

# HUNDREDS HURT; PANICS IN 5 BOROUGHES

Brooklyn hospitals were taxed to their capacity to bind up the wounds of the injured. Most of the hurts were caused by broken glass.

In the Communipaw section of Jersey City, few who were on the streets at the time of the explosion escaped injury. The medical hospital resources of Jersey City and Bayonne proved entirely inadequate to care for the victims. The Chief of Police of Jersey City sent word to Commissioner Crosey at 12.45 o'clock that the town was in a condition approximating the aftermath of an earthquake and asked for medical aid.

Police surgeons and volunteers from east side hospitals were hurried to Jersey City by Commissioner Crosey. Ambulances were also sent over. Scores of persons were lying in the streets of Communipaw unable to help themselves.

One of the innumerable tragic freaks of the disaster occurred to George Wigginton of No. 1169 Fox street, the Bronx, who was getting shaved in a barber shop at Liberty and West street. The barber was thrown out of balance, the razor slipped and the man's throat was cut from ear to ear. He was taken to the House of Relief mortally injured.

Persons sleeping in Harlem were thrown from their beds. In East New York, the congregation of a Catholic church ran, shrieking and praying, to the street. Fulton street, Brooklyn, in the shopping district, was showered with broken glass. Ellis Island sustained a damage of \$100,000 to buildings, and the immigrants charged to the ferry and tried to throw themselves into the Bay.

Manhattan Island, south of Fulton street, was fairly riddled by the concussion. Broken glass littered the sidewalks and pavements. Tens of thousands of clerks, men and women, working on the upper floors of skyscrapers started for the stairways and elevators. They thought New York had been visited by an earthquake and that impression was generally shared.

## CROWD DOWNTOWN IN GREAT PANIC.

Soon after the shock of the explosion passed the streets in downtown Manhattan were swarming with crowds that made locomotion almost impossible. Business was suspended on the Stock Exchange and in banks. Through the crowds clanged fire engines, water towers and ambulances, looking for the scene of the disaster, for rumors were thick and dropping from every side.

The City Hall was emptied by the shock. It was rumored that some one had thrown a bomb in the Mayor's office. Doubtless it will be found that walls have been cracked and foundations weakened in many old buildings in the lower section of Manhattan.

The scene of the explosion is a little cluster of docks close to the Communipaw Station of the Central Railroad of New Jersey. It is directly across and about a quarter of a mile from Ellis Island. This spot is the official mooring ground for barges containing explosives and is the only part of the harbor so recognized.

The barge containing the explosive was at the end of Pier 7, a wooden covered structure, on which a gang of men were at work. At neighboring piers were moored sailing vessels and barges. All the docks in that section are busy places.

The noon whistles were just blowing at the time of the explosion and dockhands were hurrying ashore. The tug William McAllister was floating in, broadside, to tie up to Dock No. 6, about sixty feet toward the mainline from the magazine lighter.

Exactly at noon the barge let go. The time is established by the stopping of clocks all over Bayonne. The big clock on the front of the Central Railroad of New Jersey ferry house stopped with the minute and hour hands together pointing toward the zenith.

A great mass of yellowish smoke shot up into the air from the scene of the explosion. Higher and higher it blew, until it seemed to form into clouds and float lazily away on the wind. The sun, which had been shining brightly, became overcast in a few minutes.

When the smoke cleared away not a sign remained of the dynamite craft that had been moored to the end of the pier. But on the surface of the water floated masses of wreckage, the separate parts of which were not larger than a man's hand. Mutilated bodies floated in the wreckage, and here and there a man could be seen swimming for safety.

The wooden covering of Pier 7 was absolutely razed to the pier level save for a few splintered timbers here and there. A floating hoist, which had been passing out from the docks and was within 100 feet of the lighter at the time of the explosion, was crumpled like an opera hat. Three men were aboard this hoist. There was no sign of life aboard as the smoke cleared away and the wrecked, ungainly craft floated off with the tide.

