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## 934 PERISHED ON BIG OCEAN LINER; 433 ARE SAVED

Empress of Ireland Sunk in Col-  
lision in the St. Lawrence  
River.

ONLY 20 WOMEN ARE SAVED

Craft Goes Through Center of Vessel  
and Rips it Open From Midships  
to Stern—Men, Women and  
Children Struggle for Life  
While Waiting to Be  
Rescued.

Quebec, May 30.—A train with 396  
survivors of the lost Canadian Pacific  
steamship Empress of Ireland arrived  
here from Rimouski shortly before  
eight o'clock last Thursday night.  
Thirty-seven wounded were left at  
Rimouski.

These are all that live of the 1,376  
who sailed from here Thursday after-  
noon bound for Liverpool on the queen  
vessel of a famous fleet. The ship  
sailed out of a sunlit harbor into the  
fog off Father Point, where the rip-  
pling prow of the collier Storstad  
struck the death blow in the dark.  
The lost number 934.

237 of Crew Are Saved.  
Of the living 237 are members of  
the crew.

Of the living only 20 are women;  
two are children.

Thus the story of the most terrible  
disaster in the history of Canadian  
navigation is written more grimly,  
more vividly in hard figures than it  
could ever be in words.

How the hundreds of strong men  
of the crew were saved while the hun-  
dreds of weak women and children  
perished only the imagination can  
fathom now.

Not even the survivors can fully  
picture the 19-minute death throes of  
the riven ship—the passengers wak-  
ened in the dead of night either to be  
crushed by the invading prow of the  
Storstad, drowned in the rush of wa-  
ters or to drag themselves to the list-  
ing deck, where panic reigned, where  
shrieks of terror and of pain made an  
inferno under the shrouding mist. The  
battle that surged about the life-  
boats that had not been shattered in  
the crash, the cruel triumph of the  
strong over the weak—let the hard fig-  
ures tell it. They alone can.

One of the matters on which the  
rescued agree is that Captain Ander-  
son of the Storstad backed his vessel  
out of the hole she had dug into the  
Empress' side, nursing her own bent  
prow despite the shouted pleas of  
Captain Kendall that he hold fast to  
the wreck.

Water Rushes In.  
As the collier backed away the wa-  
ter rush listed the Empress so that  
all her lifeboats on the portside were  
useless.

The Storstad, moreover, having no  
mortal damage and lying in a river  
that was ruffled only by the strewn  
forms of the drowning, the wounded  
and the dead, picked up but a few of  
those who were taken to the hospital  
at Rimouski.

It was the government mail steam-  
er Evelyn and the pilot boat Eureka,  
which had to run all the way from Fa-  
ther Point, that did the big work of  
rescue.

A strict investigation is to be im-  
mediately begun.

"There was no time."  
That is the phrase used by every  
survivor in trying to tell something of  
what happened. "There was no time  
to save the people; no time to cry:  
'Women and children first.'"

Nineteen minutes was the time be-  
tween the crash and the sinking. In  
that time there were lifeboats to  
launch, a panic to contend with. In  
that time the wireless must flash its  
calls for help.

The "S. O. S." picked up by many  
ships near and far brought response  
too late to save even a third of the hu-  
man cargo.

Captain Kendall, one of the most  
able and trusted skippers of the line  
—a man who had captured Doctor  
Crippen, the murderer, and had served  
for many years without a mishap at  
sea—stood on the bridge during those  
19 minutes.

Gathered piecemeal from survivors  
the horrors of this wreck grows with  
the telling.

The doomed ones had little time  
even to pray. They were engulfed by  
the onrushing waters that swallowed  
the big ship.

The wireless operators on the Em-  
press, sticking to their posts to the  
last, had time only to send a few "S.  
O. S." calls for help when the rising  
waters silenced their instruments

That silence told the rescuers miles  
away more potently than a bugle that  
dum had overtaken the ship.

Only six hours before this fateful  
collision the passengers sang as a  
good-night hymn "God Be With You  
Tell We Meet Again," played by the  
Salvation Army band on board.

