

Halifax explosion 1917

In preparation



Halifax explosion 1917



- A French munitions ship, Mont Blanc, caught fire and exploded when it collided with the Norwegian ship, Imo, chartered to carry Belgian relief supplies.
- The collision occurred in Halifax, Nova Scotia at 09.04 on Thursday 6 December 1917.
- It killed 2000 people and injured thousands more.
- The explosion caused a tsunami and a pressure wave of air that snapped trees, demolished buildings and carried debris for kilometers.

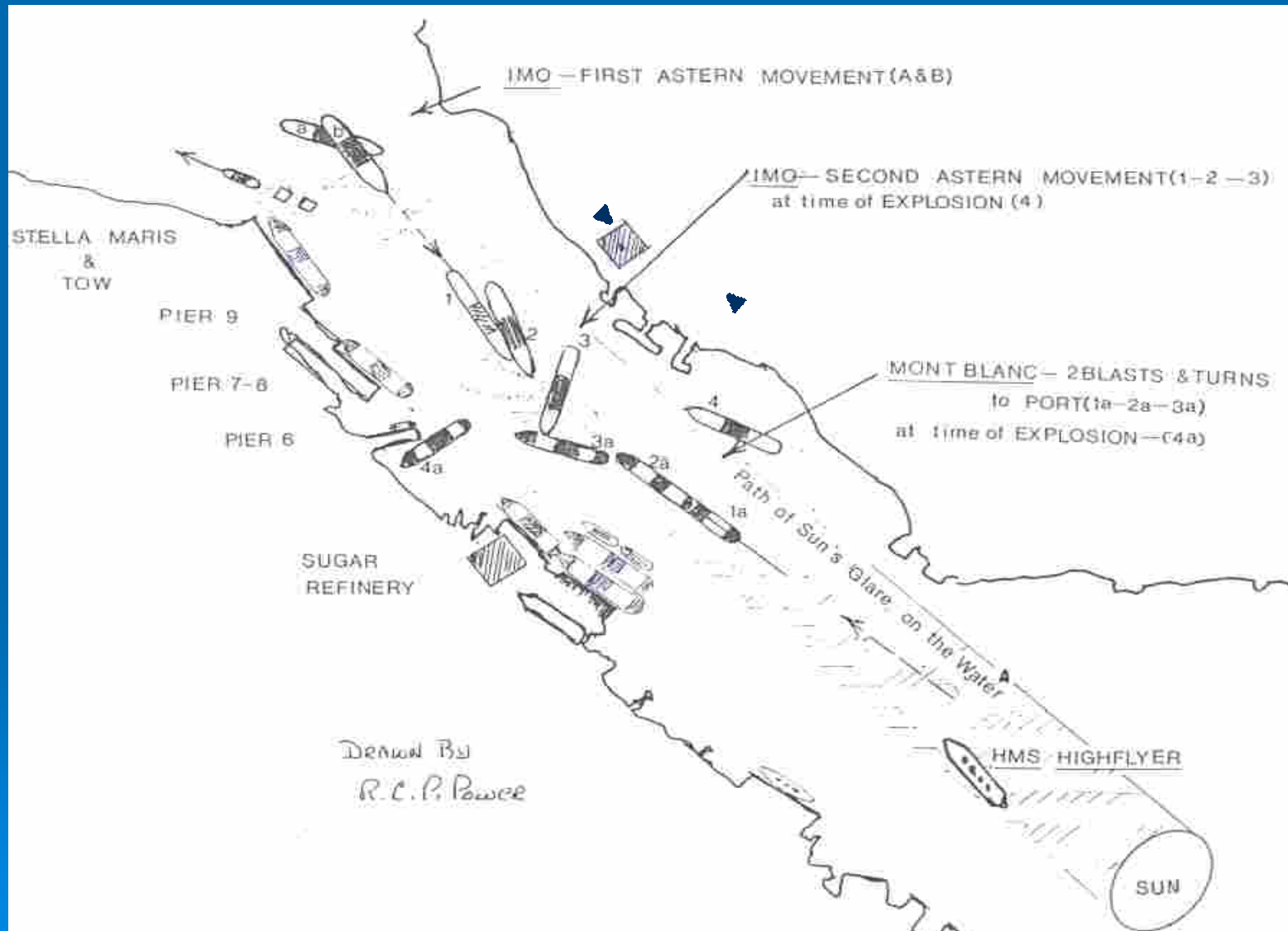


Halifax explosion - timeline

- **Dec 6th**
- 07.30 Mont Blanc enters the harbour. IMO weighs anchor in Bedford basin
- 08.30 Vessels sight each other.
- 08.45 collision. Alarm sent into West Street engine house
- 09.06 Explosion. Rescue work begins. Picton cut loose
- 10.00 Sound alarm and panic
- 10.30 Truro sends aid
- 13.00 Train of wounded leave for Truro
- 18.00 Morgue and various shelters open
- **Dec 7th**
- Morning. Blizzard begins
- 19.00 Relief train arrives from Montreal
- **Dec 9th**
- 02.00 Storm begins
- **Dec 12th**
- First published list of unidentified bodies in morgue
- Cable of sympathy from King George. Mounted guard placed over devastated area. Living man exhumed from ruins
- **Dec 13th** Court of Inquiry opened
- **Dec 14th** Severe storm
- **Dec 17th** Gas turned on for first time. Civic activities completely resumed



