

## Heroic Rescues at Hotel Lenox Fire

ROOM 221 IN HOTEL LENOX WHERE FIRE STARTED

ONE OF THE HEROES



EDWARD McDONOUGH  
Who Rescued Man Hanging by Sheet From Window on 11th Story

**3 Slightly Hurt—  
Loss \$60,000 to  
\$75,000**

(By WILLIAM A. TIGHE.)  
The only thing that prevented a long death list when fire roared through the Hotel Lenox, Boylston and Exeter sts, Back Bay, starting at 5 this morning, was the superhuman work of the members of the Fire Department, who carried out more than 50 of the 200 guests, asleep when the first alarm was sounded.  
Rescues of a nature never before recorded in the history of this city were performed by the firemen, who

without a thought of their own safety, climbed over the long extension ladders, slid down ropes, and crawled over copings and ledges covered with ice in order to reach some man or woman who was trapped by the flames, many feet above the frozen pavements.  
Not a life was lost, a record that will stand among the fire departments of the world, owing to this work, but many of the men and women, who were forced to flee into the streets with the temperature close to zero, were treated for slight cuts and bruises, or for exposure.

**Hotel Loss May Be \$75,000**

The property loss of the fire will be between \$60,000 and \$75,000, but the loss on clothing, the personal property of the guests, could not be estimated. This part of the loss is expected to be at least half as much again.

What started the fire is a mystery, as E. M. Horton of New York, who occupied room 221, on the third floor, where the fire started, could not be located after the fire was gotten under control.

to explain how his bed suddenly burst into flames.

Horton sounded the alarm to A. L. McQueney, the clerk on duty, but owing to the fact that the cry of "fire" rang out from the door above, just as Horton dashed into the office to tell McQueney that his room was on fire, it was believed that Horton tried to extinguish it himself before giving the alarm.

The door of Horton's room was left open as he dashed out, which allowed the flames a chance to roll into the corridor and from there, up through the rest of the building to the roof. The opening of doors in other apartments assisted the fire in getting inflammables to feed upon in the big fireproof structure.

**A Thrilling Rescue**

The fire getting into the corridors was what made it possible for the members of the Boston Fire Department who responded to the four alarms from Box 1673, Boylston and Fairfield sts., to have their names listed among heroes.

Among these men are Capt Charles Donohue and laddermen Nelson, Cunningham, Dobrats and Murphy of Ladder 16, and Lieut Joe Hanton and laddermen Cremin, Lawler, O'Brien, Kennedy, McLaughlin, Donlon, Sullivan and Gleason of Ladder 13, who after raising the long 85-foot ladders on their truck succeeded in finding some means of climbing still higher to reach people out of reach of the ladders.

The piece of work that stood out above all others was that done by "Eddie" McDonough, son and aide of Chief Peter F. McDonough, who rushed to the ninth floor of the building by way of the inclosed fireescape and, after crawling through the smoke and flame-filled hallway, made his way to a window ledge and pulled to safety Joseph H. Collins, who was hanging to the end of a rope made of sheets.

**Saw Work Laid Out For Them**

The crew of Ladder 15, stationed at the corner of Boylston and Hereford sts, but two blocks away from the burning building, saw that their work was laid out for them as soon as the big motor truck passed out of the house, as the flames were rolling from the windows on different floors.

The cries of the imprisoned men and women could be heard by the firemen before the truck was straightened out for the run down Boylston st, and Capt Donohue, as his machine sped along, strained his eyes to locate the people who were crying for help.

This he did while the truck was

**THREE INJURED**

Three Hotel Lenox fire victims, including Edward Horton, the man in whose room the fire started, were treated this morning at the Boston City Hospital. A. Cheshire Mitchell, a hotel manager from Seattle, Wash., was treated as an out-patient, and after having painful burns on his arms and other parts of the body dressed, left the hospital.

Everett Tew and Mr Horton are now inmates of the hospital, and are reported to be fairly comfortable. Both are suffering from severe burns on the hands and face.

approaching the building and he gave his orders to his crew before the machine came to a stop, with the result that every man was ready and within a very few seconds after the truck stopped, the big ladder was being lowered against the windows on the seventh floor.

Two women were in these windows, while on the ninth, 10th and 11th floors, men and women were crying down to the firemen for help. One man was on the ninth, one on the 10th and two on the 11th floor, and as the reflection of the flames could be seen in the windows behind them the firemen sent up a prayer that the doors of the rooms would hold against the fire until they could get to the people.

