

# FEARLESS BOSTON FIREMEN.

## Who Take All Kinds of Chances

### A SERIES OF PERSONAL STORIES.

#### CAPT EDWIN F. RICHARDSON ENGINE 15

"It is no easy or pleasant undertaking to recall the innumerable occasions when one has faced almost certain death at dangerous fires and to decide which call brought one nearest to eternity."

"At the Beach-st fire in August, 1884, I had climbed the ladder to the last rung, aiming to join Joseph Pierce and James Quigley, who were already playing the hose on the flaming skylight. A moment later my foot actually rested on the edge of the roof, when without warning before me the skylight caved in, drawing the two men into the flames to their deaths. By a hair's breadth I regained my footing on the ladder and saved my life.

"Five fire horses in a mad runaway was an experience I had about 11 years ago. I responded to box 223 on Old Heath st, Roxury, about 7 o'clock one evening. I was then lieutenant of Engine 14. I jumped on the seat and acted as driver.

"Everything went well until the apparatus reached Donegal sq, at the junction of Columbus av and Center st. It was down-grade almost from the engine house to Center st and the horses were going at top speed when they reached the lower part of Center st.

"When I attempted to turn the horses into Old Heath st the wheels of the heavy engine struck the car tracks and I was thrown from the seat to the pavement. The horses ran wild for two miles and were stopped in Jamaica Plain. I hailed a milk wagon and followed the runaway horses and came up to them just as the engineer and his assistant were making explanation to two policemen who had stopped the horses.

"Five years later, at the Thanksgiving Day fire in the Brown-Durrell Building,



CAPT EDWIN F. RICHARDSON.

I was with the company of Engine 14 and had barely time to obey orders and leave the building when it collapsed, carrying four men—Newman, Looker, Brookers and Buckley—to their deaths.

"In 1904, at a church fire in Guild row, Roxbury, I narrowly escaped death when my foot slipped on an icy ladder as I strained to get a firmer grasp on Capt Dan C. Sennott, now deputy chief, who was falling through a sinking floor. Slipping from the top, I fell over across the ladder, receiving a severe injury, the marks of which I still bear.

"At the Chelsea fire, April 12, 1903, my engine was engulfed in the ruins, surrounded by smoldering debris. I had just ordered the men to abandon the lines and engine and run for their lives, when a sheet of flame suddenly shut my men from sight and nearly surrounded me. It was several hours later when I gathered the boys together and knew the lives of my men were safe."

In 1884 Edwin F. Richardson was appointed call substitute, callman in 1887, promoted to lieutenant in 1896 and captain in 1906.