

An Account from Java, speaker's name unknown

*At about 10:30 a.m. on August 27, a Javanese farmer was working in a rice paddy five miles from the coast.*

"All of a sudden there came a great noise. We . . . saw a great black thing, a long way off, coming towards us. It was very high and very strong, and we soon saw that it was water. Trees and houses were washed away . . . Not far off was some steep sloping ground. We all ran towards it . . . [The wave] was too quick for most of them . . . There was a general rush to climb up in one particular place. This caused a great block, and many of them got wedged together and could not move . . . A great struggle took place for a few moments, but . . . one after another, they were washed down and carried far away by the rushing waters . . ."

**An Account from Sumatra by Mrs. Beyerinck**

"Suddenly, it became pitch dark. The last thing I saw was the ash being pushed up through the cracks in the floorboards, like a fountain. I . . . heard [my husband] say in despair 'Where is the knife? . . . I will cut all our wrists and then we shall be released from our suffering sooner.' The knife could not be found. I felt a heavy pressure, throwing me to the ground. Then it seemed as if all the air was being sucked away and I could not breathe . . . I forced myself through the [door] . . . The ash was hot and I tried to protect my face with my hands. The hot bite of the pumice pricked like needles . . . I noticed for the first time that [my] skin was hanging off everywhere, thick and moist from the ash stuck to it. Thinking it must be dirty, I wanted to pull bits of skin off, but that was still more painful . . . I did not know I had been burnt . . ."