**Donahue's Heroic Work**

Capt Donahue, knowing that his ladder had been extended to its utmost length, grabbed a scaling ladder from the truck and a "life line" and calling to his crew to follow, quickly made his way to the top.

With a quick swing of his 16-foot stick, he hooked the end over the window sill of the room above the end of his long ladder and started climbing, all the while loosing the coil of the life line that was over his shoulder.

Calming the two women who were holding out their hands to him he made a loop of the rope and placing it about the waist of one of them, lowered her into the arms of the men on the ladder below.

As soon as the rope was taken off by the firemen, he hauled it back

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## FIGHTING FIRE ON EXETER-ST SIDE



**HEROIC RESCUES AT  
HOTEL LENOX FIRE**

Continued From the First Page.

and repeated the work, lowering the second woman to safety.

Before the rope was taken off the second woman, he was swinging his ladder to the room above and again he succeeded in getting the person in the window out in safety.

The same thing was done on the two upper floors, so surely and swiftly that all the guests on that side of the building who were above the tip of the extension ladder were safe and the entire job took less time than it takes to tell it.

**Guests Picked Off Ledges**

As soon as the scaling ladder work was finished, the long ladder on the truck was swung from window to window on the Boylston-st side, picking men and women off the window ledges, sometimes at angles that caused the few spectators on the street to hold their breath as the ladder bent under the weight of a fireman and his burden to a degree that seemed as if it was about to break.

The manner in which the ladder on this truck was used was one that would never be used under ordinary circumstances, as it was stated, that, in 99 cases out of each 100, that strain placed on it would break it, but the firemen had to work quick, and take chances of being dashed to death on the pavements, both of which they did.

While the crew of Ladder 15 was working on the Boylston-st side the crew of Engine 33, which is located in the same station, pulled into Exeter st, laid a line of hose and entered the building. Just enough men were left on this line to handle it, and Capt Lawler took the rest and started to work through the building to assist in rescues.

Engine 22, with Capt "Tom" Downey, and Ladder 12, with Lieut "Joe" Hanton, rolled into Exeter st, from the quarters on Warren st, about this time, and as the engine crew started a line of hose into the building Hanton had his big ladder thrown to the limit against the Exeter-st front.

**Guests Screamed for Help**

Downey, after getting his line to work, took a number of his men and dashed through the building and succeeded in assisting nearly a score of men and women who were groping about the smoke-filled hallway to the office and turned them over to police officers and others for further care.

At this time it seemed that men and women were in every window on the front, all screaming and crying for help, while a score of men in front of the B. A. A. house and the Boston University a score of police officers and citizens stood and cried out for the men and the women

in the building to wait for the firemen.

It appeared as if the fire was burning the hottest on this side of the building, and it also looked as if every person in the windows was doomed to sure death, as the flames rolling out from the windows on the lower floors made it appear as if a ladder could not be thrown up or any human being climb through the fire to reach the upper windows.

By this time the extra alarm apparatus started to roll in, and one of the first things Chief McDonough ordered was a couple of streams of water on the lower floors to kill the fire enough for the laddermen to get above.

Hanton and his crew, also with scaling ladders, started their work of rescue. Before they had covered half the distance up the ladder they were hidden from the people on the street by the thick clouds of smoke which were rolling from all parts of the building.

This smoke also hid the persons whose voices came ringing down from the upper windows, but within a very few moments after the firemen started up they began to reappear, each one with his burden in his arms or over his shoulder.

The work of this crew was exceptionally brilliant, as the men, after getting off their ladders, were forced to crawl along copings and ledges covered with ice to reach the people they were after.

More than a score of men and women were taken down in this way before the work was made lighter for the crew of 13 truck by the arrival of Ladder 17, another big aerial truck, which pulled in and threw the long ladder against the building a trifle nearer Huntington av, which shortened the distance that the men had to cover on the icy copings.

**"Eddie" McDonough's Work**

The most spectacular rescue of the fire, and one of the most in the history of the Fire Department, was being performed at this time by "Eddie" McDonough, but owing to the cloud of smoke that rolled up and hid the work from the view of the spectators, it was not appreciated until after the smoke cleared away.

Joseph H. Collins, a well-known horseman, was asleep in his room on the 11th floor, when he was awakened by the fire going and his telephone, the switchboard being operated by William Conlon and Miss Mary Harding, the bookkeeper, who was driven from her room, and rushed to the assistance of the house crew.

**Made Rope of Sheets**

Collins, when awakened, opened the door leading into the hall, but was driven back by a cloud of smoke and a burst of flame. Keeping his nerve with him, Collins closed the door of the room and the fireman and quickly got into his clothes.

