

FOUGHT FIRE IN MID AIR.

Great Courage Displayed by Lieut Albert J. Caulfield and Ladderman Dennis F. Daly in Extinguishing the Blaze at Top of a Wireless Telegraph Pole 208 Feet High.



In the fire department there are many heroes. Hardly a week passes without at least one member of the department receiving official recognition and reward for some brave act which he has performed. As the general orders relating to the heroic conduct of the various firemen are read in the department houses the men are inspired, and practically every member of the department is in readiness for extra duty in the hour of emergency.

Some of the fire department heroes were rewarded because they stopped runaway horses who were endangering the lives of pedestrians, others have been commended for their skill in dressing wounds of injured persons, while many more have been praised for meritorious conduct shown in the performance of their duties.

Until a few days ago there was some doubt as to whom the place of honor in the fire department hall of fame really belonged, but now the fire department officials say that the doubt no longer exists, and that to Lieut Albert J. Caulfield and ladderman Dennis F. Daly of ladder company 19, East 4th st, South Boston, and hoseman Napeen Boutillier of engines 26-35 Mason st, detailed to ladder 19, belongs the glory of being the star heroes of the fire service.

The above trio gave a wonderful practical illustration of the remarkable courage possessed by Boston firemen on Tuesday morning last, when they imperiled their lives to save from destruction apparatus belonging to the De Forest wireless telegraph system at South Boston.

Selected by Asst Chief John A. Mullen to save the property from total loss, the trio, contending with difficulties, ascended a 208-foot pole and extinguished the blaze at the top of the pole. The act required considerable nerve, but the three firemen had plenty of that, and their sufferings while fulfilling their task were graphically related to Fire Commissioner Wells by Asst Chief John A. Mullen, who was on the scene, and the officials appeared much pleased because of the grand work of the men.

Previous accounts of what occurred at South Boston last Tuesday morning, the fire department officials say, failed to do justice to the three brave men. For three and one-half hours they worked on the lengthy pole, their hands and bodies numb with the cold, but they never flinched, sticking to their perilous positions until the last spark had died away and they were ordered to the street. When the men descended their clothing and the ladders were coated with ice.

In order to extinguish the fire it was first necessary to press into service a 65-foot extension ladder from truck 5. Then five scaling ladders which had been brought from the fire department repair shop were used, and even with the six ladders, covering a distance of 145 feet in service, it was apparent that the fire could not be reached.

The "fleeing" process, a discovery of Asst Chief Mullen, and worked for the first time Tuesday, was then relied upon, the three men increasing their danger as they feeted the ladders, removing some of the lower scaling ladders and placing them above the upper

ones, thus leaving a large gap on the pole between the ladders.

With the fleeing service working the fire was reached, and the lines of hose were worked, and the fire extinguished by Boutillier, who stood at the head of the trio, Daly and Caulfield standing some distance beneath him on the ladders.

As a result of the brave work of the firemen Asst Chief Mullen suggested that they be rewarded for what they had done, and the fire commissioner readily agreed, issuing a few minutes later the following letter, copies of which have been sent to each of the three brave men: "Your work at South Boston on the scaling ladders at the wireless telegraph pole is worthy of special notice. The entire fire department comes in for a share of the credit for the fight, which was a most unusual and difficult proposition, and solved by the courage, skill and endurance of some of its members. You accept my thanks and are granted an extra day off and commendation in general orders."

To Asst Chief John A. Mullen, who directed the men and who suggested the plan, much praise reverts

It was only another instance of his remarkable ability and knowledge of scientific fire fighting. Mullen is now temporarily in charge of the fire department because of Chief Cheswell's illness.

Lieut Albert J. Caulfield has been the recipient of much praise, owing to the fact that it has been many years since he was obliged to go over the scaling ladders before. Scaling ladders are new to the fire department of this city so far as practical use is concerned, but the manner in which Caulfield carried out his part of the stunt of Tuesday morning on the ladders pleased his superior officers and friends.

Caulfield has been connected with the fire department since May 18, 1891, when he was appointed to engines 38-39 for duty. Dec 7, 1894, he was shifted to engine 1, Dorchester st, being granted a return transfer to engines 38-39 Feb 18, 1898, when promoted to a lieutenant. Oct 25, 1902, he was placed at his present station, which is numbered among the department's most reliable companies.

Ladderman Dennis F. Daly, who stood next to Boutillier on the ladder, is one of the "dandy drillers" of the fire department. He has been in the service since March 10, 1902, and whenever there are any fancy drilling exhibitions over at fire headquarters Mr Daly is always summoned, because the drillmaster knows that he can mount two rungs of a ladder without dropping three. Daly drives ladder 19, where he has been located since April 18, 1904. Previously he was attached to engine 17 and combination 11.

June 3, 1904, Boutillier joined the department and today is considered one of the crack hosemen of the city. Like Daly, he is a "dandy driller," and is always sent for when an exhibition is to be given. Boutillier used to serve at engine 1, Dorchester, South Boston, but after Capt Coulter was sent there he was shifted to engines 26-35. He is very clever with his hands, at one time being the amateur boxing champion. He has won many trophies at the B. A. A.

Nowadays everybody is talking about the stunt at the wireless station, and all agree that for circus performances, Caulfield, Daly and Boutillier take the cake.

Fire Loss 2 -- No Title

Boston Daily Globe (1872-1922); Nov 28, 1905;

ProQuest Historical Newspapers Boston Globe (1872 - 1927)

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Wireless Mast Damaged by Fire.

An electric spark ignited one of the guy ropes near the top of the mast of the wireless telegraph station at the corner of M and East 9th sts, South Boston, about 8:45 last night, and before it burned itself out caused a damage of about \$1000. The burning rope set fire to the heavy top gaff 200 feet in the air, and this soon fell to the ground. The firemen were powerless to do anything because of the great height of the fire.

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