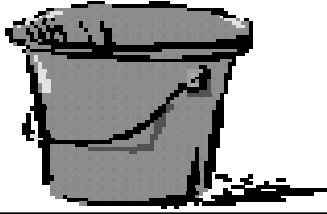


# The Great Fire Of London 1666

## Disaster??



On the night of September 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1666, a small fire broke out in the premises of a bakers shop in Pudding Lane, London, more than likely started by the carelessness of a maid. If it was carelessness, it was carelessness that had enormous and disastrous consequences, for the fire spread and soon the whole building was alight. In the close-packed streets of London where buildings jostled each other for space, the blaze soon became an inferno. Fanned by an east wind, the fire spread with terrifying speed, feeding on the tar and pitch commonly used to seal houses.

Nearly every housewife has made the same mistake, usually with no great consequence. However on September 2<sup>nd</sup> 1666 the result was disastrous!

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Our best account of the fire comes from the diaries of Samuel Pepys. He watched the course of the destruction from a safe position across the Thames, and called it, "a most malicious bloody flame, as one entire arch of fire... of above a mile long. I t made me weep to see it. The churches, houses, and all on fire and flaming at once, and the horrid noises that the flames made. Over the Thames with ones face in the wind you were almost burned with a shower of fire drops"



After four days while helpless citizens stood by and watched the destruction of their homes, the wind mercifully died and the fire was stopped.

### *Then the accounting took place!!*



When a dazed populace took stock of the damage, they must have wondered if Armageddon had come. Fully 80% of the city was destroyed, including over 13,000 houses, 89 churches and 52 Halls. It was a disaster!