

FEARLESS BOSTON FIREMEN

Who Take All Kinds of Chances

A SERIES OF PERSONAL STORIES.

CAPT JAMES J. CAINE ENGINES 38 AND 39

"Twenty-three years ago I joined the Boston Fire Department. I have had many exciting experiences there have been times when my life has been in peril.

"I remember the Lincoln-st fire, way back in March, 1893. I had been in the department only a short time, but this fire left an impression upon me that I shall never forget.

"It was a general alarm fire, corner of Lincoln and Essex sts. When we arrived on the scene we started to lay our hose, and before we got the water on the windows commenced to fill with wild, frantic people. Some started to jump to the street below. We abandoned our line and resorted to our life-nets and horse blankets, catching the people as they jumped out of the windows.

"This fire was such a roaring hell that the flames jumped across the street, and several other buildings were burned. Inside of one hour the building on Lincoln st was a mass of debris. Had it not been for the life-nets, many lives would have been lost. As it was, those who jumped from the windows before we were able to get our nets spread were dashed to death on the pavement below.

"At another fire in August, 1894, when I was hoseman on Engine 28, I responded to an alarm from box 45 for a fire at the corner of Arch and Franklin sts. The fire was on the upper floor. I carried my line up there. The smoke was so dense and heavy that I was obliged to lie flat on the floor while playing the stream.

"Not being able to stand the smoke any longer, I started to make my way out, but must have fallen unconscious, as the next thing I remember was when I was lying in Arch st and my comrades were working over me. They told



CAPT JAMES J. CAINE

me afterward that they found me lying in a stupor and brought me down to the street.

"At the Baldwin-Robbins fire on Pearl st. in February, 1894 (I was captain of Engine 33 at the time), hoseman Dennis Hurley and I were on a ladder playing in the second-story window when a hot-air explosion occurred, blowing Hurley from the ladder to the street. He received injuries that necessitated his remaining in the hospital several months. I was fortunate enough to hang on to the ladder and reached the street in safety.

"I think the most painful and disagreeable accident I ever had was at a fire in Rowe pl, near Chauncy st. We carried the line in as the stairway was burned away. The fire was raging above us. We were obliged to play a stream almost perpendicular and the water came down on us boiling hot, scalding my back and shoulders very badly.

Capt James J. Caine joined the department Jan 18, 1876; was made lieutenant in November, 1893, and captain Jan 4, 1897.