

Three Little Girls Drown Trying Out Christmas Skates

Lansdowne, Md., Jan. 3.—(P)—Three little girls drowned today when they tried out their Christmas skates on ice that was too thin.

They were Shirley and Joan McEvoy, sisters, twelve and nine years old, and Patsy Grace, twelve.

Officers from Halethorpe, Baltimore suburb, worked three hours in an attempt to revive the girls after they had been dragged from beneath the ice of old Red lake, a deep abandoned quarry pond.

Patrolman Norman Reinhardt reported the ice was between an inch and a half and two inches thick.

A passing schoolboy spread the alarm after finding a blue and a yellow tam floating in a hole in the ice.

Shirley and Joan, who had received the new shoe skates for Christmas, left their regular shoes on the bank, where they were found by rescue workers.

Three patrolmen grappled with hooks, broke away part of the ice, and recovered all three bodies within an hour.

Mr. and Mrs. Edward J. McEvoy and Mr. and Mrs. George Grace, parents of the girls, stood at the edge of the quarry as officers dragged out the bodies and started their long resuscitation efforts.

They told police the girls had been gone from home only a short while.

Police said they learned that the three girls were warned not to go on the ice by the same boy who spread the alarm.

"We couldn't find out who he was," said Officer Ernest L. Schneider.

"He wanted to go skating himself, but he looked it over and decided not to.

"He told the girls that the ice wasn't thick enough, and then walked away.

"He came back by in a little while and saw the hole in the ice and the girls' shoes on the bank."

Only the two McEvoy girls were believed to have been drowned at first.

Shirley's body was recovered first, and she was wearing her skates. When a second body was recovered, without skates, the rescuers renewed their search for a third body.

Scores of townspeople gathered on the bank of the pond as police worked over the bodies. The spectators built bonfires to keep the rescue squads warm.

It was the last day of holiday vacation for the girls, as they were scheduled to start back to their parochial school tomorrow.

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