WEATHER FORECAST
Clear and cold. Light winds.

The Daily News

Newfoundland's Only Morning Newspaper

ST. JOHN'S, NEWFOUNDLAND, WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 1948 PAGE 1

NATIONAL SAVINGS CAMPAIGN
Build UP Your Bank Account by Saving — The Savings Stamp Way

33 Persons Met Death In Nursing Home Holocaust

All Victims Have Now Been Identified 10 Others Escape

Hull Infirmary Corner New Gower And Springdale Streets Gutted By Fire Early Yesterday

Thirty-three persons lost their lives in the terrible holocaust at the Hull Infirmary at 7 o'clock yesterday morning and ten others who escaped with their lives are now hospitalized for injuries, shock or exposure. The infirmary which housed aged, infirm and otherwise incapacitated persons is situated on the second and third floors of the concrete building on the southwest corner of Springdale and New Gower Streets.

"I was passing on my way to work," said Hector Carter of the Daily News staff, "and smoke was then coming out of the windows on the New Gower Street side of the building. There were flames coming from the Springdale Street side with smoke from the New Gower Street side. The firemen had not then arrived.

"I saw people at the windows and then one middle-aged man jumped from one of the third storey windows. As he came down his feet hit a ledge and he somersaulted, crashing to the concrete sidewalk on his head. I believe he was killed instantly."

Mattresses were spread by nearby residents for people to jump on, but when they saw the firemen's ladders coming they waited for them and were helped down.

"One man went to get on a ladder but missed his footing and swung on the windowledge for a few minutes while firemen moved the ladder to him. He was taken down safely."

Firemen fought the blaze in a bitter, near zero temperature and Fire Chief Vivien had his hands frozen while Chief of Police Strange suffered frost-bitten ears.

By mid-afternoon a pall of gloom and death hung over the city as relatives sought their dead and others speculated on the cause of the fire and pondered its dreadful aftermath.

Police and firemen, assisted by Red Cross workers, removed 33 bodies from the gutted building. Many of them were burned beyond recognition. It is understood that some of the occupants of the infirmary were invalids who were unable to leave their beds.

Members of the Salvation Army were early on the scene from their Springdale Street headquarters to supply firemen and policemen with hot coffee.

THE SCENE AT THE MORGUE

Death was shrouded in a sheet in the City Morgue at the General Hospital yesterday. The dead lay side by side, united in the common fate of the Great Reaper.

At 12.15 a.m. a **Daily News** reporter visited the City Morgue to witness the most terrible experience in his history. The dead were charred beyond recognition, unrecognizable bodies lay along the cold marble floor of the morgue.

A man present, inured to death, turned to the reporter and said, "This is the worst I have ever seen." The reporter, looking around the blackened remains of what were once humans, agreed. He thought: "How lucky some people are who have never seen this sort of thing, and yet," reminding that had they ever seen it "would they not be roused to a demanding that no such holocaust be ever allowed again in Newfoundland."

For, the dead, some pretty, they are horrible relics, terrifying evidence of what fire can achieve. These thirty-three died the most horrible death of all—death by fire!

And what was in the minds of these strange, uncommunicative people who silently filed past the charred hero? Were they thinking of naught but the horror, the heartrending horror of the tragedy which had struck their loved ones? One cannot be honest, and not wonder when you are a reporter standing among corpses rescued too late from a funeral pyre.

It is far too horrible for words, faces charred so that only the faint resemblance of human lips leads you to believe they were once human. It is far too horrible for words to see bodies blackened as burnt wood, without limbs . . .

The stream of people into the City Morgue increases, and so do your thoughts, strangely rapid, strangely incoherent . . . with every move, with every thought you are led to think—for the "fire dead" are far more terrible than anything else in the world.

You wonder if they could speak, these unmobilized dead! What would they say, they who have paid the sacrifice of the flames! And, suddenly you rush from the morgue, unable to explain why.

The girl on the hospital elevator says "It is horrible . . . this smell of death."

