

SEVENTH FIRE DISTRICT OF BOSTON.

It Contains Garages, Lumber Wharves, Freight Sheds, the Public Library, South End Tenements and Back Bay Residences—The Apparatus and the Men Who Fight the Fires—District Chief John T. Byron's Experiences at the Arch Street and North Street Explosions.



BOSTON'S seventh fire district lies between the Charles river on the west, and Fort Point channel and South bay on the east. The northern boundary from the Charles to Fort Point channel is outlined by Otter, Beacon, Arlington, Boylston, Church and Providence sts, Park sq, Columbus av, Church, Tremont and Pleasant sts and Broadway extension to bridge. The southern boundary runs along Massachusetts av from the Harvard bridge to the South bay. It contains three engines, three lad-

der trucks, one chemical engine, one water tower, and all the spare apparatus of the department which is kept at the repair depot on Bristol st. Each engine is quartered with a ladder truck. A glance at the map will show that this great district is bisected by Columbus av. In the vicinity of which lies the garage district. Down toward the Charles lies Copley sq, with the library and many other public buildings, and the apartment hotel and residential region of the Back Bay. Toward Fort Point channel and the South bay is much of the tenement house district of the South End, also the hazardous lumber wharf and freight shed district along Albany st. Near the southern boundary are the many buildings comprising the City hospital.

Opportunity is afforded for every sort of fire. To the hazards of the lumber and gasoline districts in particular Commissioner Daly has devoted much of his attention since assuming office. Many of Boston's big fires in recent years have occurred in the 7th district.

The burning of the great elevator a few years ago, when several firemen were injured, is still fresh in mind. No fiercer gasoline fire has been seen anywhere than that which destroyed the Park-sq garage two winters ago. When the firemen arrived the building was already enveloped and blazing like one immense oxy-hydrogen flame. So fierce was this fire, despite the prevailing snowstorm, that all efforts were directed to protecting surrounding property. So sudden was its spread that within one minute of bursting open the doors of the old Park-sq skating rink, at some distance from the original fire, and before water could be brought to bear, Deputy Grady, Chief Fox, Capt Sheeran, and the men under their command, were compelled to abandon their attempt to save the structure, and barely escaped with their lives.

The Albany-st fire of August last was a typical lumber wharf fire, causing a general alarm and threatening the entire city. It was during this fire that Acting District Chief McManus and all the men with him were buried beneath the walls of a building on Bristol st.

The command of this section of the city devolves upon District Chief John T. Byron, who is, by long experience in the busiest downtown companies, well fitted for the responsibilities of this important division. He joined the Boston fire department as call man to chemical engine 5 on Dec 24, 1879, and was made a permanent member on April 1, 1882. Promoted lieutenant of chemical 5, October, 1886. Promoted acting captain of engine 6, 1894, and captain of same company in February, 1896; transferred to engine 26 March, 1897, promoted acting district chief of the 5th district in June, 1900; district chief June 9, 1909, and assigned to the 7th district.

During his long service he has been injured many times, but his worst experiences have been in explosions. At the Arch-st explosion he, with Chief Mullen and many others, was blown down the stairway and badly burned; and at the North-st explosion he was so severely burned that he was unable to return to duty for three months.

The headquarters house of the seventh district is that of engine 22 and ladder 13, on Warren av. This house, built under the direction of the late fire commissioner, Henry S. Russell, is the finest house in this part of the country, both in finish and accommodations.

Capt F. M. O'Leary commands engine 22. He entered the department Dec 14, 1880, and was promoted lieutenant Nov 12, 1897. Promoted captain March 2, 1906, and has since then served with engine 22.

Lieut H. M. Hebard is one of the few engineers who have gained higher rank. He entered the department July 17, 1891, and was soon made assistant engineer. In February, 1897, he was made engineer of the self-propelled engine No. 38. Promoted lieutenant June 29, 1905. He now holds the responsible position of instructor to the department engine school.

