

# A LITTLE SHOE, A LITTLE SOCK; A TOT TO BURY

## Tiny Things Like That Identify Bodies

A low hum, broken only by occasional sobbing, filled the Cook county morgue Tuesday.

These were the muted prayers of the living for those who perished Monday in the terrible fire in Our Lady of the Angels Catholic school. Hundreds of hands clutched prayer books and rosaries.

The prayers were in Italian, Polish, and Spanish as well as English, for the school drew its pupils from a cosmopolitan neighborhood. They had in common only the same sad note of despair, of anguish.

While scores prayed, and wept, and waited, many others in the morgue were busy. Dentists, carrying dental charts of pupils they had treated, came to aid in the grim task of identification.

### Exhibit Tragedy's Trinkets

At a long table sat detectives showing rings, watches, jewelry, and clothing—all taken from the bodies of children that lay in a basement room—to bereaved relatives seeking some clew to the fate of a missing child.

One family brought a shoe store owner. He identified a pair of shoes he had sold the family. And so another quiet, still form was claimed by saddened parents.

"It's my boy," whispered Mrs. Alice Ragona, 857 N. Trumbull av., as she caught sight of a tiny blue sock. She made the identification alone. Her husband stood outside, unable to bring himself to face the tragedy he knew was theirs.

### Four Bodies! Five Claimants!

The morgue took on an even more macabre air than usual when, with only four bodies unidentified, five parents were on hand to claim them.

"What are you going to do about it?" sobbed the father of one missing girl. "I know she can't be lost. I've already checked all the hospitals. She must be somewhere."

once more thru the ashes to see if any victims had been overlooked in the debris.

As parents showed signs of breaking under the strain,

morgue attendants led them to a room where a nurse provided sedatives. The Red Cross made available coffee and doughnuts. Few of the searchers felt like eating.

The telephone rings constantly. One caller is Coroner Walter McCarron.

"Im physically sick over this terrible thing," he reports. "We can't bring these kids back, so there's no use rushing an inquest."

Technicians were busy taking finger prints, an almost impossible job because most of the victims' hands were charred too greatly to permit finger prints. Technicians wheeled the bodies, one by one, into another room so X-rays could be taken.

### Grim House of Death

Parents and relatives showed up in work clothes, hunting clothes, housecoats, all kinds of apparel. Priests in their black coats and white collars moved quietly about, offering comfort where they could.

No one smiled, no one