Halifax explosion – ship movements

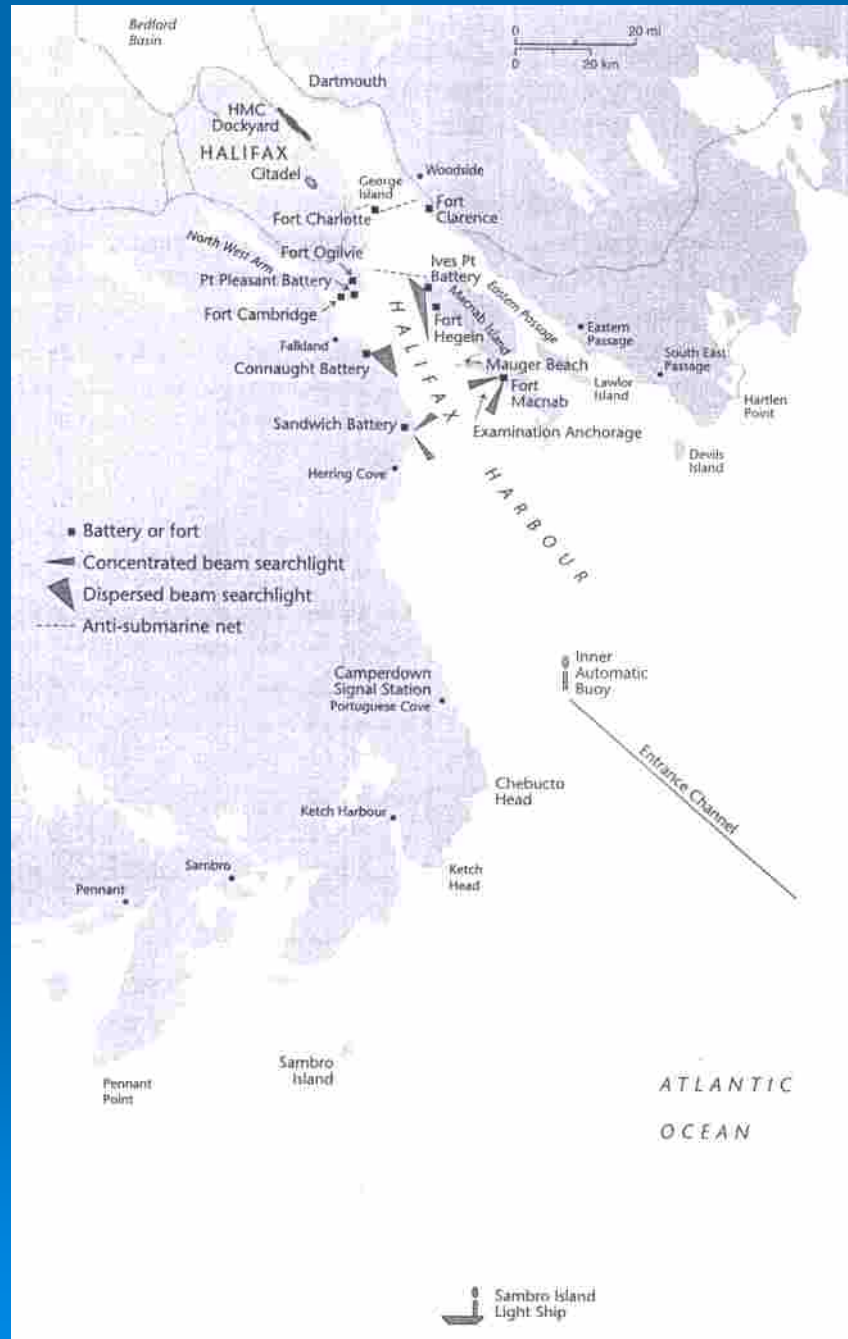


Halifax explosion – fire fighting



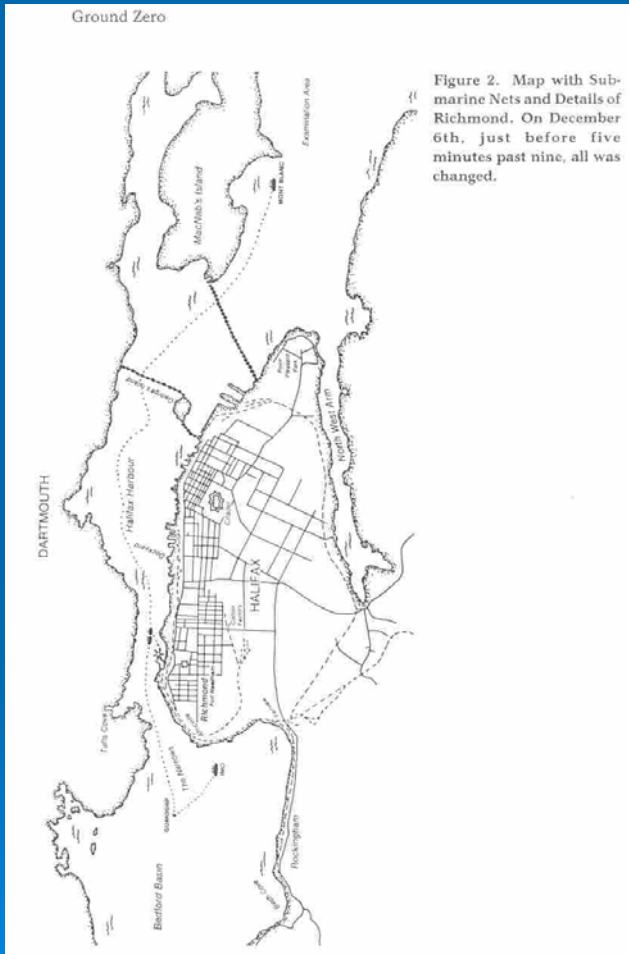
GOTTINGEN STREET LOOKING SOUTH FROM WELLINGTON BARRACKS



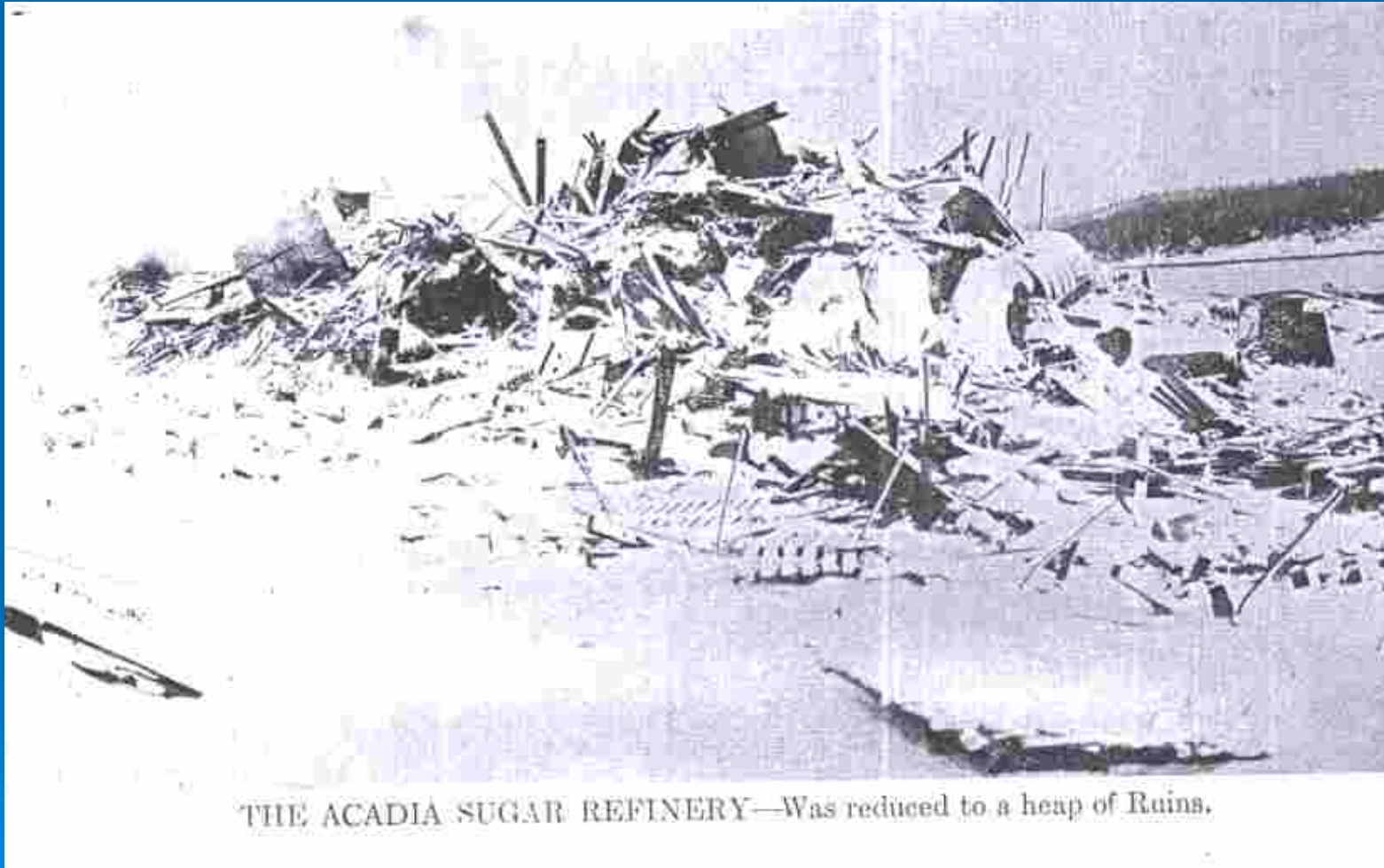


Halifax explosion - tsunami





Halifax explosion – Refinery ruins



Halifax explosion – smoke plume

