



Bits & Pieces of Milton's History

Four drown in Koshkonong

The following article appeared in the Dec. 10, 1908 issue of The Telephone.

The most heartrending accident that has happened upon Lake Koshkonong occurred at about 7 o'clock Saturday evening when four children between the ages of 13 and 15 skated into an airhole near the Rufus Bingham farm and all were drowned. The children who lost their lives were Harvey, 13 years old, son of George Richardson of Newville; Earl, 13 years old, son of Benj. Cooper who lives near Newville; Fannie, 15 years old, daughter of Peter Bliven, who lives at the Taylor house, and Violet, 13 years old, daughter of Courtland Bliven, proprietor of the Taylor house. The two girls were cousins.

The four ill-fated children, together with a young girl, Mabel Brown, were skiing on the lake. The Brown girl being smaller had fallen behind the other four, when suddenly she saw them sink from sight. She threw herself to the ice and she too slid so close to the open water that her hands were wet. She crept back to firm ice and then attempted to save the lives of the others, who had come to the surface. The Richardson boy and one of the girls were able to grasp the edge of the ice. The Bliven girl, however, was unable to remain but a few moments, when she bade the Brown girl goodbye and disappeared below in the open water. The other Bliven girl and the Cooper boy had already gone down for the last time. The heroic little girl remained in spite of the terrible happenings to as-

sist young Richardson, who, having twice nearly gained safety when the ice each time broke under him, was unable to further help himself. Here Harvey Richardson also proved himself a hero. Knowing that his only chance of escaping the fate of his companions lay in the assistance from the Brown girl, he yet commanded her to keep back lest she too be drowned. He finally became exhausted and bidding the brave little girl goodbye sank from sight.

The girl now alone and nearly overcome by the horror of the scene she had just witnessed, started to find someone to whom to tell her awful story. It had begun snowing and she soon became confused as to directions. Her repeated calls were soon heard by Tone Brown who lives near the Taylor house, and to him she was able to make known what had happened. Mr. Brown summoned assistance and the bodies were recovered at 10 o'clock. The water where the drowning occurred was about eight feet deep.

The bodies were taken to the Taylor house and later the remains of the boys were removed to their homes.

The funeral of Harvey Richardson was held at the house at 9:30 and at the Milton Junction M.E. church at 11:30 o'clock Tuesday morning, Rev. Andrew Porter conducting the services, and the burial was in the cemetery in this village. The funerals of Fannie Bliven and Earl Cooper were held at their homes Tuesday, the former in the forenoon and the latter in the afternoon. No services were held here for Violet Bliven, whose remains were taken to New York city for interment, and there the funeral will be held.

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