

FEARLESS BOSTON FIREMEN

Who Take All Kinds of Chances

A SERIES OF PERSONAL STORIES

DISTRICT CHIEF JOSEPH H. KENNEY

"I never tried to corner the narrow escape market, but when I look back over the 28 years I have given to fire-fighting it certainly is apparent that my name has been linked with narrow escape quite frequently. While the stories of these fires were read, you can rest assured that I do not desire to go through any of the experiences again.

"The Thanksgiving Day fire of 1889, where four firemen met their deaths; the Hecht Building fire in January, 1893, the Lincoln-st fire, where the lamented Dist Chief Egan gave thousands a thrill when he swung off a roof onto a telegraph wire; the Clark's Hotel, Underhay Oil Company and Hyer Brothers' Building fires were the scenes of my narrow escapes.

"At the Underhay Oil Company fire a beam fell, removing my fire hat, but all I got in the shape of a souvenir was a slight lump on the head. Now that certainly was a close call, but I escaped without being seriously injured. I never realized until long after the accident how fortunate I was.

"Speaking of souvenirs takes me back to the fire at Clark's Hotel. We were working in the basement at that blaze when a floor collapsed and the rescuing party that came in to get us had no easy job. I was nearly dead. Much of my hair had been burned off and the flames robbed me of my eyebrows.

"While all of these little things are simply a part of what you may expect at any good fire, I would be just as well satisfied if I did not have to endure



JOSEPH H. KENNEY
District Chief.

any more of them. My narrow escape average is pretty near 100 percent."

Kenney's career has been a most active one. He joined the force in 1888 and spent several years as a member of Engine 3, Ladder 3 and Tower 2, and was in the thickest of the battle at many lumber fires. He was named a lieutenant in 1895, and afterwards filled the position of drillmaster with great success. Becoming a captain in 1901, he was placed in charge of Ladder 8, and remained there until 1908, when he was sent to Ladder 12. A year ago he was promoted to his present position.