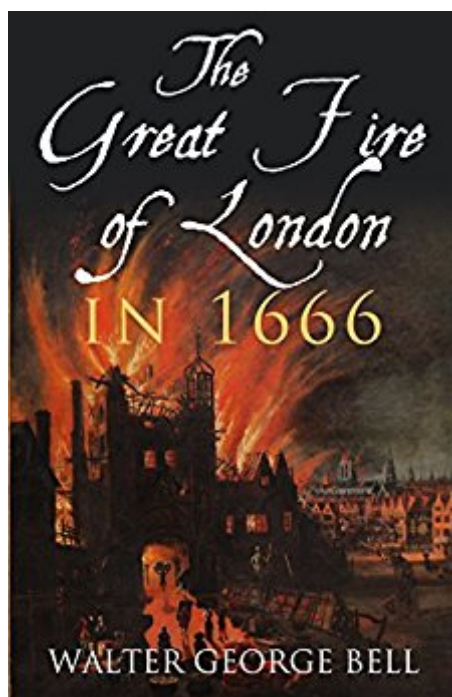


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# The Great Fire Of London In 1666



## Synopsis

September, 1666; carried by a strong east wind, in just four days Shakespeare's London would disappear forever, consumed by a towering inferno. Seventeenth century London was a scandalously populous city; scant care was given to the poor, and their dwellings were waterproofed solely by pitch. It was only a matter of time before tragedy struck, and as a result a hundred thousand were left homeless, with many more imperilled through speculation and circumstance. Bell goes on to point out that the Great Fire in fact may have been a mercy for London's health, ridding her of the evils that had festered there for centuries. The London that rose from the ashes in the following decades was different in everything that counted for human welfare, with contributions from many, including Christopher Wren. A landmark text upon its original publication, within its evocative pages Bell uses Samuel Pepys's Diary along with other documentation to offer an appreciation of what the Great Fire was, what it meant for London, for the people who lived there and how she endured. Walter George Bell F.R.A.S. (1867-1942) was an English historian and journalist. A keen astronomer from a young age, he contributed numerous articles on the subject to magazines and would continue to do produce such columns when he joined the Daily Telegraph. His candidacy for the Royal Astronomical Society was proposed in 1917. As a historian he was well-known for his works on the city of London. For details of other books published by Albion Press go to the website at [www.albionpress.co.uk](http://www.albionpress.co.uk). Albion Press is an imprint of Endeavour Press, the UK's leading independent digital publisher. For more information on our titles please sign up to our newsletter at [www.endeavourpress.com](http://www.endeavourpress.com). Each week you will receive updates on free and discounted ebooks. Follow us on Twitter: @EndeavourPress and on Facebook via <http://on.fb.me/1HweQV7>. We are always interested in hearing from our readers. Endeavour Press believes that the future is now.

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## Customer Reviews

The Great Fire of London in 1666 was originally written in 1920 by Walter George Bell, who makes the observation that the fire served to rid London of the last vestiges of its medieval ecclesiastical and monastic roots toward commercialism. The fire began before sunrise on Sunday, September 2, burnt through the city for four days, and left more than 100,000 people homeless by consuming 13,200 houses with 373 acres burnt within the city walls. No doubt residents must have felt accursed having escaped the plague only a year before. After the fire followed drought, torrential rains, and then a severe winter with exorbitant coal prices. One of the many interesting bits of information Bell includes, in this very informative account, is how wooden houses were brought down in the fire's path. Bell also includes an excellent review of the plans presented for London's rebuild and the Rebuilding Act itself. Bell does an excellent job of detailing the good that arose out of such devastation. I especially appreciated the appendices, which included contemporary accounts. The Great Fire is a well-researched and very readable account of both the fire and its aftermath.

Princess Fuzzypants here: On September 3rd (my purrday) 1666, the City of London was changed forever. A small fire started in Pudding Lane and turned into a conflagration that destroyed most of medieval London. The hot dry summer and the strong winds did not help. Nor did the claustrophobic streets of wooden buildings built so tightly together that two carts could not pass each other at the same time without getting stuck. Plague had ravaged the city the previous year and there were those quick to accuse all sorts of wickedness on the any number of boogie men. That the fire was an accident, caused by carelessness, was not accepted at the time. That the fire cleansed the city of many of the sources of plague and gave the city an opportunity to rebuild ever greater and more beautiful was lost in the sorrow of what had been lost. Chaos prevailed for a long time as things were

sorted out and buildings rebuilt. It is when some of the most striking buildings that survive today rose up, many of which were thanks to Sir Christopher Wren. It was not easy nor was it perfect but it changed the Square mile forever. This is a good and detailed account with many references from source material of the time. It is a long book but once worth the time. The book, written in 1920, adds an additional layer of interest. Many of the buildings that are discussed in the book, having survived to the 20th Century, were damaged or destroyed during the Blitz. Since then, the rebuilding of London has continued apace. So the reader can look at this book with no small amount of regret that some of what stood as a testament at the time exists no longer. This is definitely a good book for lovers of History particularly the history of London. I give it four paws and two paws up.

I really enjoyed reading this, Mr. Bell's writing was well informed and well-researched. I learned a lot about life in London in 1666 and the great fire that happened there.

The beginning is interesting in giving an overall view of what happened, but from then on it was a very detailed account of every step in the fire. I must admit I didn't finish reading it.

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