Engineers E. G. Hook and J. McLaughlin look after engine 22, and D. H. Twiss and J. J. Downey drive. H. F. Mendall is the senior man, and the names of the other hosemen are J. A. Kippenberger, M. J. Sullivan, J. P. Gallagher, D. F. McDonald, T. A. O'Connell and J. P. Rose, who is a veteran of the Spanish war.

Aerial ladder 13, quartered in this house, is under the command of Capt P. J. V. Kelly. He entered the department May 18, 1891, and was promoted lieutenant May 23, 1900, and made captain of ladder 13, April 9, 1910. Lieut DeWitt Lane entered the service Oct 17, 1890, and for many years served as assistant engineer. Thinking his chances of promotion better on the "line," he voluntarily resigned from the position of assistant engineer and became a hoseman. He was promoted lieutenant in May, 1906.

The driver of the big truck is J. H. Feeley, also a veteran of the Spanish war. The names of the laddermen are senior man J. P. Olsen, T. E. Flanagan, Leroy James, J. J. Donohoe, J. J. Kenney, T. L. Finn, F. Linloff, J. J. Cremin, J. F. Lawler and D. A. Truesdale, captain of the Boston F. D. baseball team.

Ladder 3 is quartered with engine 3 at the corner of Harrison av and Bristol st. It is of the regular city service truck type and carries 14 ladders ranging from 65 feet to the short roof ladder. The captain of truck 3 is Peter E. Walsh, a Charlestown man, who before entering the fire service was a stone-cutter by trade. He was appointed July 28, 1892. Promoted lieutenant Aug 28, 1896, and captain Nov 4, 1904, and is now acting chief of the 7th district. He is one of the few firemen who have taken up serious outside studies. In 1903 he began the study of law, and in December of 1907 successfully passed the examinations for the Massachusetts bar, and was admitted to practice Feb 4, 1908.

Lieut John McCann was appointed Feb 26, 1893, and assigned to ladder 3. Promoted lieutenant Jan 4, 1907, he remained with the same company. It is considered most unusual for a member to be promoted lieutenant and retained to take charge of his former associates.

Driver J. J. Cronin handles the ribbons of the truck, and the laddermen are John T. Gillen, James W. Mahoney, Patrick J. Malone, J. Gavagan, G. A. Waggett, H. E. McGaffigan, T. D. Brown, M. T. Barrett, C. A. V. Anderson and John J. Earle, a Spanish war veteran, who saw some of the hardest fighting in the Philippines, and was specially commended for bravery.

Engine 3 is under the command of Capt Michael Boyle. He was appointed to engine 15 June 21, 1889. Promoted lieutenant of engine 12 Feb 6, 1903, and captain of engine 3 May 18, 1903.

Lieut William F. Field was appointed Sept 13, 1892, and promoted lieutenant May 18, 1903. Engineers F. S. Young and V. B. Nolan look after the machinery. Engineer Young is very well known as a swimmer who has made excellent records. Drivers T. F. Feeley and A. E. Nelson handle the reins, and the hosemen are G. W. Darling, D. I. Bell, D. J. Kennedy, J. J. Gately, J. L. Glynn and J. J. Burke.

Water tower 2 is housed in the headquarters building beneath the lofty drill tower on Bristol st on which all recruits perform the regulation stunts. The house also shelters the "wrecking wagon" which goes to all fires of a serious kind and carries everything necessary for emergencies. As the tower is right under the eye of the fire commissioner it is, of course, manned by picked men.

Lieut Charles H. Donohoe commands the big tower. He joined the fire force in 1833 and was assigned to engine 15 and afterward to engine 13 and to ladder 3. He became president of the Russell fire club, and was promoted lieutenant Sept 16, 1910. In addition to taking charge of the water tower he acts as drillmaster to the department, and recruits remain under his instructions for 30 days after entering the department.