Last Call for Aid.

That last "S. O. S." wireless cry for  
aid from the crippled and sinking  
liner was a trumpet call to those  
ashore. It was heard by J. McWill-  
iams, the wireless operator at Father  
Point, who repeated it along the coast  
to point after point after he had tried  
in vain to get another message from  
the Empress.

When he failed he knew that the  
wireless was wrecked and the ship  
probably sinking.

He repeated his fears to other wire-  
less stations and urged the need of  
haste to save the passengers and crew  
of the vessel.

On board the steamers Lady Evelyn  
and Eureka that cry for aid was heard,  
and getting the position of the Em-  
press of Ireland from Operator Will-  
iams, they put on extra stokers, called  
their full crews to quarters and began  
a race to save life.

That this race ended just too late  
to save the majority of those on the  
hapless liner is no fault of the offi-  
cers and crews of these two rescuing  
vessels.

Relief vessels and trains equipped  
with doctors and nurses and every  
medical and surgical supply were  
rushed to Rimouski to care for the sur-  
vivors.

Survivors Tell of Fog.

It was foggy, according to survivors,  
when the Empress of Ireland, a steel-  
hulled, steel-bulkheaded ship of more  
than eight thousand tons left Quebec  
at 4:30 Thursday afternoon in com-  
mand of H. G. Kendall of the Royal  
Naval Reserve, one of the most skilled  
of transatlantic navigators.

Forest fires also obscured the at-  
mosphere and the big ship, in charge  
of a pilot, proceeded slowly on her  
way to sea. At midnight the pilot left  
near Father Point, shouting a merry  
"bon voyage" as he went down a lad-  
der to his waiting boat.

The darkness at this time was in-  
tense and the ship under the slowest  
speed possible with steerage-way held  
her course. Her decks were deserted.  
The passengers had all sought their  
berths with no thought of impending  
death.

Out of the darkness, on the port  
side, soon after 2:30 in the morning,  
there loomed the little Norwegian col-  
lier, not half the size of the Empress,  
but fated to be her destroyer.

Not until the collier was almost  
aboard of the big liner was the danger  
known on either ship. The fog had  
blotted out the "steaming" lights as  
well as the port and starboard lights  
of both ships.

Quick orders trumpeted on both  
vessels were heard. But they came  
all too late.

The steel-pointed prow of the Stor-  
stad struck the liner amidships and  
then forged aft, ripping and tearing  
its way through the Empress of Ire-  
land.

Clear to the stern of the Empress of  
Ireland was this great steel shaving  
cut from her side, from the top of the  
hull to far below the water line. Into  
that rent the water poured with the  
force of a Niagara.

The bow of the Storstad smashed  
its way through berths on that side  
of the ship, killing passengers sleep-  
ing in their berths and grinding bodies  
to pieces.

Reaching the stern of the big liner,  
the Storstad staggered off in the dark-  
ness, her bow crumpled by the impact.  
Her commander was ready a few min-  
utes later, when he found his ship  
would float, to aid the crippled and  
sinking Empress, but he was too late  
to save the majority of those on  
board.

The Empress of Ireland recoiled al-  
most on her starboard beam ends from  
the blow of the collier and passengers  
were flung from their berths against  
the walls of their staterooms.

Many were stunned and before they  
had time to recover were carried to  
the bottom with the ship.

The vast torrents pouring into the  
great gash on the port side, aft, filled  
the corridors and flooded every sta-  
teerage room about the midship section  
inside of four minutes.

There was never a chance for the  
helpless ones in the after cabins and  
staterooms of the liner. With her  
port side laid open for half its length  
from the midship section to the stern,  
a sieve had more chance to float than  
the Empress of Ireland, and the  
trapped passengers in that section  
were doomed from the moment the  
Storstad struck.

Reeling from the blow the ship be-  
gan to settle almost immediately as  
the water rushed into the big rent.

From the forward cabins, however,  
men and women in night attire stum-  
bled along the corridors and up the  
companionway to the promenade deck  
—the deck below the one on which  
the boats rested.

