

Quebec Mercury, 18 October 1860

* " At 10 minutes to 6 yesterday morning, almost every soul of our population was roused from their slumbers by a sudden shaking of the earth accompanied by a heavy rumbling sound like distant thunder and as it were a great rushing wind, though at that moment everything out of doors indicated a perfect calm ...

The most severe part of the shock was about 10 seconds after the commencement, when the sensation experienced was like that of driving in a cart without spring over a hard road. The trembling of the earth then gradually subsided, the whole occupying about one minute. During the violent shock every article of furniture in our apartment contributed to make the noise more appalling, and a similar cause probably prevented most persons from distinguishing the actual rumbling in the earth, from that produced in their houses.

About a minute after the vibrations of the earth had subsided, a noise somewhat resembling that of a low steam whistle or the howl of a dog was heard by many persons some of whom, though it struck them as remarkable, did not connect it with the earthquake until it was mentioned by others. We are inclined to believe that this indicates an actual escape of vapour, the sound of which took a minute or more to reach us. It is remarkable that this sound has been described to us by persons residing many miles from the city, and the sound which they have imitated is in all cases precisely similar both in tone and duration.

Some persons felt two different slight shocks before the last great one. One of them appears to have occurred at four, a.m. Others perceived a very slight tremulous motion about two minutes after.

The accounts which we publish from the various parts of the Province prove that the earthquake has been generally felt with nearly equal force ...

The nature and extent of the motion is shown by the following notes.

OPINIONS OF PARTIES IN TOWN

The commencement of the worst shock was so severe that the writer sprang out of bed and for at least six or eight seconds felt a heavy tremor attended by a noise as if some persons were shaking weighty furniture in an adjoining apartment. We had during the day previous been frequently disturbed by the packing of several hundred weight of old type to be sent to the founders, and the vibrations and noise as we were roused yesterday; bore an exact resemblance to the rocking at one's feet of a box containing one hundred and fifty pounds of lead, as the men would shake it to sink the metal so that the case might be filled to its utmost capacity. The effect of this is unmistakeable, and the earthquake must have been very severe for us to have identified the resemblance as thoroughly as we did. Those who remained in their beds described the motion as equally violent, and many indeed fancied that their beds were being lifted by persons underneath. As soon as the

trembling or rocking had subsided, we were struck by an overpowering sensation that led us to rush to the head of the staircase and look down believing that the entire house below was enveloped in flames. This must have been the result of the so called gust of wind described elsewhere, and which was heard in town and country. Some persons living on the Cape rushed out on the gallery under the same impression that the house was all in fire below stairs.

In St. Ursule street, a family was roused by a large jug filled with water that had been standing, it is supposed slightly inclined, in a basin on the wash stand. In another house in the same street, a flat bottomed bedroom candlestick was seen to move from one end of the drawers towards the other.

Both in town and country and at various elevations, the disturbance in lumber and attic rooms is described as having been most extraordinary. Stove pipes and bottles tumbled down, and added to the consternation of the inmates, who everywhere imagined something dreadful was impending.

Part of a chimney in Grand (Grant?) Street fell to the ground, and the tall chimneys of the Gas Works and other factories are said to have been seen moving. A gentleman walking along St. Vallière assured us that he saw the houses rising and sinking like the waves of the sea.

We are informed that one of the gables of the cut stone guard house at the Queen's Wood yard, has been cracked by the earthquake.

From all quarters we are told of people commencing their prayers under the notion that their destruction if not the end of the world was imminent. Many persons in early attendance at the Roman Catholic churches, were in such dread of the sacred edifices falling on them that they rushed out into the street. Some persons living on the Cape imagined that the cliff had again fallen, and opened their windows to look for some unusual display without.

A gentleman residing on the St. Lewis Road says his household were in the greatest state of alarm. The doors of a wardrobe opened of themselves and then slammed violently together. The servant was horrified at the motion of the kettle on top of the kitchen stove. The panes of glass in the windows of the Presbytery adjoining the French Cathedral were broken in some places.

In the house of a Mr. Dunn residing in Mt. John Suburbs, a clock was thrown from its place and fell on the floor. In Dufresne street, St. Rochs, a clock was heard distinctly tapping against the partition at its back.

In the Turnpike Office in St. Peter street, a large book which had been securely ledged on a shelf in the safe, was found, in the morning, lying on the floor, and a lot of papers that had fallen with it were strewed around.

A woman living in St. Joseph Street, St. Roch, had just returned home from a dancing party, and seeing a large " temperance cross " fall from the wall of her room, she was so terrified that she has been seriously ill ever since. "