Hoseman J. J. Hughes, G. L. Evanson, G. F. Frazier Jr, W. P. Sullivan and W. J. Connell are also carried on the roster of tower 2. Hoseman Hughes is a veteran of the fire force. He became one

of the original permanent men on engine 25, when that company was first organized. He drove engine 25 for 19 years, and is now the last of the original members of that well-known company.

Across the grill yard stands the repair shop, or rather it used to be before the Albany-st fire. The regular employees do not fight fires, but Supt Eugene M. Byington and his private secretary, Vincent "Ben" Buckley, do when there is a big fire, and are always on call in emergencies and take particular care that the engines are plentifully supplied with ammunition.

Supt Byington is one of America's foremost fire engine experts, and engines built to his specifications have had phenomenal success. He is the author of a book on the steam fire engine and is recognized as an authority on the subject by all builders.

Chemical engine 4 is a busy little company, located on Shawmut av. Lieut John P. Murray commands. He entered the department Aug 9, 1893, and was assigned to ladder 15, served 13 years with that company and was promoted lieutenant of ladder 13 March 2, 1904. After three years with ladder 13 and three with engine 4, he took charge of chemical 4 Sept 16, 1910.

Senior hoseman Michael J. Brown is also the driver of this fast moving machine, and William P. Punch and Henry J. Enross are the hosemen. Hoseman Punch has the credit of rescuing a boy from a burning building in February of this year.

This company recently distinguished itself by catching four young men who were concerned in sounding a false alarm from box 80, and paid \$15 each for their amusement.

The house is one of the oldest in Boston. Formerly the quarters of Hard-scrabble engine 1 and the famous Suffolk 5, its old companies were composed of volunteers, who afterwards became some of Boston's most prominent citizens.

Engine 33 and ladder 15 occupy the station at the corner of Boylston and Hereford sts. Engine 33 is commanded by Capt M. P. Mitchell, and ladder 15 by Capt F. P. Stengel. Both men were born in Boston and have been intimate friends since they were boys.

Capt Melvir P. Mitchell was born Feb 10, 1839. He joined the first force as call man to engine 1, Nov 27, 1853, and was made a permanent member of same company Sept 4, 1884. Promoted lieutenant of same company March 27, 1897, he remained there till made captain of engine 10, Oct 28, 1904. He was transferred to engine 33, Jan 28, 1908, and is now the senior captain of the 7th district.

Lieut M. D. Greene joined the department May 12, 1893, and served with ladder 1 and engines 38 and 39 until promoted lieutenant of engine 33, Oct 25, 1902, and with this company he has since remained.

Engineers J. H. Desmond and G. H. Magwood look after the machinery of engine 33, and J. H. McLaughlin and J. J. Sheehan drive. The names of the hoseman are L. H. Boudreau, V. P. McGulre, C. C. Shepard, J. M. Cook, J. J. Gleason and W. H. Guinan.

The captain of ladder 15, Frank P. Stengel, was born May 15, 1859. Appointed call man to ladder 5, April 21, 1883. Made permanent on engine 28, March 28, 1885, and then served with engine 3, ladder 1 and engine 21. Promoted lieutenant of ladder 6 July 2, 1897, and captain of ladder 2 April 9, 1909. He has been in command of aerial ladder 15 since Feb 10, 1910.

Lieut F. D. Adams joined the department Feb 22, 1895, and served with engine 13, ladder 4, ladder 3 and tower 2. Promoted lieutenant March 2, 1906, and has since served with ladder 14 and his present company.

Driver C. A. Wolfe handles the reins of the big truck and senior ladderman W. H. Gillis looks after the tiller. The laddermen are J. J. Ealdwin, F. Donoghue, W. J. Shepard, E. J. McIntyre, J. J. Walton, J. F. Murphy, C. A. Glennon, T. L. Corliss and J. Harrington. Ladderman William J. Shepard is secretary and now vice president of the Russell fire club and one of the best workers the organization possesses. Ladderman Florence Donoghue received a medal from the Humane Society Jan 28, 1901, for the rescue of a man from an attic in a building on Auburn