Swarm to Deck.

Up they swarmed on deck in their  
night clothing, to find the ship heeling

away to port and the deck slanting at  
a degree that made it almost impos-  
sible to stand even clinging to rail-  
ings.

Men and women, shrieking, praying,  
crying for aid that was fated to arrive  
too late, fell over one another in that  
last struggle for life on board the  
doomed Empress of Ireland.

Frenzied mothers leaped overboard  
with their babies in their arms. Others  
knelt on deck and tried to pray in the  
few moments left to them. Some  
were flung overboard by the heeling  
of the sinking ship and some broke  
their legs or arms in trying to reach  
the lifeboats.

Above the din of the struggle on the  
great promenade deck could be heard  
Captain Kendall shouting com-  
mands for the launching of the life-  
boats. Several were launched in the  
19 minutes that the ship floated.

There was no time to observe the  
rule "Women first" in this disaster,  
for those nearest the boats scrambled  
to places in them.

But even as they were being  
launched, while the wireless still was  
calling "S. O. S." there came a terrific  
explosion that almost rent the ship in  
two.

It was the explosion of the boilers  
struck by the cold water. A geyser  
of water shot upward from the mid-  
ship section, mingled with fragments  
of wreckage, that showered down upon  
the passengers still clinging to the  
rails forward and upon those struggl-  
ing in the water.

The explosion destroyed the last  
hope of the ship's floating until suc-  
cor could arrive, for the shock had  
smashed the forward steel bulkhead  
walls that had up to then shut out tor-  
rents invading the after part. The  
water rushed forward and the Em-  
press of Ireland went swiftly to her  
doom, carrying down with her hun-  
dreds of passengers who stood on her  
slanting decks, their arms stretched  
upward and their cries choked in the  
engulfing waters.

Blames the Collier.

Doctor Johnston, chief medical offi-  
cer on the Empress, said that had  
not the Storstad backed out so soon  
from the Empress, a large number of  
the passengers might have been  
saved. He said that when the collier  
pulled itself free the sea surged into  
the hole it had torn in the side of  
the Empress and the liner quickly  
sank.

Chief Operator Hayes of the Em-  
press told of the sinking of the ves-  
sel.

"As soon as I felt the shock of the  
collision," he said, "I was ordered to  
sound the danger signal, and the flash  
of my S. O. S. was immediately  
picked up by the operator at Father  
Point and answered. But I could not  
talk with him for five minutes after  
the impact my dynamos failed me and  
17 minutes after the collision our boat  
sank."

The noise of the water rushing into  
his cabin awoke W. Davis of Toronto  
and his wife. They fled upon deck,  
but in the rush of passengers became  
separated. Mr. Davis was saved. It  
is feared his wife sank with the boat.  
A full equipment of ambulances sup-  
plied by the city of Quebec, the town  
of Levis, on the opposite side of the  
river, and the army medical service  
corps was awaiting at Levis when the  
special survivors' train arrived. The  
passengers were immediately disembark-  
ed and transferred to the ferry steamer,  
which had been waiting at the special  
wharf to facilitate the transfer to the  
Quebec.

Many Survivors Injured.

It was a pitiful sight when the ferry  
steamer Polaris docked on the Quebec  
side at 8:30 o'clock and the 396 men  
and women saved from the ill-fated  
Empress of Ireland trooped falteringly  
down the gangway. The faces of all  
plainly registered the frightful experi-  
ence they had gone through.

Few of the survivors possessed a  
complete outfit of clothes, the major-  
ity wearing only shirts, trousers and  
boots.

Heads were bared in the throng as  
the injured were brought ashore, sup-  
ported by friends and officials of the  
company.

The second and third class passen-  
gers and the crew were immediately  
made comfortable on the Allan liner  
Albatross, which was lying in an ad-  
joining berth at the breakwater.

The first class and injured passen-  
gers were transferred in automobiles  
and other vehicles to the Chateau Fron-  
tenac. A staff of doctors and nurses  
took charge of the injured.

