



THE FIRE started in a bakeshop near London Bridge 300 years ago. An easterly wind carried it through London, the flames devouring almost everything in a path 1 1/2 miles long and half a mile wide, an area in which 600,000 people lived. Whole streets were in flames at once, as shown in this 18th century history book etching. (CP Photo)

The fire that razed the City of London in a September week 300 years ago seemed too malicious in its devastation to be accepted at the time merely as an aimless catastrophe.

Following the great plague that took 56,558 London lives the previous year, the fire of Sept. 28, 1666, caused only four known deaths by burning. But shock or exposure killed uncounted numbers among the 100,000 Londoners left homeless and hungry on suburban meads.

Pushed by an easterly wind from its start in a Pudding Lane bakeshop near the end of London Bridge, the fire rushed through 400 narrow and for once rainless lanes, destroying 13,200 lath- and-plaster homes, 89 of the city's 109 churches and more than 50 centres of trade and craft from the apothecaries' hall to the woodmongers' livery.

SCAPEGOAT SOUGHT
The fire devoured almost everything in a path 1 1/2 miles long and one-half mile wide through the cramped community of 600,000 people—100 times the population that lives in the same area now.

"Rattle, rattle, rattle, was the noise which the fire struck upon the ear round about," wrote a contemporary pamphleteer, Rev. Thomas Vincent. "You might see in some places whole streets at once in flames that issued forth as if they had been so many great forges from the opposite windows... and then you might see the house stumble, tumble, tumble from one end of the street to the other with a great crash."

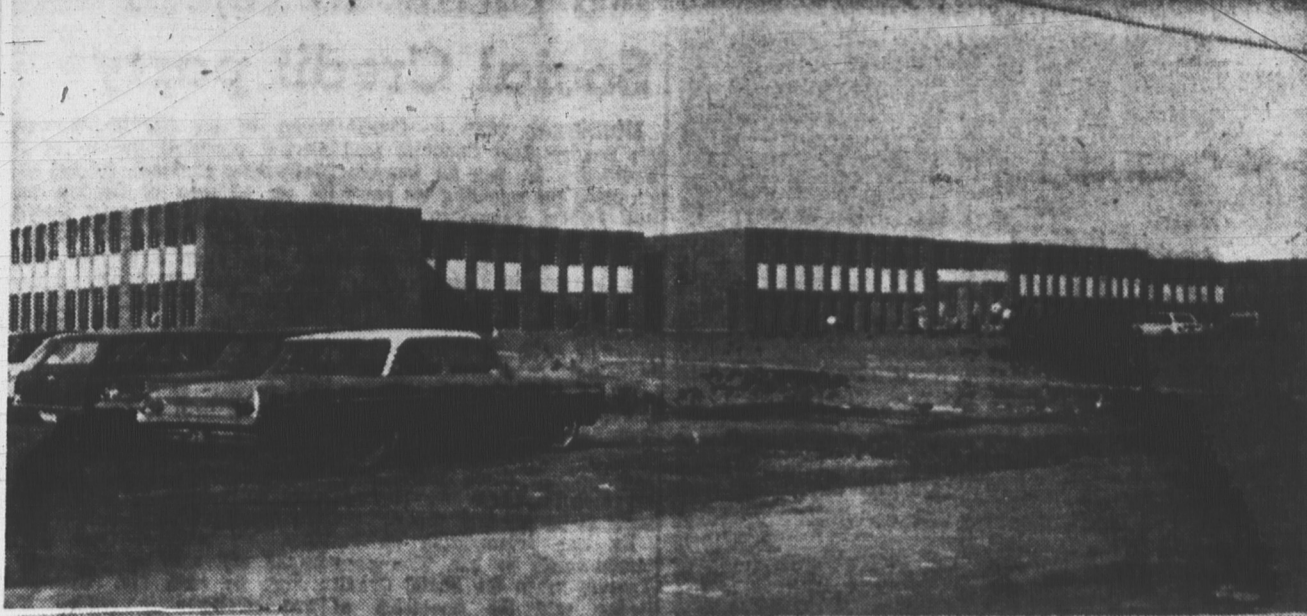
The search for an explanation scoured up a flock of scapegoats and provoked a great post-mortem controversy.