## TUGBOAT AND SHIP WRECKED NEAR BARGE.

The tugboat William McAllister was wrecked. Harry Ford, the cook, was sucked from the deck of the tug by the vacuum following the explosion, dragged eighty feet over the wreckage of the pier and the barge and dropped into the river, where he swam around for fifteen minutes until he was picked up by the patrol boat of Harbor Squad A of New York.

"The McAllister," said Ford, "was just making fast to the pier, about 100 feet to the westward of the dynamite barge. I was standing in the door of the galley getting ready to pass a line to a deckhand on the pier. Then I felt as though the whole world had hit me on top of the head.

"What happened I don't know. I came to in the water paddling. When I hit in the water I was nearly one hundred feet from the tug. As I look at it now, it seems that I was sucked from the tug by a back current of air, carried clean over the wreckage and out into the river."

Pier No. 5, a corrugated iron structure, was crumpled like a mass of paper. Small boats and tugs lying alongside this pier were wrecked. The bark Ingrid, just in from Buenos Ayres with a cargo of bones, and lying at Pier No. 7, was dismantled by the force of the explosion.

The bones from this cargo were blown out of the hatches, which had just been opened, and distributed for miles along the waterfront of Bayonne. After the explosion the hand and arm of a man were found entangled in the rigging of the bark. A longshoreman, standing on the pier alongside the Ingrid and just about to start in with a gang to unload the cargo of bones, had his head blown off. His decapitated body was found in the hold of the bark.

Tugboatmen and others who were in the vicinity of the explosion say that there were some fifteen men at work on the end of Pier No. 7 and on the dynamite barge, transferring explosive from the freight cars to the barge. None of these was seen after the explosion. It was supposed that an arm and hand blown into the rigging of the Ingrid are all that was left of one of them.

The first man found dead in the hold of the Ingrid was identified as Elmano Moro of No. 11 Conover street, Brooklyn. Later the body of his brother, Michaelo, was found in the debris. One of his arms had been torn off and it was supposed that his was the arm which hung in the rigging of the ship.

## JERSEY CENTRAL DEPOT TORN APART.

The shock of the explosion practically wrecked the Jersey Central Railroad station. The corrugated iron roof was torn and ripped as if it had been tightly stretched cloth, the iron pillars and beams were twisted and the framework so bent that it will be impossible to use it in reconstruction. Every pane of glass was smashed and the main waiting room was piled and littered with debris.

The train dispatcher stuck to his job in spite of the panic that followed the shock and stopped the running of trains in or out of the station. With the exception of reporters who went to use the telephones, he was the only person in the station.

The roof of the train shed was torn away in sections and great pieces of iron hung in jagged sections from the beams to the ground. In their slips the ferryboats Somerville and Plainfield were moored. The Somerville had just discharged her passengers when the explosion came. Every windowpane in her was broken and the shower cut the faces of several of her crew. The Plainfield had the same experience.

A lighter of the Lehigh Valley line was moored a short distance north of the location of the explosion. The pier, undermined, fell, smashing upon the lighter, burying it beneath the water. Two men who were on the lighter sank, but came to the surface and were picked up and sent to St. Francis's Hospital, Jersey City.

Every flagman's and switchman's shanty in the yard was wrecked. The demand for ambulances was so great that the injured were waiting

## Wrecked Jersey Central Pier at the Scene of the Dynamite Explosion Carrying Out the Wounded Men to the Ambulances in Waiting



CARRYING OUT THE INJURED



WRECKED FREIGHT CAR, PIER 6

on the piers without attention and three United States Express wagons were pressed into service and rushed to the hospitals filled with wounded.

### FERRYBOAT SHATTERED BY BLAST.

The ferryboat Lakewood was leaving the Communipaw slip and was swinging to the northward, bound for Manhattan, when the explosion occurred. The starboard side of the ferry-boat was crushed in and splintered. About twenty of the passengers were injured. The captain of the Lakewood, seeing the destruction that had been wrought by the explosion to the Communipaw ferry-house, and convinced that his damage was all above the water line, kept right on to the Liberty street slip in New York.

