

Great Fire of London 1666

On Sunday 2nd September 1666, the weather was hot, dry and windy.

The level of the water in the River Thames was low because it had been a hot, dry summer.

The fire began in Pudding Lane in the house of a baker. The family were woken by smoke in the early in the morning, and had to escape through an upstairs window.

Early on Sunday the fire spread west of Pudding Lane. The water engine was also destroyed.

Samuel Pepys's maid reported to him that more than 300 houses had been destroyed. He kept a diary of the Great Fire of London.

Did you know: Samuel Pepys buried his expensive cheese and wine to stop it perishing in the fire.



By Sunday night the fire had burned for half a mile to the East and North of Pudding Lane. King Charles II had ordered the Mayor to pull down any houses necessary to stop the spread of the fire.



The houses in London were very tightly packed, and pulling down enough houses to stop the fire before the fire took hold was a difficult job.



Monday and the River Thames was full of boats carrying property rescued from houses that had burnt down.

Many of London's wealthiest citizens had taken their money and valuables to the Tower for safekeeping. By Monday evening the fire was 300 yards from the Tower.

Tuesday and the fire showed no sign of stopping. All attempts to stop it spreading had failed and the fire-fighters were getting very tired.

Great Fire of London



What is happening here?

By the evening the roof of St. Paul's cathedral was on fire.

Wednesday and the fire continued to burn but, the wind had dropped, so it was not spreading so rapidly.

A number of houses in Cripplegate had been destroyed and that had stopped the spread of the fire and allowed fire-fighters to put it out.



Thursday evening and the fire was finally put out. It had caused a lot of damage:

87 churches, including St Paul's cathedral, 13,200 houses

Fortunately, only 6 people lost their lives, far less than the number that would have died from the plague if the fire had not happened.

The cost of the fire and rebuilding London was 10 million pounds.

With thanks

www.historyonthenet.co.

www.london-fire.gov.uk

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