When he went to his window he found the tip of Ladder 13 was about four stories below him. Knowing that jumping meant sure death, and hearing the flames rolling around his door, he looked for a rope, but not finding any, made one of the sheets on his bed and all the towels that he could find.

Making the end of the rope secure in the room, he threw the other end out, and as the flames ate their way through the door, he started to slide down the rope in the direction of the top of the ladder.

hand over hand, all the time feeling for the end of the rope.

When he felt the end he stopped and, twisting his leg around the rope, took his weight off his arms and made it possible for him to wait patiently for the arrival of his rescuers.

The smoke became thicker and thicker as he hung to his rope, and when the fire began to come dangerously close he started to yell for help at the top of his voice. He could not be seen from the street for a number of minutes, but at last "Eddie" McDonough, who was sweeping the front of the building with his electric searchlight, discovered him.

**Collins Saved**

Telling his father, the chief, who was standing beside him, that he was "going to get that man," McDonough dashed through the lobby of the hotel and to the inclosed fire escape in the center of the building, which he had located a few minutes after his arrival.

Counting the floors as he dashed up the stairs, he came to the one where he believed the man was hanging outside of the windows.

He pushed open the door of a room and went in, closing the door after him. He made his way to a window, but discovered that he was about two windows distant, but not thinking of his own danger, he stepped out onto the coping covered with ice and snow, and, hugging the wall, made his way to Collins.

Again the smoke rolled up in such a volume that Collins was hidden from his view, and he was forced to cry out to get an answer by which to locate Collins. As soon as he located him, he got astride of a ledge, and, grabbing Collins by a leg, gently pulled him toward him, so that he could get a grip on his body, and when he did he grabbed none too gently and hauled him into the room.

The sheet rope was left dangling from the 11th-story window as a mute testimony of a wonderful piece of work.

**Crawled to Safety**

As soon as the two men got their breath and a little bit of their confidence back, McDonough led the way and they crawled under the smoke and fire to the inclosed stairway and made their way to safety.

While these rescues were being made on Boylston and Exeter sts the men of other companies were working with a will in the rear of the

building, and succeeded in assisting many persons to the street. As these people were taken out they were sent across to the B. A. A. house.

The Lenox is of first class construction and under any ordinary circumstances the fire should have been confined to the room where it started and should have burned itself out there without getting into the adjoining room, but owing to the manner in which the guests left the doors of their rooms open when they fled, the fire raced through the open doors and attacked anything of an inflammable nature in the rooms.

This was the reason for fire to be seen rolling from windows in all sections of the building, from the third floor, where it started, to the 11th floor, where the windows are just under the roof.

The appearance of the building when the firemen arrived made them think that a dozen different fires were burning, as smoke and flames were seen from two or three windows at a time, and then again from windows half the length of the building away.

Halfway up the side of the building facing on the railroad yards and Huntington av, two or three apartments appeared to be a roaring furnace, while the other rooms on that side appeared natural.

**Many Rooms Wrecked**

On the Exeter-st front fire seemed to be roaring in a dozen different places, while on Boylston at only a few places showed any signs of fire near the windows, but plenty of fire could be seen in the hallways on the side.

Chief McDonough placed a water tower on Exeter st and another in the driveway leading to the railroad yard, both of which machines poured hundreds of gallons of water into the building, while the deck guns on a number of hose wagons also helped to keep the fire from spreading all over the hotel.

A dozen lines of hose were sent into the building, and the crews worked from the street to the roof, killing the fire in the different rooms. Many of these rooms were complete wrecks as a result of the occupants leaving the doors open, while other rooms were wet, but not badly burned, as the firemen got to them before the fire had a chance to spread after burning through the doors.

**Chiefs Complimented**

Chief McDonough, Deputy Chief Sennott, District Chiefs Walsh, Shallow, Coulter, Gaffey, Jordan, Kenney and Fox were complimented by the guests of the hotel and of the other hotels in the vicinity, as well as the residents and police officers, on the manner in which the life-saving work was done. Without exception, it was stated that never before had anything to equal it been performed anywhere.

The police of the Back Bay Station, under the direction of Lieut Skillings and Sergt John Murphy, were on the scene within a few minutes after the first alarm.

By orders of Lieut Skillings a number of ambulances were called from other sections of the city, but their services were not required.



JOSEPH COLLINS,  
Rescued from Ninth Floor of Hotel Lenox by Chief's Aid "Eddie" McDonough.



WILLIAM CONLON,  
Switchboard Operator at Hotel Lenox, Who Assisted Guests.