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Fire Destroys Four Square Miles



On Sunday, October 8, people in downtown Chicago awoke to see flames leaping at their homes. Grabbing anything they could, they fled toward Lake Michigan. Hundreds did not escape in time, and many suffered serious burns. All lost their homes.

Rumor has it, Mrs. O'Leary's cow kicked over a lantern in her barn, starting this disaster. However, the story has not been confirmed. What is known is that fire totally destroyed four square miles. Wooden buildings fueled the fires moving across the area. The city is pulling together to aid those suffering great losses.



One star on Chicago's official flag stands for the building of Fort Dearborn, the next star stands for the Great Chicago Fire, and the last two stand for the World's Fairs in 1893 and 1933. The top and bottom blue stripes represent Lake Michigan and the Chicago River.


One of the largest fires of the 19th century burned for two days and destroyed four square miles (10 square kilometers) in Chicago. More than 300 people lost their lives, and 100,000 lost their homes.

Several different reasons for the start of the fire have been suggested. The most well-known is that it began when a cow kicked over a lantern in Mrs. O'Leary's barn. Regardless of the reason, Chicago was devastated by the fire. The citizens, however, were committed to rebuilding this great city. Within just four years, workers rebuilt what was lost. Chicago was better than ever.



Someone in the watchtower is sending out the alert. The rest of the men will be coming soon.

As Josh and his dad rush on, a wind whips the fire into raging tongues of fire.



Dad, the wind is pushing the fire toward the center of the city!

Yes, I see. I hope we can stay ahead of it.