Among the 50 passengers left in  
Rimouski were several who were so ill  
or so severely injured that they had  
to be taken to a hospital.

Well Known in London.

London, May 29.—Among the pas-  
sengers on the Empress of Ireland, A.  
B. Anderson was chairman of the Brit-  
ish Electrical Manufacturers' associa-  
tion and managing director of Fer-  
ranti, Limited, of London. He was a  
resident of Marrow. A. J. Burrows, a  
Canadian well known in the lace  
trade, was a traveler for T. I. Birkin  
& Co. of Nottingham.

## TALES OF HEROISM TOLD BY SURVIVORS

Passengers Saved From Em-  
press of Ireland Relate Thrill-  
ing Stories of Rescue Work.

### DEATH CAUSED BY BLAST

Little Girl, One of Two Children to  
Escape, Says She Helped Her-  
self—Ship's Surgeon Tells Ex-  
perience—Crew Is Praised.

Quebec.—Thrilling tales of heroism,  
stories of futile fights for life, narra-  
tives that tell of the horrors of that  
fateful few moments after the Em-  
press of Ireland was rained by the  
Storstad poured from the lips of the  
rescued when the special train bearing  
them reached this city.

There was little voiced criticism for  
the terrible loss of life; rather those  
who had been snatched from the jaws  
of death seemed anxious to tell of  
men who had proven themselves  
heroes in the supreme moments of  
their lives.

Special praise was given to the work  
of Dr. James F. Grant of Victoria, B.  
C., ship surgeon on the Empress. To  
his coolness was credited the saving  
of a large number of persons taken  
out of the water who probably would  
have perished had they not received  
prompt medical attention.

Surgeon's Own Narrow Escape.

A graphic description of the scene  
on the Empress of Ireland after the  
collision was given by Doctor Grant.

"I was in my cabin," said the ship's  
surgeon, "and knew nothing of the ac-  
cident until the boat listed so that I  
tumbled out of my berth and then  
rolled under it. I tried to turn on the  
light, but there was no power. I  
reached the bolted door, but the list  
was so strong that it took me consid-  
erable time to open it.

"When finally I got out and reached  
the passageway it was so steep, due to  
the way the ship was canted, that my  
efforts to climb were rendered impos-  
sible by the carpet which I was cling-  
ing to breaking away.

"I then scrambled up and managed  
to get my head through a porthole, but  
I was unable to get my shoulders  
through. At that time the ship was  
lying almost flat in the water on its  
starboard side.

"A passenger finally managed to pull  
me through the porthole.

Sank With One Hundred Others.

"About a hundred passengers were  
gathered on the side of the ship at the  
time, but a moment after I joined them  
the vessel took another list and  
plunged to the bottom.

"I next found myself in the water  
and swam toward the lights of the  
steamer Storstad, and when nearly ex-  
hausted from the struggle and the ex-  
posure I was picked up by a lifeboat.

"This boat went on to the scene of  
the disaster and picked up a load of  
survivors from the water and then  
took them on board the Storstad.  
There we were wrapped in blankets  
and I was provided with clothes.

"When able I did what I could to  
help the survivors. Some of them,  
however, were in such exhausted con-  
dition that they died."

Praise Liner's Crew.

"The behavior of the crew was, on  
the whole, good, though it must be  
said that the men hardly had time to  
collect themselves or to effect rescues  
in any systematic way.

"The boat was really sinking before  
the crew or anybody else realized it  
or could do anything.

"Those of the crew who got to the  
deck tried to launch a boat on the up-  
turned side of the vessel, but this was  
impossible, because the list was such  
that the boat could not be put into the  
water and landed on the side of the  
vessel.

"The decks were almost perpendicu-  
lar, so that many passengers in order  
to escape had to slide down from the  
higher side to the lower or water  
side."

Another Tells of Explosion.

