

Page 9 - The 1923 Strike in Steel and the Miners' Sympathy Strike ISSUE : <u>Issue 22</u> Published by Ronald Caplan on 1979/6/1

tion • but when they got past us, down to where the railroad track crossed the road at that time • they opened out on both sides, started galloping the horses and swinging those sticks at the people. Men and women. Mrs. Galloway; "And when we looked, my brother and his wife were going over the great big company fence, high as that. He was up and he had his wife by the hand, trying to drag her up over the fence where she wouldn't get hurt. There was a hotel over just the other side of the subway, and they drove the horse right in the front door of the hotel, right to the foot of the stairs, chasing the people. My sis? ter-in-law's father was standing in the door • an elderly man • and the fellow come up and struck him and split his head open. Bernie; And they were doing that to force the men back to work, keep them in subjec? tion, keep them down. Keep us all down. Mrs. Galloway; We lived right on the front street, my mother did. She was at the front window, looking out. And they were down on the street. And one of them put up a gun to her, like that, and he told her to get in that window. And all this was a-gainst people not interfering with anyone or anything, walking after church • walking up the sidewalk on Victoria Road, on the right hand side because there was no side? walk on the left hand side. Chief of Police (in the Post, 1923); This stuff is all bunk. I know these people ' personally, and saw many of them heckling the police and throwing stones both before and after the troops. Now they have got what they have been itching for, and a lot of them want to fall back upon the plea that they were coming from church. Perhaps it was unfortunate that the charge should have taken place just at the time church was coming out, but at that I don't think many church people got mixed up in the raid, (Here is how the Halifax Chronicle re? ported these events:) At 8.'5 P'm. a small body of provincial police moved out on foot and requested the crowd to disperse as the Riot Act had been read and the sol? diers might be summoned. The belligerent section of the crowd replied with shouts of "yellow," "rats," "scabs," and other epithets, and proceeded to resist the ad? vance of the police. At this moment the mounted squad of pro? vincial police, under Col. E. W, MacDon? ald, appeared suddenly at the city end of Victoria Road and charged the mob, using their batons freely. The crowd ran down into the nearby subway and up to the Whit? ney Pier end of Victoria Road. Some of them resisted and engaged in hand-to-hand fights with the dismounted police. The mounted police pursued the mob through the subway and into the alleys and by-ways Mr7and Mrs. Bernie Galloway of the coke ovens district, where many of them escaped in the pitch black maze of lanes which characterize that locality. Others were chased into the western part of ward five, right up to the residence of Mayor Fitzgerald, During this charge of the police, many in? nocent by-standers received blows from the mounted men, because in the confined space it was of course impossible to tell who were strikers and who were spectators. The first shots of the Sydney steel strike were heard last night at Whitney Pier, where things got so serious that the troops had to be called out, the Riot Act read, and a volley fired over the heads of the crowd in an effort to induce it to disperse. Even this show of military force seemed to have little effect



and it was not until a machine gun was placed in po? sition and preparation made to fire, that the mob moved slowly off and gave up its efforts for the night. Bernie Galloway; And this is when the min? ers came out m sympathy with the steel? workers. Fellow by the name of Jim McLach? Ian brought them out. He was an old Scotchman, labour leader for years, and they say he learned most of his stuff down the mines in Scotland. And he came over here and he organized and he got to be a leader. He pulled the miners out. Emjuerson Campbell: He said he would bring the miners out if we went out. And he was as good as his word. They called him eve? rything. Said he was a Bolshevik, said he was Red. But he wasn't. He was just a him? dred per cent pure labour man. Maritime Labour Herald; MINERS STRIKE A-GAINST USE OF TROOPS BY BESCO