

The Great Fire of London was a major conflagration that swept through the central parts of the City of London, from Sunday, 2 September to Wednesday, 5 September 1666.

The fire gutted the medieval City of London inside the old Roman city wall. It threatened, but reached, the aristocratic district of Westminster, Charles II's Palace of Whitehall, and most of the suburban slums. It consumed 13,200 houses, 87 parish churches, St Paul's Cathedral and most of the buildings of the City authorities. It is estimated to have destroyed the homes of 70,000 of the City's 80,000 inhabitants.

The death toll is unknown but traditionally thought to have been small, as only six verified deaths were recorded. This reasoning has recently been challenged on the grounds that the deaths of poor and middle-class people were not recorded, while the heat of the fire may have cremated many victims leaving no recognisable remains. A melted piece of pottery on display at the Museum of London found by archaeologists in Pudding Lane, where the fire started, shows that the temperature reached 1700 °C.

The Great Fire started at the bakery of Thomas Farriner (or Farynor) on Pudding Lane, shortly after midnight on Sunday, 2 September, and spread rapidly west across the City of London.



The use of the major firefighting technique of the time, the creation of firebreaks by means of demolition, was critically delayed **owing** to the indecisiveness of the Lord Mayor of London, Sir Thomas Bloodworth. By the time large-scale demolitions were **ordered** on Sunday night, the wind had already fanned the bakery fire into a firestorm which defeated **such** measures.

The fire pushed north on Monday into the heart of the City. Order in the streets broke down as rumours arose of suspicious foreigners setting fires. The fears of the homeless focused on the French and Dutch, England's enemies in the ongoing Second Anglo-Dutch War; these substantial immigrant groups became victims of **lynchings** and street violence. On Tuesday, the fire spread over most of the City, destroying St Paul's Cathedral and leaping the River Fleet to threaten Charles II's court at Whitehall while coordinated firefighting **efforts** were simultaneously mobilising. The battle to **quench** the fire is considered to have been won by two factors: the strong east winds died down, and the Tower of London garrison used gunpowder to create effective firebreaks to halt further spread **eastward**.

The social and economic problems created by the disaster were overwhelming. Evacuation from London and resettlement **elsewhere** were strongly encouraged by Charles II, who feared a London rebellion amongst the dispossessed refugees. Despite numerous radical proposals, London was reconstructed on essentially the **same** street plan used before the fire.

text number 3: great fire of london

Vocabulary

Swept: Barrida

Gutted: destruido

recently: recientemente

Poor: Pobre

melted: derretido

bakery: panaderia

spread: propagar

Owing: debido

ordered: ordenado

Such: semejante

efforts: esfuerzos

eastward: hacia el este

elsewhere: en otra parte

same: mismo

quench: Apagar

Lynchings: linchamientos

reconstructed on essentially the **same** street plan used before the fire.



1. Many suburban slums were burnt down

- a. True.
- b. False.
- c. We don't know.

2. How many inhabitants had their homes destroyed?

- a. 13,200.
- b. 70,000.
- c. 80,000.

3. There were many deaths recorded.

- a. True.
- b. False.
- c. We don't know.

4. The Lord Mayor of London decided to demolish the burnt buildings

- a. True.
- b. False.
- c. We don't know.

5. The city was rebuilt following a new street design.

- a. True.
- b. False.
- c. We don't know.

Justification

- 1) but did not most of the suburban slums
- 2) it is estimated to have destroyed the homes of 70,000 of the city's 80,000 inhabitants.
- 3) The death toll is unknown but traditionally thought to have been small, as only six verified deaths were recorded.
- 4) the use of the major firefighting technique of the time, the creation of firebreaks by means of demolition.