A story that there was a tremendous  
explosion on the Empress of Ireland  
after it was hit by the Storstad was  
told by Philip Lawler, a steerage pas-  
senger from Brantford, Ont. He was  
on the way to England with his wife  
and son Herbert, aged fifteen.

When the collision came the Em-  
press listed under the severe shock  
and water rushed into the steerage  
quarters. A few seconds later there  
came an explosion that shook the ves-  
sel. This probably was when the wa-  
ter reached the boilers, Mr. Lawler  
said.

People were simply shot out of the  
ship into the sea by the explosion,"  
Mr. Lawler added. "I was pushed over-  
board with my wife and boy. The boy  
could swim, so I tried to take care of  
my wife, but somehow she slipped  
from my grasp and sank."

and I was surprised when I afterward  
came to realize the awful conse-  
quences of the crash. When we got  
on deck there were very few persons  
to be seen. In fact, the people on the  
deck were so few that they were hard-  
ly noticeable.

"The reason for this is that when  
the boat had listed to one side the  
stairs from the sleeping apartments  
up to the boat decks were very dif-  
ficult, almost impossible to mount. I  
did not see the hole in the side of our  
ship as I rushed for the stairs, but I  
did see the water entering in such  
volume that it threatened to drown us  
before we could mount the stairs."

Salvation Army Man's Story.

A. McIntyre was in the second cabin  
with most of the other Salvation Army  
passengers. He told a vivid story of  
his own experiences and of what he  
saw as he swam to safety.

"Virtually every leading officer of  
the Salvation Army in Canada is  
gone," he said. "Commissioner Rees  
and his wife and the children sank and  
only three of this family survive. Out  
of our Salvation party of 150 on board  
probably less than twenty were res-  
cued."

"I was on the upper deck and there-  
fore had a better chance to get to  
safety than those in the lower berths.  
The water came in through the por-  
t-holes of the lower decks before the  
passengers there realized their danger  
or that there was danger at all.

"I was aroused from my sleep by  
the impact and awoke the others in  
my cabin. I could then hear plainly  
the rush of water, and I felt sure that  
something serious had happened. I  
also heard the machinery of the boat  
running. It did not stop immediately  
after the crash, but continued until  
the explosion occurred.

Gave Woman His Life Belt.

"I grabbed a life preserver and went  
out to the deck. On deck there were  
no life belts and quite a number of  
people were standing about apparently  
unable to determine what to do. I  
gave my belt to Mrs. Ford, one of our  
party. I tied the belt on her myself.

"My three comrades went to the bot-  
tom. I swam in the direction of the  
vessel that ran us down and was  
pulled into a lifeboat of the collier. I  
saw the collier standing not far from  
where the Empress foundered. It was  
all lighted up.

"When I was taken on board I saw  
many men rescued, practically un-  
clothed. I was almost in a state of  
nakedness myself, and the rest of  
those on board were shivering and in  
a bad state from the icy water of the  
river and the chilly morning air. Soon,  
however, we were attended to by those  
on board the collier and made warm  
and comfortable.

Heard Boilers Blow Up.

"As I swam through the icy waters  
I heard the dull explosion caused by  
the water reaching the engines of the  
sinking ship. It was followed by a  
burst of steam that spread to all parts  
of the vessel. Then came a quick  
listing of the liner and she turned  
over. It looked to me as if she turned  
turtle.

"I don't think there were many first-  
class passengers saved. I saw only  
one of the first-class boats lowered.

"The weather was virtually calm  
and there was plenty of light on the  
water when I came on deck. I saw no  
fog.

"I thought at first we had hit a rock.  
Some officers of the vessel came along  
and said that the ship would not go  
any further, for bottom had been  
struck.

"The behavior of the crew was, on  
the whole, good, though it must be  
said that the men hardly had time to  
collect themselves or to effect rescues  
in any systematic way.

"The boat was really sinking before  
the crew or anybody else realized it  
or could do anything.

"Those of the crew who got to the  
deck tried to launch a boat on the up-  
turned side of the vessel, but this was  
impossible, because the list was such  
that the boat could not be put into the  
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board with my wife and boy. The boy  
could swim, so I tried to take care of  
my wife, but somehow she slipped  
from my grasp and sank."