The first outside aid to reach Communipaw was furnished by Police Sergeant Bogert and a detail of men from Harbor Squad A. Their boat was alongside Pier A, at the Battery at the time of the explosion. The echo had not died away before the nose of the little craft was pointed toward the cloud of smoke on the Jersey side of the bay.

As the Manhattan police boat approached Communipaw, ploughing through the mass of pulverized wreckage, a man was seen swimming aimlessly toward the shore. He was dragged aboard the police boat and proved to be Harry Ford, the cook of the tug William McAllister. He was minus his right ear and had a big cut in his scalp.

Manhattan felt the shock plainly. South Brooklyn and Columbia Heights were slammed as though by a terrific blast of air coming from the westward that blew out windows and set solid buildings trembling.

The sensation in the skyscrapers of lower Manhattan was one that those who went through the experience will remember to their dying day. The great structures of steel quivered and rocked from side to side. There is no more substantial building in the city than the Pulitzer Building. The rocking sensation was plainly felt by those sitting in their chairs in the editorial rooms of The World on the twelfth floor and in the tower.

Within ten seconds after the shock thousands of windows in the skyscrapers were opened and tens of thousands of heads popped out into the chilly air. With one accord those who sought to find what had happened turned their gaze to the southward or the southwest. It appeared as though the shock came from that direction.

### GLASS SHOWERED IN CITY STREETS.

In Manhattan the brunt of the shock was felt below Fulton street. Acres of glass were blown out of windows and skylights. Stocks of goods were blown from the windows of stores and distributed along the sidewalks. In all the streets in the financial districts the sidewalks and pavements were littered with broken glass. In some places the debris was ankle deep. Horses showered with glass ran away and thousands of pedestrians were injured more or less severely.

The women operators on the upper floors of the Western Union Building at Broadway and Dey streets became panic stricken and ran for the windows. That old structure fairly jumped from the effect of the shock. Chairs and desks leaped from the floor.

All along Broadway, from the Post-Office down, the fronts of stores and the plate-glass windows of banks on both sides of the street, were pulled out of their frames by the suction after the blast. The buildings emptied of their tenants in a stream, and Broadway was densely packed with a panic-stricken crowd.

A battalion of fire apparatus plunged through the mob to Wall street and Broadway, followed by ambulances, and hung about until the real location of the blast was found. A peculiar freak of the suction was that no two adjoining windows were broken.

In the high buildings which had windows overlooking the harbor all the glass was smashed and many clerks and other occupants were cut by broken glass.

### 650 IMMIGRANTS TOSSED BY SHOCK.

Ellis Island caught nearly the whole blast of the explosion. Fifty of the officials were in the restaurant at the west end of the main building at luncheon and 650 of the 1,000 immigrants on the island were in the main dining room.

The floor heaved as though with an earthquake and then the windows were driven in. Waitresses were knocked down by flying sheets of glass. Many of the diners were blown from their chairs and hurled against the walls.

Every pane of glass on the island was shattered. Doors were torn from their hinges. The damage was roughly estimated at \$100,000 to Government property.

All the medical inspectors of the Immigration Bureau were set to work dressing the wounds of the scores of men and women who were cut and bruised. The whole institution was like a hospital.

A little tug called the Dewey, puffing and straining to get a coal barge away from Pier No. 7, was almost blown out of the water by the force of the concussion. The captain of the Dewey was found unconscious in the pilot house. He was hurried to New York on another tug. Apparently his injuries were mortal.

The area involved in the destructive effect of the explosion extends for two miles along the Communipaw waterfront. Fully a dozen tugs and as many more barges and lighters were utterly wrecked. Several larger vessels are wrecked so far as their upper works were concerned.

Factories and warehouses along the water front were so shaken and wrecked that many were condemned soon after the explosion. The employees were just getting ready to go out to lunch. Those who were on stairways were thrown down and injured.

