

FEARLESS BOSTON FIREMEN

Who Take All Kinds of Chances

A SERIES OF PERSONAL STORIES.

LIEUT JOHN W. McCANN LADDER 3

"It was about 25 years ago, at a fire on Dover st. that I thought my time had come to say goodby to this good old world. I responded to a still alarm on the afternoon of April 30 for a fire in the house 240 Dover st. When we got to the fire it was burning in good shape, but I forged my way inside and up to the third floor.

"After working there some time the flames commenced to come up the stairway and burned the stairs and the floor below, so it was impossible to escape that way; the only thing left for us to do was to jump from the third-story window to the pavement below.

"This I was about to do when Ladder 13 arrived on the scene and ran up the ladder. Had they been five minutes later it would have meant a three-story jump for me.

"The Pope fire on Columbus av was another time I had a close call. When we arrived the building was a mass of flames. We managed to get our line inside and were working on the first floor when the burning timbers commenced to fall all around us; the whole inside was a roaring furnace. I dropped the hose and got out just in time; had I lingered a few minutes longer I would never have been able to reach the street.

"Another fire—at Johnson's lumber mill, 416 Albany st—was a sad affair, as we were aware there were two men inside and we were unable to save them. We ran ladders up to the windows, but the heat was so intense we were obliged to abandon them. We did all in our power to reach the men, but it was impossible.

"If there is one incident in a fireman's life that causes him regret it is to know that there are lives to save and that he is powerless to act.



LIEUT JOHN W. McCANN.

"A fire that I won't forget was at 127 Dover st, box 69. The fire was in an attic on the fourth floor; it had gained great headway when we reached the building. I went into the front room, groping my way to open the window, when I fell over a man severely burned and unconscious. I called for help and Carl Anderson, who was a member of the company at the time, came in and we got him out. He had a close call.

"The most pathetic scene I ever saw was at a fire at 925 Washington st, box 64, March 5, 1908. The fire was on the third floor; it was about noontime; we put the fire out in short order.

"I went into the room to ventilate and, sitting in a chair by a window, was a woman burned to death. She had been cooking her husband's dinner on an oil stove when it exploded. Nobody in the building knew that she was in there."

Lieut John W. McCann was appointed to the department Feb 10, 1893, and assigned to Ladder 3; promoted to lieutenant Jan 4, 1907.