

# FEARLESS BOSTON FIREMEN

## Who Take All Kinds of Chances

### A SERIES OF PERSONAL STORIES,

#### CAPT C. J. O'BRINE ENGINE 10

"In the 26 years that I have been a member of the Boston Fire Department I have seen many sights that were heartrending. I have had many close calls myself. One in particular that impressed me and gave me a real thrill was at the Revere House fire in January, 1911.

"I responded to the second alarm from old Box 23. On arriving at the fire we ran a line through the front door of the hotel to the courtyard at the center of the building. We worked up from the first to the third floor.

"It looked so bad that I ordered all my men out. After I saw my men had gotten out safely I wanted to go myself, but I was a little bit too late. The wall of the courtyard collapsed, knocking me down and almost completely burying me under debris and brick. My head was cut open and I was in a dazed condition.

"Other members, noticing my hands and arms protruding from the debris, quickly dug me out and brought me to a place of safety. I was so badly injured I was off duty 16 days.

"I had another close call at the Cambridge-st fire. I was working on a third floor and about to change a line of hose to the fourth floor when, without warning, the roof and three floors above came down with a crash, carrying Willet, Walsh and McCarty with them. I was thrown across the floor and was grabbed by other members of the company.

"After getting myself together I called out the names of the different members of the company and found all responded with the exception of the three. We all started to rescue our unfortunate brothers and succeeded in getting Mc-



CAPT C. J. O'BRINE.

Carty out alive after three hours' hard work. The other two boys had responded to their last call.

"Another fire gave me a thrill not easily forgotten. At the Merrimack-st blaze, Feb 5, 1898, I was working on the top floor when the roof and floors gave way. I was fortunate in being able to grab one of the window sills and was pulled up by Capt Garrety and others and succeeded in reaching the ground by a ladder. I then assisted in excavating the boys who had gone down with the floors and were buried in the debris.

"We found four members of Engine 7 who were alive and five members of Engine 39 were taken out dead. One was the late lamented Chief Eagan, known as the dare-devil of the department."

Capt O'Brien joined the department May 30, 1890; was made lieutenant in February, 1898, and captain in January, 1907.