Every ambulance in Jersey City and Bayonne was started for the Communipaw docks as soon as the scene of the accident was located. The explosion occurred at a remote point and it was hard to reach it from the land side. The general impression in lower Jersey City was that the Standard Oil plant at Constable Hook had blown up.

The City Hall at Jersey City, at Grove and Montgomery streets, seemed to crack and rend in the concussion of the explosion. It was found that the main supporting pillar had cracked. Inspectors of the Building Department were summoned to see if the structure was liable to fall down. No one will be permitted in the building until an examination has been made.

## GRAPHIC STORY OF WRECK, OF SURGING CITY CROWDS AND RUIN CAUSED BY CRASH

(Continued from First Page.)

except the toothlike ends of these pilings.

The pier next above it on the north was a permanent structure with metal sides and lots of glass windows in its sides. From the lower wall the strips of corrugated iron sheathing were torn off and stacked up on the deck like huge playing cards. All the windows were gone and you could look through from side to side. In the little pocket between the destroyed pier and the badly damaged one a four-masted brig was moored. She had been four-masted—she wasn't any more. Two of her masts stood yet, toppling crazily with their rigging hanging on them in a nightmarish tangle of broken spars and tangled ropes. One mast was broken—blown short off—and its splintered stump sticking up like a huge froxy whisk broom. The fourth was gone entirely. It had been lifted out of its step like a tooth out of its socket.

All about and in the shadow of these central objects there was a weird jumble of lighters and tugboats, all showing signs of damage in scarred sides and the empty sockets of portholes where glass had been. The water was covered for an eighth of a mile out with a thick, gray scum. This was shredded debris broken up so fine that one might have skimmed it off the surface with a spoon entirely. In this coating on the water were such things as a mattress, a derby hat and scraps of what looked like men's drill jumpers, but which might have been bits of sail cloth. The river was brown with this stuff.

A tug came puffing out of the heart of the ruck, conveying a little steam hoister that had been caught somewhere in the zone of the smash. The wooden deckhouse on this hoister was flattened down on its float into a weird likeness to a crushed hat. Somebody called out that two men had been killed on board this hoist. In the presence of a disaster which we knew must be so widespread the death of only two seemed a mere incident.

Like Sweep of a Typhoon. Men were getting up steam on two mauled and blistered tugboats. They looked as if they had been through a typhoon by way of a blast furnace and out again. Their paint was scorched and their cabin windows were gaping holes. The smokestack of one of them was skewed to one side, drunkenly. I read their name in a passing glimpse—the Commodore and the D. B. Hardwick. Later I heard that they had been saved by the happy circumstance that they were sheltered behind a row of loaded freight cars that stretched between them and the dynamite lighter.

As Sergeant Doherty shot the nose of the police launch right into the little cove where the lighter Catharine W. had once been, some men in a tugboat yelled to us and began pointing at something under the side of their own boat. We turned and ran up to them. They were trying to drag out of the water a young fellow, half conscious, who hung to a line.

The policemen hauled him aboard the launch. He was Harry Ford, cook of the tugboat William McAllister, and the only man who went into the water to be saved alive. He had been standing in the galley door of his tug just back of the place where the men were loading the lighter, passing out a hand line and then he found himself in the water, 100 feet from shore.

Was Remarkably Calm. For a man who had been blown eighty feet out and forty feet up and had one ear cut off and his scalp split open he was a remarkably calm young man. He said he didn't see or hear anything unusual—just found himself swimming.

"How many are dead?" echoed a man who had the look about him of a mate. "God knows! Everybody aboard that pier I guess is gone. One of my men says he saw two bodies drift by a bit ago, but I've seen nothing."

There was a line of freight cars between me and the pier. The sides were shucked off these cars like the husks of ears of corn and some of the cars were shifted from their trucks. You could look in anywhere as you

passed and see their jumbled together contents.