## BLAMES COLLIER FOR THE DISASTER

CAPTAIN OF LOST SHIP TELLS  
STORY OF THE RIVER  
WRECK.

### STRUCK WHILE LYING TO

Capt. Kendall Gives Account of Sink-  
ing Which Cost 957 Lives—Others  
Describe Last Moments.

#### FIGURES OF DISASTER.

Lost 957.  
Saved 403.  
Passengers lost 746.  
Crew lost 211.  
Crew saved 201.  
First cabin passengers lost  
31 men, 26 women, no children.  
Second cabin passengers lost  
52 men, 63 women, 10 children.  
First cabin passengers saved  
21 men, 8 women, 1 child.  
Second cabin passengers saved  
15 men, 5 women, 1 child.  
Second class passengers lost  
564 men, women and children.  
Third class passengers saved,  
146 men, four women, no chil-  
dren.  
Total on board, 1,360.

Rimouski, Que.—Final tabulations of  
casualties in the sinking of the steamer  
Empress of Ireland made showed that  
403 of her passengers and crew had  
been rescued and 954 had perished.  
Capt. Henry George Kendall of the  
liner was telling his story of the dis-  
aster at an inquiry conducted by  
Coroner Pinault here.

Capt. Kendall in substance declared  
he had taken all possible precautions  
against a collision. His ship had been  
stopped and he gave the requisite sig-  
nal when the Danish collier Storstad,  
which sank the Empress, was two  
miles away, but the collier kept on  
through the fog that settled down  
soon after the two vessels sighted  
each other and had rammed the Em-  
press while the latter vessel was mo-  
tionless.

Then the End.

Then, despite his plea to the mas-  
ter of the collier that he run his en-  
gines full speed ahead to keep the  
hole in the liners side plugged with  
the Storstad's bow, said Capt. Ken-  
dall, the Danish vessel backed away,  
the water rushed in and the Empress  
sank.

Capt. Kendall took up his story of  
the disaster from the point at which  
the Empress of Ireland, bound from  
Quebec for Liverpool, had dropped  
her pilot at Father Point.

"We then proceeded full speed,"  
continued Capt. Kendall. "After pass-  
ing Rock Point gas buoy I sighted,  
the steamer Storstad, it then being  
clear.

"The Storstad was about one point  
12 degrees, on my starboard bow. I  
saw a slight fog bank coming gradu-  
ally from the land and knew it  
would pass between the Storstad and  
myself. The Storstad was about two  
miles away. Then the fog came and  
the Storstad's lights disappeared. I  
stopped my ship.

"At the same time I blew three  
short blasts on the steamer's whistle,  
meaning 'I am going full speed as-  
tern.' The Storstad answered.

"I then blew two long blasts, mean-  
ing 'My ship was under way but  
stopped and has now way upon her.'  
He answered me again.

"It was still foggy. About two  
minutes afterward I saw red and  
green lights. He would then be about  
one ship's length away from me. I  
shouted to him through the mega-  
phone to go full speed astern. At the  
same time I had my engine full speed  
ahead with my helm hard a port with  
the object of avoiding, if possible, the  
shock. Almost at the same time she  
came right in and cut me down in a  
line between the funnels.

"I shouted to the Storstad to keep  
full speed ahead to fill the hole he  
had made. He backed away. The  
ship began to fill and listed over rap-  
idly. When he struck me I had stop-  
ped my engines. I then rang full  
speed ahead again, with the object  
of running her on shore. Almost im-  
mediately the engines stopped, the  
ship filled and going over all the time.

Ordered Out Boats.

"I had, in the meantime, given or-  
ders to get the lifeboats launched. I  
told the chief officer to tell the wire-  
less operator to send out distress sig-  
nals. He told me this had been done.  
I said: 'Get the boats out as quick  
as possible.' That was the last I saw  
of the officer. In about three to five  
minutes after that the ship turned  
over and foundered.