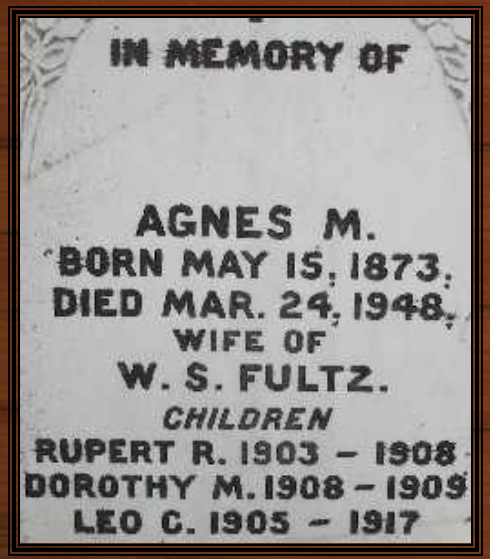
Leo Charles Fultz

Leo Charles Fultz, son of William Silver and Agnes Fultz of Halifax, Nova Scotia was born in 1905 and was a relative of the Sackville Fultz family. At the time of the Halifax explosion, Leo was 12 years old and though he and his family were Roman Catholics, he attended the non-denominational St. Patrick's Boys School on Lockman Street, which is now Barrington Street. The explosion heavily damaged the school and a new fireproof Boys' School was opened in 1921 and the original school was turned into a spice factory. Leo lived at 270 Gottingen St in Halifax and would have most likely been walking to school at the time of the explosion. Unlike many of the Halifax schoolchildren, Leo was not killed immediately by the explosion. He was struck by a falling beam and hospitalized. Unfortunately, Leo Charles Fultz passed away in the hospital due to his injuries ten days later on December 16, 1917.



Leo Charles Fultz's stone at Mount Olivet Cemetery

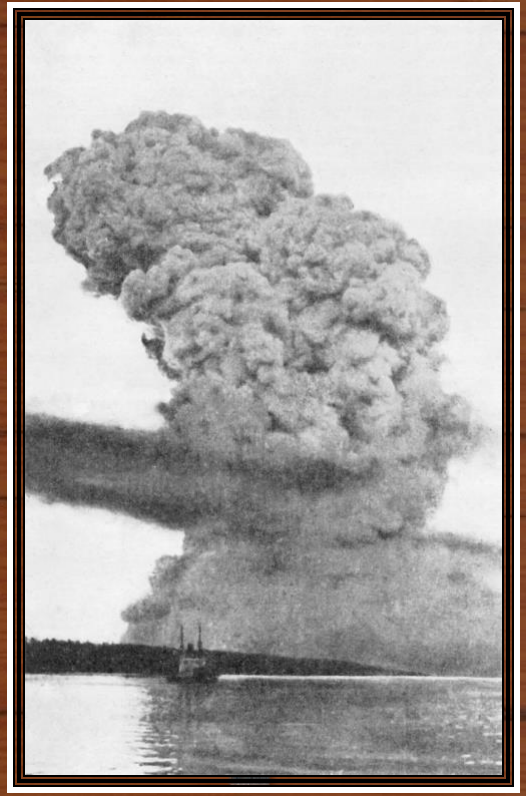
An Interview with Marjorie Grove

Marjorie Grove, a Beaver Bank local was the granddaughter of Peter Blakeney who ran the first telephone office in Sackville and the first post office in Middle Sackville. During a 1992 interview on Seniors in Action, Marjorie Grove spoke about her experience during the Halifax Explosion from a local perspective. While speaking with interviewer Paula Marek, she explained: "We were living down there by the Fultz house and my brother was sitting at the table eating breakfast at that time and he had just sat down and there was a big window right behind him and he had porridge on his plate. And when the window broke, how it happened I don't know, but the glass just came right around him and it swooped the porridge off the table and the dishes off the table and he never got a scratch. And there were two women that lived handy there and they were out just running and screaming. They said "The Germans are in Halifax, the Germans are in Halifax!" They were terrified. There were over 20 panes of glass broken in the house that we were in that day."

The Roome Street School shortly after the explosion. The Fultz House Museum currently has a desk from the school on display in the Teacher's Room.

One Hundred Years of Remembrance:

The Halifax Explosion



Fultz House Museum

A Maritime Disaster

On the morning of December 6, the Norwegian vessel *Imo* left its mooring in Halifax harbor for New York City. At the same time, the French freighter *Mont Blanc,* its cargo hold packed with highly explosive munitions–2,300 tons of picric acid, 200 tons of TNT, 35 tons of high-octane gasoline, and 10 tons of gun cotton–was forging through the harbor's narrows to join a military convoy that would escort it across the Atlantic.

At approximately 8:45 a.m., the two ships collided, setting the picric acid ablaze. The *Mont Blanc* was propelled toward the shore by its collision with the *Imo,* and the crew rapidly abandoned the ship, attempting without success to alert the harbor of the peril of the burning ship. Spectators gathered along the waterfront to witness the spectacle of the blazing ship, and minutes later it brushed by a harbor pier, setting it ablaze. The Halifax Fire Department responded quickly and was positioning its engine next to the nearest hydrant when the *Mont Blanc* exploded at 9:05 a.m. in a blinding white flash.

The massive explosion killed more than 1,800 people, injured another 9,000–including blinding 200–and destroyed almost the entire north end of the city of Halifax, including more than 1,600 homes. The resulting shock wave shattered windows 50 miles away, and the sound of the explosion could be heard hundreds of miles away.

The SS Imo immobilized on the Halifax shore.

Harold T. Barrett

In 1917, Beaver Bank lumber mill owner, Harold T. Barrett had saved enough to buy his first suit, which he put on Dec. 6 to go to Halifax. At that time the railroad station was at North Street, where he left the train and walked to 95 North St. to visit his grandfather's sister. About ten minutes after arriving at the house, the Halifax Explosion took place and during rescue operations he was taken to Camp Hill Hospital, where his new suit was removed and thrown away.

Mr. Barrett remained in hospital until Saturday and during this time his family was unaware of his whereabouts. When he left the hospital on Saturday it was raining so hard he was unable to make his way home, and stayed in Bedford until Monday, when he walked the remainder of the way to Beaver Bank. Mr. Barrett said he can still remember being more upset about the loss of his new suit than he was over the injuries he received.

Helen Hopkins

Helen Hopkins was a local with connections to two of the large families in Sackville. One side of her family was derived from the Fenerty family who were a large lumber milling family who Charles Fenerty, the unofficial founder of the pulp paper process, was related to. The other half of her family was related to the Payne family. Her grandmother, Emily Payne, was a Sackville local who, during the First World War, built eleven rooms onto her home and raised illegitimate children as her own.

In her book *Take My Hand: A Casual Stroll Through the Life of Helen Hopkins*, she speaks about her experience of surviving the Halifax Explosion. Then, only three days old, Helen Hopkins was living on Waterloo Street in Halifax with her family. Though windows were shattered and properties were destroyed, it was the loss of her father that she remembers the most. Her father, who was a carpenter, was working on a rooftop with a Mr. Peverill on the morning that the two ships collided in the harbour. Mr. Peverill stood unharmed as her father was hurled skyward and then crashed back on to the rooftop, breaking every bone in his body. Despite all of his injuries, Charles Walter Orme Payne hung on long enough to be taken home so he could say good-bye to his family.

Helen Hopkins months after the explosion