

RIVER TAKES LIFE OF GEORGE ATKINSON

Goes Through Thin Ice While
Skating to Aid Two
Companions

WHOLE TOWN MOURNS LOSS

Thoughts of business cast aside, all Bradford today mourns the loss of its Public School principal and most highly respected citizen, George G. Atkinson, who, in an endeavour to reach two companions who had broken through the ice of the Holland River, himself went through into the icy waters before he could reach his objective.

Starting out after school yesterday (Tuesday) afternoon, George was a member of a skating party including Messrs. H. L. Blackwell, manager of the Canadian Bank of Commerce here; Bert Broderick, accountant; Mrs. Atkinson and Miss Adelaide Keaney, teller at the same bank.

When the accident occurred the skaters were approximately four miles down the course of the river, north of Bradford. Owing to the exceptionally mild January weather, sun and wind had made the ice extremely thin and treacherous in many places. Unaware of this danger, the party were enjoying the open air and fine smoothness of the ice, when, without warning, Bert Broderick went through the ice, and Mr. Blackwell, following close behind, fell into the same hole.

George, realizing the danger to his companions in the water, attempted to hurry to their assistance, and in doing so the ice gave way and he was carried underneath to his death. Messrs. Blackwell and Broderick managed somehow to crawl out of the water to safety, and after assuring themselves that nothing could be done to aid their companion who had disappeared beneath the surface, Broderick skated to town and notified police of the tragedy. Mr. Blackwell, numb with cold and badly dazed, finally made his way through the swamp to the safety and warmth of the home of Robt. Mills.

Mrs. Atkinson and Miss Keaney did not go through the ice, and realizing the doomed man was beyond human aid, skated to town.

The accident is thought to have occurred about 5.20 p. m., Mr. Blackwell's watch having stopped at that time. As soon as word was received in town, search parties under the leadership of Provincial Police Officer Sam Irvine and Mr. B. B. Collings rushed to the spot. Owing to darkness and the treacherous condition of the ice, however, it was found that little could be done without the aid of boats. These were procured and taken up on the ice, along with grappling outfit, and though all efforts were made to locate the body with the help of torches and flashlights, it was not until nearly noon to-day that the body was recovered from the river in twelve feet of water, about fifteen yards from where he went through the ice.

Announcements of funeral have not yet been made. A more extended obituary notice will appear in next week's Witness.

Much sympathy is felt for Mrs. Atkinson (formerly Helen Kilheany, of Bradford), one young son and his parents in Streetsville.