THE BUILDING

The Hull boarding house situ-

(Continued on page 7)

(Daily News Photo)

The Chapel at the General Hospital was turned into a temporary morgue yesterday and in it were placed sixteen of the thirty-three bodies. Here a relative of one of the victims looks over the horribly charred bodies seeking his missing niece.

Fire Causes Seven Deaths At Halifax

Three Adults And Three Small Children Die In Flames; Another Girl Killed By Fall

HALIFAX, N.S., Feb. 10 (C.P.)—Six persons burned to death and one was fatally injured in a drop of three storeys and another was seriously hurt as early morning flames ravaged a north end tenement here today driving the remaining 19 tenants into the subzero weather.

Eight hours after the first alarm at 2 a.m., firemen uncovered the body of four-year-old Lorina Greencorn to end their search through the smoking rubble for victims. A few minutes earlier 12-year-old Dorothy Barry had died of injuries in hospital without regaining consciousness after her fall.

Other victims were Mr. and Mrs. William Greencorn, parents of the dead child, Mrs. Joseph Gaudet and her two children, Patrick 4 and Arthur Joseph 7.

Mrs. Freeman Barry was in hospital with injuries received in the combined action of jumping from her window and attempting to catch her daughter.

Public Health And Welfare Drivers Excellent Work

Conveyed Dead And Injured From Tragedy Scene Yesterday Morning

Vehicle drivers attached to the General Hospital and the Department of Public Health and Welfare rendered excellent work yesterday morning with regard to the fire that destroyed the Hull Home and claimed the lives of many of its inmates. Two ambulances were immediately called into action and shortly afterwards were joined by two vans and two cars of the Department in taking the dead and injured to the morgue and hospital and bringing clothes, etc., to those who escaped the fire. Also on the fire scene and giving every possible help when the occasion arose were Messrs. Crummey and Butler of the Department as well as other members of that staff. Vehicle operators were: P. Byrne, J. Crummey, J. Norris, E. Andrews, R. Warford, C. Miller, and Arch Bradbury. For Nurses Carnell and Maddock it also was a busy time and both ladies played a large part in having the injured and unsheltered cared for and quartered. Some of the vehicle operators and ambulance attendants were practically ice-coated by the time that their work in this connection concluded.

Temperatures

Following temperature notes were compiled at 3 o'clock this morning.

City—Zero, clear.
Torbay—1 above, clear.
Argentia—4 above, clear.
Buchans—3 above, snowing.
Gander—4 below, clear.
Bishop's Falls—12 below, clear.
Botwood—10 below, clear.
St. Anthony—8 below, clear.
St. George's—3 above, snowing.
St. Pierre—14 above, clear.
Stephenville—4 above, snowing.

No disturbances were reported locally during the night. Since yesterday morning temperatures in some areas had dropped considerably. Maritimes were also exposed to zero weather.

Exacting Job

It takes from 16 to 20 weeks to design and build a new drill press for an automotive production line.

