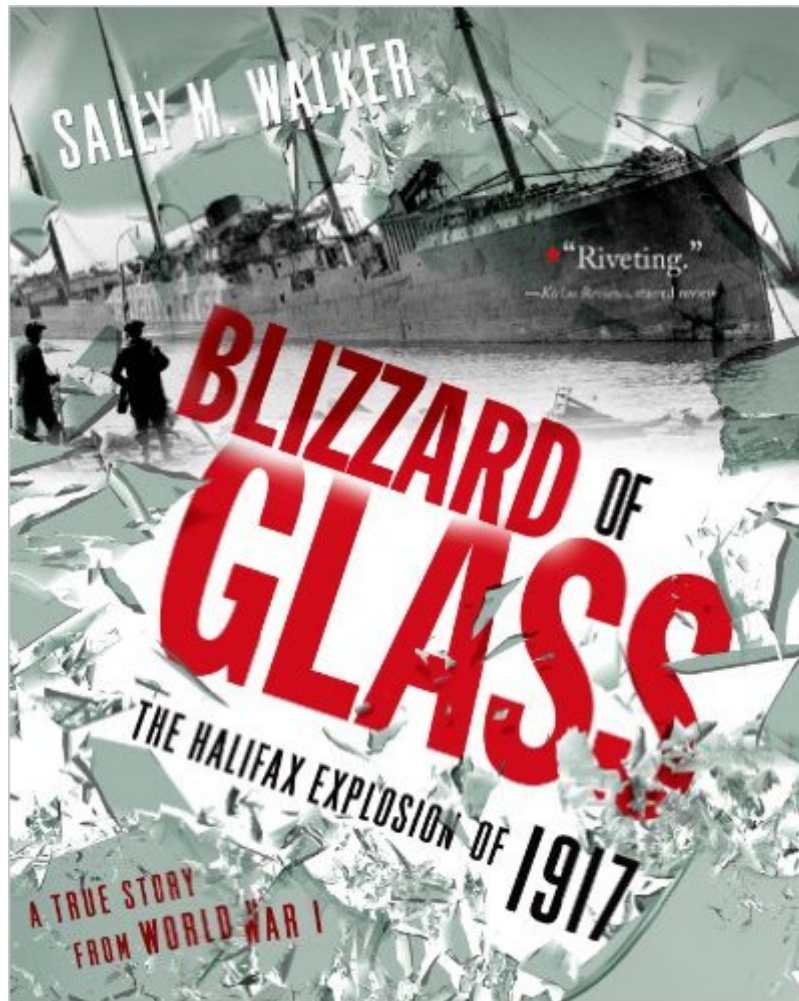


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# Blizzard Of Glass: The Halifax Explosion Of 1917



## Synopsis

On December 6, 1917, two ships collided in Halifax Harbor in Nova Scotia, Canada. One ship was loaded top to bottom with munitions and the other held relief supplies, both intended for war-torn Europe. The resulting blast flattened two towns, Halifax and Dartmouth, and killed nearly 2,000 people. As if that wasn't devastating enough, a blizzard hit the next day, dumping more than a foot of snow on the area and paralyzing much-needed relief efforts. Fascinating, edge-of-your-seat storytelling based on original source material conveys this harrowing account of tragedy and recovery. This thoroughly-researched and documented book can be worked into multiple aspects of the common core curriculum.

## Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (35 customer reviews)

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Age Range: 10 - 14 years

Grade Level: 5 - 9

## Customer Reviews

Blizzard of Glass is about the Halifax explosion in 1917. It tells about the lives of multiple families living in Halifax on the day this occurred. It went through what each member of the family was doing that day. Then, it told about the explosion, explaining what happened and why it happened. It then went on to tell what happened to many people, especially the families described at the beginning. The end went on to describe the many days after; the financial help of others, the bravery of those looking for survivors, the doctors and nurses trying to help those that had been severely injured. It talked about people looking for family members. It even went on to describe what happened to

many of the people many years down the road. I had honestly never heard of this disaster. I came across it when reviewing Titanic books, and it looked interesting. The undertaker who helped record personal information and try to identify bodies from the Titanic site also had the same job in Halifax, where he lived, so I found that Titanic tie in very interesting. I liked the way the book was written. It had me invested in the lives of all of the people living there. I tore through the book very quickly, in less than 2 hours. Yes, I know it isn't geared toward a grown woman like myself, but I would recommend it to many adults. Children probably 4th grade and up who enjoy a good nonfiction story would like this one. Also, it is a great book to give to someone interested in the Titanic that is looking for something different to read. It is filled with pictures that bring the story even more to life. Like I said, I had never heard of the Halifax explosion before picking up this book, so I have nothing else to compare it to, but it seems very factual. Overall, great book!

"Blizzard of Glass" details an explosion that takes place in the harbor of Halifax, Canada in 1917. This book chronicles the events surrounding a collision between two ships that lead to the largest explosive blast to happen before the atomic bomb. Even 50 miles away, the rumblings of this explosion could still be felt. The aftermath of this horrendous catastrophe was chaotic. All the glass in Halifax was blown out from every building and home, and the streets were blanketed in broken and sharp shards. Anyone who loves history and tales of courage during a disaster, will find this fascinating book hard to put down. The author's energy captures your attention straight through the climax, and then the closing chapters' details leave you with an understanding of how the people of Halifax rebuilt their beloved city. Any mature reader, ages 10 to adult, would enjoy this intense and informative narrative. Review by Young Mensan Owen D., age 11

After reading about the Halifax explosion in another book, I wanted to know more about it and I knew I had this book so I hunted it up. And I was not disappointed. Sally Walker has done a great job of telling the story of this tragic event that occurred almost 100 years ago and left its mark on so many. Walker begins by giving a brief history of both Halifax itself and World War I, knowledge of which is helpful in understanding the disaster itself. After all, it was because of World War I that an ship full of ammunition entered the Halifax Harbor in the first place. The second chapter of the book takes a look at the two ships at the heart of the accident, describing the ships themselves, where they were coming from, and whose command they were under. Chapter three looks at some of the families living in the disaster zone and their circumstances before the explosion, giving the disaster a more human face. Stories like this make the events seem all the more real. Chapter four gives the

details about how the accident occurred as far as it is known. Even as I read this chapter, I couldn't help wishing that someone, anyone, would make a different decision that would alter events, despite knowing this wouldn't happen. It was interesting to read in the author's acknowledgements that she felt the same way as she wrote the book. It's impossible to read this book without feeling a little sick at heart at the tragic nature of the whole thing, and heartsick for the families that lost so much. Chapter five gives the locations and activities for the families included in chapter three just as the explosion occurred. Chapter six describes the explosion itself and the incredible devastation that occurred. This was the hardest chapter for me to read. Up until the dropping of the atomic bomb at the end of World War II, this explosion was the worst such man-caused disaster to ever have occurred. The photographs included throughout the book add a great deal to making the realities of the tragedy that much more real. The pictures of streets completely flattened is rather shocking. Chapter seven looks at the human cost of the disaster as Walker shares what happened to the families mentioned earlier. Chapter eight offers hope as I read about the incredible response of those who wanted to help, as doctors, nurses, rescuers, and tons of supplies were sent to the suffering community. Chapter nine looks at the incredible amount of work that continued through a couple of nasty blizzards as people continued to look for the dead and injured, setting up many temporary hospitals and a temporary morgue. Reading about devastated families having to identify their dead relatives was heartbreaking. And chapters eleven and twelve look at the days, weeks, months, and years after the disaster and the rebuilding and recovery efforts as well as the impact on various families and their descendants. Walker has created a thoroughly readable and heart-wrenching account of an event that still resonates today. A powerful historical record of both heartbreak and resiliency that needs to be remembered.

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