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Frain Disaster in New Zealand

5th January 1954

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These aerial pictures taken at Tangiwai, in New Zealand, tell the tragic story of the terrible railway disaster that clouded a Nations' rejoicing... The night express from Wellington to Auckland was carrying passengers -(eager to catch their first glimpse of the Queen) when the bridge over the Wangashu River (weakened by flood waters) collapsed - hurtling the packed coaches to destruction.

When news of the tragedy reached the nearest towns, volunteers were rushed to the scene, to comb the river banks in an anxious search for survivors

The stretcher-bearers brought in pathetic remains

The Queen's concern for the bereaved was a source of much comfort, as the Prime Minister of New Zealand expressed the Nation's sympathy And the Duke of Edinburgh flew with Mr Holland to attend a mass funeral of twenty-one unidentified victims - held in Karori Cemetery, Wellington.. His Royal Highness laid a wreath of roses, Hydrangees and arum lilies simply inscribed "From Elizabeth B. and the Duke of Edinburgh" a token of Royal sympathy...

Afterwards the Duke spoke to grieving relatives - bringing comfort and encouragement in their irreparable loss.

The disaster - one of the worst in railway history - is thought to have A VoucANIE come of flour RUATENU been caused by a colourie comption which released millions of tons of tons of tons of tons of tons of tons of the ice and water into the river. And to-day, Tangiwai, a Maori word meaning "Nailing Waters" is the symbol of a Nation's grief.

Name volcano.