List Of Identified Dead

JAMES PENNY, (next of kin Stephen Penny, 181 Victoria Street, Sydney, C.B.), age 72. R.C.
FLORA CRITCH, (next of kin John French, Craig Miller Avenue), age about 76. C. of E.
RUTH MARTIN, Springdale Street, adopted parents, R.C.
LOUISA OSMOND, Greenspond. C. of E.
MARY LAKE, Williams Street, St. John's. R.C.
MRS. MARY ANN ROSE, Round Cove, Hermitage. C. of E.
CAPTAIN WILLIAM LANE, Long's Hill, age 91. R.C.
STEPHEN WEST, Ladle Cove, age 55. U.C.
MARY BARRY, New Gower Street, age 70. R.C.
MARTIN WHELAN, c/o Mrs. Sheehan, daughter (next of kin), New Gower Street. R.C.
ALBERT GOUDIE, N.W. River, Labrador. U.C.
JOSEPH-MORIARITY, Hamilton Street, age 76. R.C.
FRED WISCOMBE, Marystown. C. of E.
MRS. EFFIE BEST, Brookfield. U.C.
DANIEL BROWN, Happy Adventure. R.C.
THOMAS RYALL, Wood Street, age 77. R.C.
JOHN DROVER, Island Cove, age about 50. C. of E.
WILLIAM MARTIN, last known address c/o Mental Hospital (dumb), age 68.
WILLIAM RODGERS, St. John's, no known relatives, age 77. C. of E.
MRS. MARY FURLONG, Larkin's Square, age about 75. R.C.
MRS. LILLIAN SPRACKLIN, Brigus, age about 34. U.C.
MISS ANNE SWEENEY, Bonavista, age about 70. R.C.
JOHN WEBBER, Long's Hill, age 77. C. of E.
EMILY TUCKER, St. John's, age 74. S.A.
MISS PATIENCE SHEPPARD, Spaniard's Bay, age 80. C. of E.
ELIZABETH ANDREWS, Moore Street, City. R.C.
ANDREW KINSLOW, Burgeo, age 60. C. of E.
ANDREW RYAN, St. John's, wife lives at Hulls, age 74. R.C.
NELLIE QUIRK, St. John's, age 45. R.C.
HARRY STARKES, Greenspond, age 72. U.C.
MAMIE SHEA, Gambo, age 55. S.A.
MRS. ELLEN McCARTHY, City, age 84. R.C.
MISS ELIZABETH MILLEY, City, age 50. U.C.

LIST OF THOSE WHO ESCAPED AND NOW KNOWN TO BE SAFE

ALEX. KING, Western Bay.
PETER JACKMAN, Bell Island.
ALPHONSUS PENNY, Port au Port.
CLAYTON HISCOCK, Carbonear.
ALICE CONNORS, Lawn.
ROSIE POWER, Cape Broyle, age 20.
MRS. MARY GALE, Stephenville.
ISOBEL KING, St. John's.
WILLIAM WALL, Holyrood.
DAISY MILLER, Portugal Cove.

Oppose Forming Town Council

The issue of a proposed town council for Greenspond was voted on by the residents of that community this week and the majority voted against a town council being instituted. There were 69 votes cast in favour of the suggestion and of a council and 74 were against it.

Trawler Sails For The Banks

The Northlantic dragger Fearless finished discharging yesterday afternoon with a turn out of 210,000 lbs. of good fish and 100,000 lbs. of mixed fish.

The Fearless sailed again for the Banks last night.

Nfld. Seaman Held In Brooklyn For Murder

James Robbins Charged With Slaying Of Arthur Hunt, Formerly of This City; Roderick Purcell, Also of This City, Held As A Material Witness

NEW YORK, Feb. 10 (C.P.)—James Robbins, 27-year-old seaman of 264 New Gower Street, St. John's, Newfoundland, is being held without bail on a charge of murder arising from the death on January 29 of Arthur Hunt, age 39, following a fight in a cellar of a Brooklyn building, police said tonight.

A companion of Robbins, Roderick Purcell, age 29, of 66 Livingstone Street, St. John's, Newfoundland, is being held as a material witness in bail of $10,000. Robbins will appear in Brooklyn Felony Court on the murder charge but the date for his arraignment has not yet been fixed.

Police said Hunt, a former resident of St. John's, had been living in Brooklyn for about twenty years and he had permission from the building superintendent to sleep in the basement. Police said the three men had known each other for some time and they had been drinking before the fight started.

Series Fires In City Yesterday

Besides the call made to the Hull Home, city firemen had four matters to attend to yesterday, however none resulted in serious damages being caused. The first was shortly after eight o'clock in the morning when a minor blaze was promptly brought under control at the General Hospital. Three hours later some members of the Fire Department proceeded to 56 Poplar Avenue where smoke was issuing from the basement of the building. Next call was made early in the afternoon and this time it was to 83 Pennywell Road to attend to an oil furnace. About six o'clock last night a slight chimney blaze was quenched at 41 Adelaide Street.