A man was staggering shoreward alongside these cars a few paces ahead of me. His face was cut by broken glass out of semblance to a face. He dropped on the earth on the end of the pier just as an ambulance surgeon reached him. In half a minute with yards of temporary bandage swathing his head he was in an ambulance on his way to St. Francis's Hospital in Jersey City. The surgeon paused in his work of binding up the man long enough to tell me that two express wagons loaded with injured had already been taken away.

"And I guess there are plenty more waiting for us," he added, as he knotted the bandages into a grotesque turban effect around the victim's skull.

Window of Wreckage. To get around to the pier where the dynamite went off I was forced to make a wide detour because there rose in the path a sort of windrow of wreckage as high as a man's head. My route brought me in line with the Central of New Jersey's station, and I ran through it. It, too, was a wreck inside. The walls, of course, had stood, but the huge skylights in the top of the train shed and the waiting rooms were all blown out and the fragments of glass from above still dropped in jagged showers.

The barber shop and the restaurant opening off the waiting room were gutted and what had been inside—food and barbers' tools and taboretts—strewn the floors as if a small cyclone had been swirling inside the building. The ticket booths were all smashed and men stood guard over the money and the tickets inside them. Everything was powdered deep with a film of light dust like that which hangs in the air after a storm which had struck to her post and was sending in calls for doctors and police, looked as if she had been dipped head first in a barrel of wood ashes.

The Crowd Kept Back. On what was left of Pier 7 I found a dozen or more Jersey policemen charging about aimlessly and giving orders to which nobody paid any heed whatsoever. They had lost their heads, too, or else there were not enough of them

to spread a fire line. Depot hands helped them to hold the crowds back. A stream of officials, firemen, surgeons and newspaper men were filtering past them and running down the pier. It was hard to pick your way along. The dock was piled up with wreckage, most of it broken fine but some in big pieces.

It was slippery and wet from the water which had been sucked out of the river by the force of the explosion and sprayed over it. And everywhere there were clots of red and moudy bones of beef cattle. I knew where the red clots had come from, and in a minute I was to know how the whole place came to be covered with these odorous ribs and shoulder blades and horns of cows.

Just an hour before the crash came the dingy four-masted Sigrig, a Norwegian bark, had landed on the lower side of Pier 7 to discharge a cargo of furs, furs and buttons. A gang of Italian longshoremen had swarmed aboard her and rigged slings and had started to heave out her smelly freight. The explosion, it would seem, lifted bodily into the air sundry tons of the bones and horns and scattered them everywhere, on the water, on her decks and even on the land.

Worst Horror of All. Here the worst horror of all was to be found. The crowd of light haired Scandinavians who made up her crew were roosting about forlornly, most of them with their faces and heads out. They hadn't recovered their senses sufficiently to begin trying to clean up the frightful mess that covered their ship. But this wasn't the worst thing. Down in the hold, prone on the bones, you could see two bodies, one of them headless and in what was left of the freight sling thirty feet aloft dangled a human arm still in its burnt sleeve, caught fast in a knot where two lines crossed.

The fireboat New Yorker and two police boats from Manhattan had landed alongside the Sigrig and Chief Croker, Fire Commissioner Waldo and other New York officials were on the wrecked pier, doing what they could to help. It was Waldo who found a long string of freight cars, every one of them loaded with crates of dynamite.

The sides of the cars were gone and reared and fallen backward and were thrashing around. He saw the flying heels of the horse strike a woman and knock her twenty feet. She fell unconscious.

Vincent Comovito, steward of the Lakewood Country Club was leaving a train in the station. He was knocked down and then pinned under a beam.

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And yet the forward car of the string wasn't a hundred feet from where the Catherine W. had been moored. I found one man who could remember just how things looked, on the lighter a minute before the crash came. This man was one Dillon, a Brooklyn Irishman who was aboard the Sigrig to check out the cargo for the consignee.

"There were about fifteen men at work on the lighter at the end of the pier," said Dillon. "It was just 12 o'clock and the hands in another minute would have knocked off for lunch. Then something let go and I found myself buried under half a ton of smashed stuff. I dug my way out and looked toward the pier end."

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