

resumed two sessions.” At the Academy on the Fenway, they were a little luckier as, “January was rather uneventful month. We reopened the Classes on the 7th inst. It was a longer vacation than usual owing to the shortage of coal in Boston.”

And in South Boston, the sisters noted that, “Our Christmas vacation was prolonged to the fourteenth of January and then only one session was allowed because of the shortage of coal in the country. However, on February 13, we were ordered to resume two sessions a day because weather conditions allowed the transportation of coal to the various part of the country.”

Schools and municipal buildings weren’t the only places forced to close. Many factories and businesses also had to shut their doors because they couldn’t keep the buildings warm. Because of that, workers lost pay and even production of supplies like army blankets were halted. Other businesses had no choice but to close early every day to save on heat, causing more losses to their workers.

The crisis eventually eased by the end of February, as spring neared, but the effect of workers losing their pay and the memory of such a terrible winter didn’t end quite as soon.



Children waiting to buy coal
From the *Boston Globe* January 2, 1918

Sources consulted for this article

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