Relatives Fire Victims Arrive

Relatives of some of the out-of-town inmates of the Hull Home arrived yesterday afternoon and last night in the city. Most of them are attending to funeral arrangements. Relatives of other victims will probably be arriving in St. John's sometime today. Telegrams were sent yesterday afternoon to the next of kin of those who perished in the fire yesterday morning.

Other late local and foreign news on pages 5 and 7.

Long Distance Telephone Service
Avalon Peninsula
Burin Peninsula
Corner Brook Area
Grand Falls Area
U. S. A.
Canada
Avalon Telephone System

Commodities And Stocks Hit Skids Again In U. States

Price Breaks Cause Confusion In Grocery Trade Where Retail Prices Also Take a Tumble

CHICAGO, Feb. 10 (C.P.)—Commodities and stocks hit the toboggan again today in United States in a slump worse than any day last week. It knocked more props cut from under the high cost of living.

The new breaks in commodities boosted the wheezes for greater retail price cuts on some foods. Flour, bread, lard and some meats already are cheaper in some United States stores than a week ago.

All grains and lard deliveries crashed the daily permissible limits at all United States markets. New York stocks sunk to a new average low since May. New York cotton suffered the sharpest break in 16 months with May and March and July deliveries down the permissible limit of $10 a bale.

All grains showed declines on the Winnipeg grain exchange.

Wholesale meat prices jagged as much as $4 a hundred pounds in Chicago.

The new grain price collapse more than wiped out the gains scored Monday in that today's limit decline applied to all deliveries. Grain market analysts who had expected prices to stabilize somewhere near yesterday's levels said the new slump was caused by lack of confidence in the price level. Monday's recovery was sparked by short covering and buying by mills.

RETAIL PRICES DROP

NEW YORK, Feb. 10 (C.P.)—The price of food is dropping in United States grocery stores and some retailers say more price cuts are in sight. In some cities grocers frankly said they were confused by the recent commodity price break but they cut prices changes in 25 key cities in every section of United States.

Bacon costs 10 cents a pound less today than a week ago.

A 10-pound sack of flour costs about 10 cents less.

Meaty meats are down five to six cents a pound.

Butter is off four to five cents a pound, lard down five to six cents a pound, shortening two cents a pound.

A five pound sack of sugar commands about two cents less.

However, these retail price cuts vary widely in different sections of the country.

New Bank President

B. C. GARDNER

Mr. B. C. Gardner New President Of Bank Of Montreal

Was Formerly Manager Of Bank's Branch In This City

MONTREAL, Feb. 10 (C.P.)—A tall, white-haired banker who interrupted his business career to serve with a Highland unit in the First World War, Bertie Charles Gardner, today became President of the Bank of Montreal. He succeeded George W. Spinney who died 16 days ago.

Appointed executive Vice-President of the Bank only last December the new President had spent most of his life in banking. Born and educated in Bristol, England, he started his banking career at the age of 17 and five years later in 1906 came to Canada to work as a clerk for the British North America Bank. During the First World War, serving first as a Lieutenant and then as a Captain, Mr. Gardner was twice wounded and was awarded the Military Cross. On returning to the front after his second convalescence in 1917, he was second in command of the 43rd Battalion with the rank of Major.

When the British North American Bank merged with the Bank of Montreal in 1918, Mr. Gardner's first appointment was as assistant manager of the Bank of Montreal branch in St. John's, Newfoundland, succeeding to the management eight years later. In 1930 he became manager at Saint John, N.B., and was later transferred to the Montreal head office as Superintendent of Foreign Branches.

TABLE CLOTHS
Colored Damask Cloths with fancy designs. Sizes 1½ yards x 1½yards. Real value.
EACH
$1.75

BLANKET ENDS and RAYON ENDS
Small remnants Blanket Pieces, White and Colored, ¼-½ yard lengths, also similar sizes in Rayon Pieces, mostly dark shades.
POUND 35c

BERETS and CAPS
Children's Wool Berets and Caps in all colors, to fit up to 6 years
TO CLEAR
20c EACH

Bon Marché

feb9,11,13