

# FEARLESS BOSTON FIREMEN

## Who Take All Kinds of Chances

### A SERIES OF PERSONAL STORIES.

#### DISTRICT CHIEF PETER E. WALSH

"Boston's last general alarm fire on Aug 9, 1910, I will always remember for many reasons, but principally because I consider that on that night I had a miraculous escape from death.

"Most of the persons about town who are interested in the doings of the firemen remember that the last general alarm was given for a fire which started in a lumber yard on Albany st, and was carried by the wind across Albany st, destroying the old repair shop and spreading to buildings on Bristol st.



PETER E. WALSH,  
District Chief.

"That fire brought to a sudden termination the department careers of the late Capt John P. McManus of Ladder 4, and Hoseman Thomas O'Connell of Engine 22. They were so seriously

injured that they had to be pensioned and about a year ago Capt McManus passed away. I was near them when the floor collapsed.

"I was captain of Ladder 3 at that time and was on a day off when word reached me that there was a general alarm and I hastened to the fire and reported to my district chief, who ordered me to report to Capt McManus, who was acting district chief that evening and was directing the crew of Engine 22 inside the building 51 Bristol st.

"They were directing a stream through a fire door into an adjoining building. When I reached Capt McManus he ordered me to take charge of another line. The line I was to direct was on the roof and I turned and had taken about five steps in the direction of a skylight when I heard a loud crash and the rumbling and breaking of timbers.

"I could feel the floor under my feet rock. I hastened to a window sill, straddled it and waited for the floor to collapse. There had been a collapse, but it did not extend to the point I had reached.

"When the rumbling ceased I looked back toward the fire door and found that the floor had given way, carrying Capt McManus, O'Connell and others down four floors. The hose line they had been handling was dangling by the walls.

"In a moment I forgot my own experience and, grateful that my life had been spared, proceeded to help rescue the injured."

Dist Chief Walsh has been in the service since July, 1892. In 1896 he was advanced to lieutenant and on Nov 1, 1904, to captain. His promotion to the position he is now filling took place in August, 1913. He is a Charlestown boy and is regarded as one of the most able and aggressive of leaders.