England was at war with Holland. Religious suspicion was rife. Just 17 years after

great fire of London, "was occasioned by the sin of gluttony for it began at Pudding Lane."

300th anniversary recalls the great fire of London

By CARL MOLLINS
LONDON (CP)—The calamity, the English parson told his congregation after the



COLONEL GRAY, HIGH SCHOOL, CHARLOTTETOWN

Immigrant complains

Oliver Cromwell's Puritans had killed the Catholic Charles I. and six years after the monarchy was restored under the nominally Protestant Charles II, whose brother and heir James was a Catholic.

Foreigners of any kind were beaten in the burning streets. Protestants accused Catholics of starting the fire, Catholics said the fire was holy retribution for London's Protestant heresy.

WATCHMAKER HANGED
Robert Hubert, a deranged French watchmaker described by diarist Samuel Pepys as "a morose, besotted fellow," was hanged on Tyburn Tree for the alleged arson, but only after he had changed successive confessions until they finally almost fitted the known facts.

The king's fireworks-maker, a French Catholic named Beland, came under suspicion and was said to have fled hostile citizens to sanctuary inside the canopy bed of an aristocratic patron, Lady Killigrew of Whitchell.

For other Puritans, the fire was divine punishment. But the parson who blamed gluttony was at least partly mistaken.

The fire did break out in Pudding Lane—in the bakeshop of a man named Farinor at about 1 a.m. on Sunday, Sept. 2.—But at Pie Corner, a mile to the northwest, the fire was only checked, not halted, on the Wednesday.

A statue of a fat little boy still stands on the corner, though it no longer bears the inscription that once proclaimed: "This boy is put up in memory of the late fire of London occasioned by the sin of gluttony in 1666."

SOME BLAMED CHURCH
More serious were the accusations of a popish plot. These persisted even after a parliamentary committee concluded in January, 1667, that "nothing hath yet been found to argue the fire to have been other than the hand of God upon us, a great wind, and the season so very dry."

Fifteen years after the fire, the pedestal of the 202-foot Doric column raised by Sir Christopher Wren as a memorial monument bore the inscription that the fire was "begun and carried on by the treachery and malice of the popish faction." The charge was erased after Catholic James II succeeded in 1685, was carved again when he

EDMONTON (CP)—They promise everything at the immigration office in Germany, but when you get here there's nothing and nobody cares."

Helga Grau, who arrived here in May from West Berlin, was repeating in an interview a familiar complaint of immigrants to this part of Canada.

She said she, her husband and two-year-old son were met

was deposited in 1688 and was obliterated finally only in 1831.

Other consequences were more beneficial to London and the world: insurance and fire brigades, for example.

The unrecoverable material losses were worked out by an assiduous 17th century accountant at more than £10,000,000, a staggering fortune in those days. Insurance systems began to be set up as the city was rebuilt—this time of brick and stone under royal order. Nicholas Barbon, a go-ahead young merchant, established the first effective form of insurance in 1680.

FORMED BRIGADES
Within 40 years of the great fire, insurance companies began protecting their premiums with company fire brigades, the first in the world. Insured buildings were fixed with a company plaque—a sun, a thistle, a phoenix, clasped hands to show each brigade which property to save.

The confusion of firefighters—sometimes known to ignore a burning building if it bore a rival company's plaque—finally combined as a single force in 1832 and became a municipal brigade in 1866. London insurance companies still contribute to the costs of the London fire brigade.