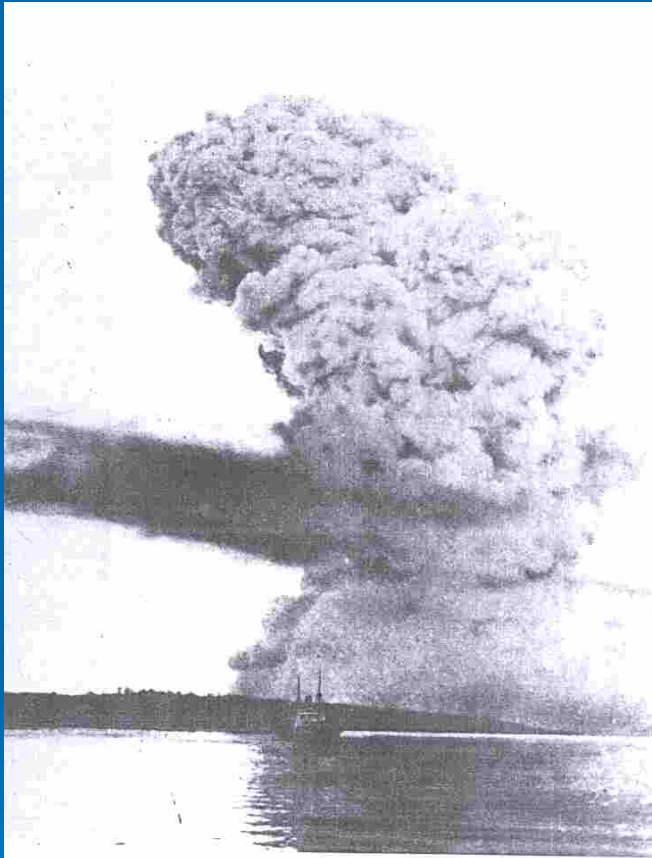


Figure 2. Photograph of the December 6, 1917, explosion cloud. The photographer and exact location are unknown, but a location in Eastern Passage is consistent with other photos. The low semi-horizontal black cloud may be smoke from the fire that roared through the benzol on the deck of the Mont Blanc for about fifteen minutes before the main explosion. (U.S. National Archives, photo 165-WW-158A-15AU; there is also a copy in the National Archives of Canada, PA-166585)

- Horizontal cloud may be from benzene burning before explosion
- Vertical plume is fire after explosion. Time unknown.





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