

The Men Who Built the Belmont Tunnel

When generations yet unborn are asked the name of the man who built the Belmont tunnel under the East River, between Long Island City and Manhattan, the handful of lucky, courageous men who made the tunnel possible will have probably faded from memory and only the combination who supplied the money for the work will live in the annals of history.

Among the men who built the Belmont tunnel, the names of the men who were in the front ranks are those of the men who were in the front ranks of the Belmont tunnel. The names of the men who were in the front ranks of the Belmont tunnel are those of the men who were in the front ranks of the Belmont tunnel.

Van Duzen, relating the incident, "and three miles out in Lake Erie. The work was that of building a tunnel for miles out under the lake to supply the city of Cleveland with water. On the night of August 11, 1901, the two-story shaft house built on Crib No. 2 caught fire and the forty-two workmen asleep in it were killed. The fire was caused by a gas leak in a blower trap. The crib was lit by the fire, and the building extended to the outer edge. The fire spread without heat or life-saving apparatus of any sort, and surrounded by the waters of the lake. Mr. Van Duzen had just come out of the shaft, and had turned into the bank when he was accused by the flames. He sprang down to the ground floor, half outside, and found the men chasing around in their narrow pen crowded with fear. His presence instantly restored order. At the command doors were unbarred and blinks placed and boards were torn off and as fast as they were thrown overboard the workmen floated off with their improvised lifeboats. In this manner all but six men, who slept in the upper part of the house, and were burned to death, got away from the blazing crib, although four of the men sank from exhaustion in the cold waters of the lake and were drowned. Van Duzen was the last to leave the crib, and he finally sprang overboard with a plank and aided in keeping the others afloat until rescue reached them several hours later from the city, three miles away. Then, despite the fact that everybody around the workings believed that the twenty men in the tunnel below had been suffocated by the smoke from the shaft house, he insisted on tracing up a temporary wind-lane and was lowered himself down the shaft, only to find the men still there all around. When the names of the workmen were checked up, he insisted that two of the men were still missing, although the books apparently showed that every man was accounted for. Six days later, when clearing away the debris, he was startled by hearing a faint sound from the depths of the shaft along an old air pipe. The signal sounded one, two, one, two, one. This meant "danger, call out the men." Without making a word to anybody he was picked up by a piece of iron and going over to the air pipe returned the signal. For the first few minutes those about the crib thought that the men were in the shaft, and they were about to take him, when closer and distinct came the answering signal from the depths of the shaft—*one, two, one, two, one*. "The everybody was crazy," said Mr.

weak to walk. We got them out and for all I know they are both well and living today."

These stirring scenes are recalled to Van Duzen every time he pulls out a heavy gold watch, for inside the case of that timepiece is the inscription: "Presented to G. C. H. Van Duzen by the workmen of Crib No. 2 for services rendered on the fourteenth and twentieth of August, 1901."

Upon another occasion, when engaged in responding the work of building a tunnel under Lake Michigan to supply the city of Milwaukee with water, they struck the same hidden lake, and a third time they ran into an immense cavern in the bottom of which opened the waters that twice came near drowning the entire gang. This cavern was

in its entrance and thickness. It was simply a great void. They could neither see nor hear, while the hollow sound made by dropping a stone into the water added to the consciousness of almost fathomless depths of water below. This necessitated a fourth change in the direction of this tunnel before the destination planned by the engineers was finally reached.

In speaking of the building of the Belmont tunnel under the East River, Mr. Van Duzen said this work was carried on under the greatest difficulties in all his tunnel building, he never encountered the hazardous conditions that surrounded



From left to right—G. C. H. Van Duzen, Superintendent; H. Rude Jacobson, Assistant Engineer; Allen A. Robbins, Assistant Engineer; St. John Clarke, Chief Engineer; S. Dahm, Inspector; R. Cramer, Inspector.

SOME JERRY WOCKERSISMS

There's a bit of enjoyment in some of those people who never get have expected the joy of producing the famous from holes drilled at the expense of the

year. Whether the flowers are produced in midwinter, indoors or in the spring, they are better when they are produced in the open air. The man who has the best of both worlds is the one who has the best of both worlds. The man who has the best of both worlds is the one who has the best of both worlds.

time the apartment is repaired. One might better give the house a hand than the bulb.

Nothing more natural than that they have done a better job of their work. The man who has the best of both worlds is the one who has the best of both worlds.

Improvement Association. The women of the Association have for a quarter of a century made the Association the means of accumulating good work and with that in mind they have done a better job of their work. The man who has the best of both worlds is the one who has the best of both worlds.

1901 Belmont Tunnel fire and rescue

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