Present-day town planners and motorists lament the fact that the City of London was rebuilt in only slightly less higgledy-piggledy fashion than before. Wren was the author of one of five plans submitted to the king within a fortnight of the fire—all of them with broad avenues and open spaces. Although Wren rebuilt 51 churches and St. Paul's Cathedral in 50 years, none of the over-all plans was carried out.

at the railway station by an immigration department officer—but he couldn't speak German.

With the help of Eric Schmidt, a naturalized Canadian of German descent whom they had met on the ship, the Graus found temporary quarters in a basement suite with another immigrant family.

"The housing situation here is terrible," Mrs. Grau said. "In Germany you couldn't rent a place like this. They just don't exist anymore. We've lived in cheap places before but never in a basement."

Mr. Schmidt helped Mr. Grau find a job with a construction company. Jobs were not as plentiful as a newspaper advertisement in West Berlin had led them to believe, Mrs. Grau said.

"Things are a little better now, but a week ago my husband wanted to pack and go back if it hadn't been for Mr. Schmidt. I don't know what we would have done. He helped us when nobody else cared what happened to us."

Rain hampers early harvest
OTTAWA (CP)—Bad weather has interrupted the early harvest in much of the Prairie green belt. The Dominion Bureau of Statistics reports crop prospects, however, remain favorable.

All told, about a quarter of the Prairie crop has been swathed. Two weeks of warm dry weather is needed to bring late-sown crops to maturity and speed and harvest, the bureau said.

In a report based on telegraphed information from crop correspondents, the federal agency said most of the Manitoba harvest activity is in the south. Manitoba yield and quality are better than expected, with wheat at 20 to 30 bushels an acre and barley 25 to 45.

Harvesting was interrupted by cool, showery weather last week but should be normal again this week.

Wet weather has halted the Saskatchewan harvest and slowed ripening of late crops. The wheat harvest began in the south with the south-central region most advanced.

Throughout the province a

quarter of the wheat and coarse grains has been swathed. Warm, dry weather is needed, particularly in the central and northern districts.

A two-week cool, wet spell has delayed crops maturing in Alberta. Little harvesting has been done except in the southeast where grain cutting is general.

COULD BE GOOD
In the Maritimes, Prince Ed-

ward Island grain yields are fairly satisfactory and most potato fields look promising. Despite dry weather in all areas of Nova Scotia, except Cape Breton, the grain harvest has started with fairly good yields reported. Rain is needed soon for the Annapolis Valley apple crop.

The New Brunswick potato crops also look promising. Some grain has been harvested with normal yields.

Grain harvesting is under way in southern Quebec. About 85 per cent of the early potato crop has been dug, with good yields reported. Summer apple picking has started, with satisfactory yields. Sugar beets and flax are promising.

Recent rain has brought relief to drought areas in Ontario and harvesting of a record yield of a good quality winter wheat has been completed. The corn crop has shown great variation, but favorable weather would bring average yields. The sugar beet crop condition is excellent.

In British Columbia's Okanagan Valley, McIntosh and Delicious apples show promise but Winesaps will be below earlier expectations.

The only rust to develop on the Prairies was a cereal variety which is expected to cause some small losses in Manitoba and Saskatchewan.

ST. JOHN'S Nfld. (CP)—The Progressive Conservative party Wednesday appealed for financial support from the public for its campaign for the Sept. 8 Newfoundland election.

In a 10-part, three-column advertisement in the St. John's News, the PCs asked donations from party supporters, uncommitted voters "who recognize the fairness of having all political parties on an even basis" and from Liberals "who believe that on the continuation of the two-party system of government rests the future of democracy."

The advertisement said: "The Liberal party in Newfoundland always seems to have unlimited funds at its disposal for election campaigns." The Conservative message to "all you know from what sources the Liberal campaign chest is kept full."

It outlined campaign practices and repeated several times the statement: "the cost is high." Contributions large and small were asked in the advertisement, with a footnote that it was paid for by "friends of the party."

TRUCKS CROSS JUNGLE
About 150 South African-built trucks are ferrying oil products to Zambia from Tanzania, around the Rhodesian blockade

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