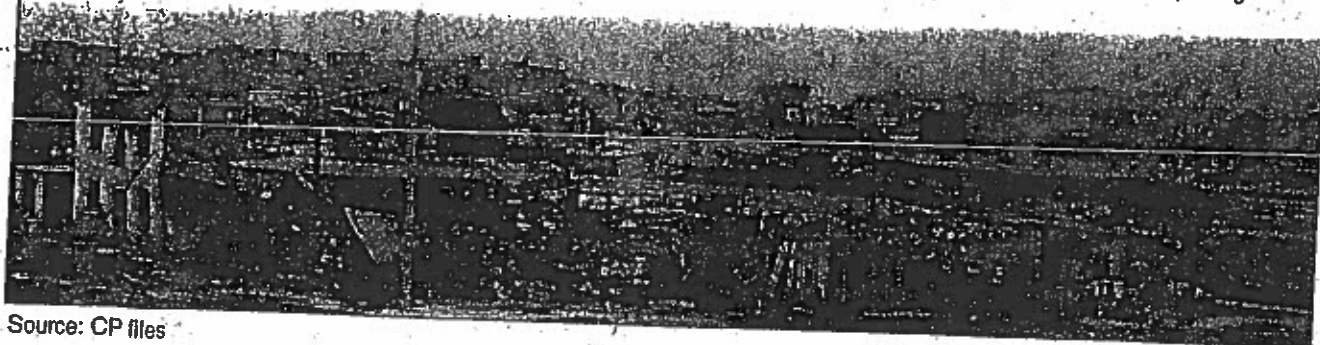
Impact: A barrel from one of the ship's cannons landed 5.5 kilometres away, a ship's anchor flew more than three kilometres in the opposite direction. Windows shattered 80 kilometres away, and the shock wave was even felt in Sydney, 430 kilometres to the north-east.

Aid: Canadian government gave \$18 million, British government almost \$5 million and Massachusetts donated \$750,000 and gave volunteer assistance.

Inquiry: Captain and pilot of the Mont Blanc charged with manslaughter. Charges dropped, because gross negligence causing death could not be proved. In the Nova Scotia District of the Exchequer Court of Canada, Mont Blanc declared solely to blame. On appeal to the Supreme Court of Canada, both ships were judged equally at fault in 1919.



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| 1. Richmond Street | 9. The Ordnance |
| 2. North St. Station | 10. Woolpool |
| 3. H.M.S. Niche Depot | 11. Cornwallis |
| 4. S.S. Platoon at Sugar Refiners' Wharf | 12. Camp Hill Hospital |
| 5. Fort Neerham | 13. Halifax Primary |
| 6. St. Mary's Cathedral | 14. Dalhousie University |
| 7. Gas holders | 15. No. 10 train |
| 8. The magazine | 16. City Hall |
| | 17. Victoria General Hospital |
| | 18. Chebucto School Morgue |



Source: CP files