

OCTOBER 6, 1895—FIFTY-TWO PAGES.—WITH ART SUPPLEMENT.

Chicago Daily: The Anniversary of the Baptism of Fire.

The Story of the Disaster of Nearly a Quarter of a Century Ago Condensed and Brought Up to Date.

TWENTY-FOUR YEARS AGO NEXT WEDNESDAY, OCT. 9, 1871, THE INFANT METROPOLIS OF THE NEW WORLD WAS BORN AGAIN OUT OF MEANNESS into grandeur, out of lethargy into activity, out of obscurity into fame, out of squalor into splendor.

Incidents of the Great Fire Told by Citizens Who Took Part in the Stirring Events of Twenty-four Years Ago.

LOOKING backward, it seems as though the yawn of the Puritan preacher of Boston, "It was God's retribution!" was most justified when one considers the conditions that existed in Chicago when the flames swept it almost off the face of the earth on those terrible days twenty-four years ago.

For three weeks the wind had blown a hot stroke from the southwest. The prairie for hundreds of miles back of Chicago was burned as though swept by fire.

The flames spread through the "patch" with a swiftness that was beyond imagination. Those who had any hope that the city might be saved, those on the North Side pinned their faith on a possible barrier, and the people on the West and South Sides prayed that the wind might hold to the quarter whence it had blown so long.

and the titles to every foot of real estate in the city, so far as the public records went, stood as on the day Columbus discovered America. This was what the historians have called the moment of supreme disaster.

The flames moved north like a line of battle, with the right resting on the lake and the left on the river, and 50,000 men, women, and children fled before it. Loaded trucks dashed past, and as the horses ran, burning brands fell on the loads. They burst into flames, and the horses were cut loose to join the horde that ran screaming through the streets towards the open country.

They were—that they were unable to fully realize the extent of their loss. To many it was not a loss of dollars and dimes, of houses and land, but the loss of their lives.

South as New Orleans, and from the Pacific slope. For more than a week every train that entered the city was loaded to the last step of every platform with people, many of whom came to plunder. As early as Monday night attempts were made to set fire to what remained of the West and South Sides.

A general relief committee was organized at once by the best citizens of the town and three carloads of tents towards the sheltering of the homeless. Wednesday two companies of regulars were dispatched from Omaha by order of Gen. Sheridan.

But such a condition could not last long, and the work of relief went on so rapidly that in a few days the camp had disappeared. All railroads carried people from the city free and tens of thousands of women and children fled to friends and relatives in all quarters of the United States.

Chicago, in those days, was a city of wood, although its population was 334,000. The pavements were of wood, as were the sidewalks. The handsome residences on the North Side occupied a narrow strip along the lake from the river to Lincoln Park, but they were nearly all of wood.

wooden shells, the haunts of vice, crime, squalor, and filth. It was the Hell's Kitchen of New York, the Seven Dials of London, and the plague spot of Chicago—Cooles' Patch. Saloons, hovels, and dives; dives, hovels, and saloons were the buildings, and the inhabitants were congenial to their surroundings.

At 5:20 o'clock the cry swept through the multitude that the water works were burning. This stood at the foot of Chicago avenue, and the flames moved north like a line of battle, with the right resting on the lake and the left on the river.

The picture shows scenes of wild excitement. The avenue is full of frenzied horses running wild. Almost the first of the ruins to be seen is that of the famous Richmond Hotel, from the balcony of which the Prince of Wales was introduced to the people of Chicago by "Long John" Wentworth.

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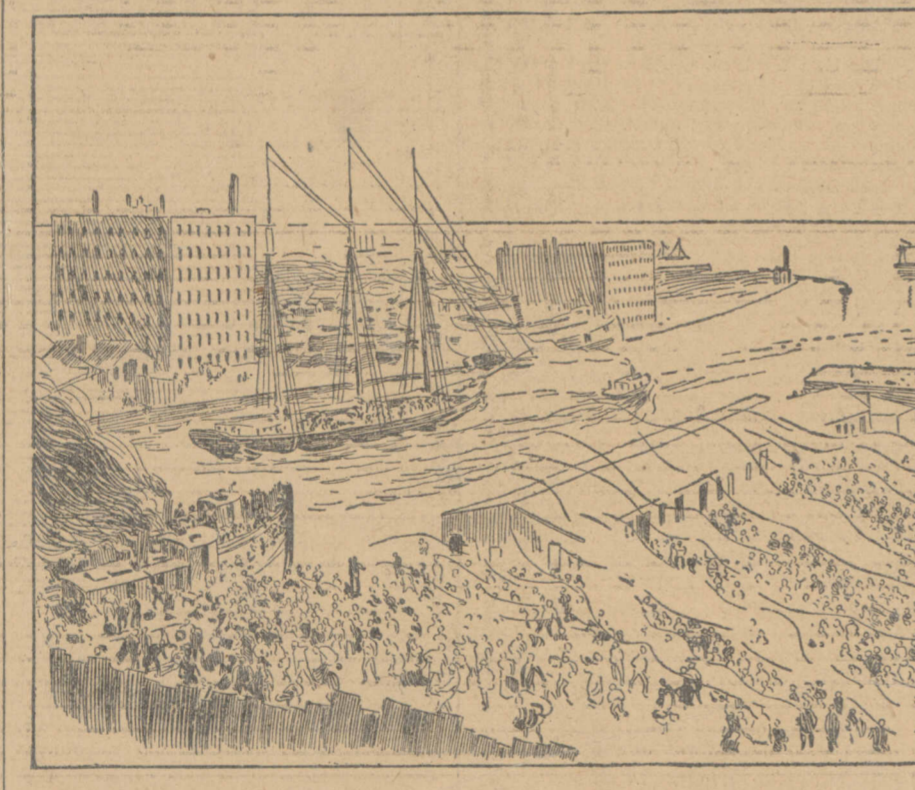
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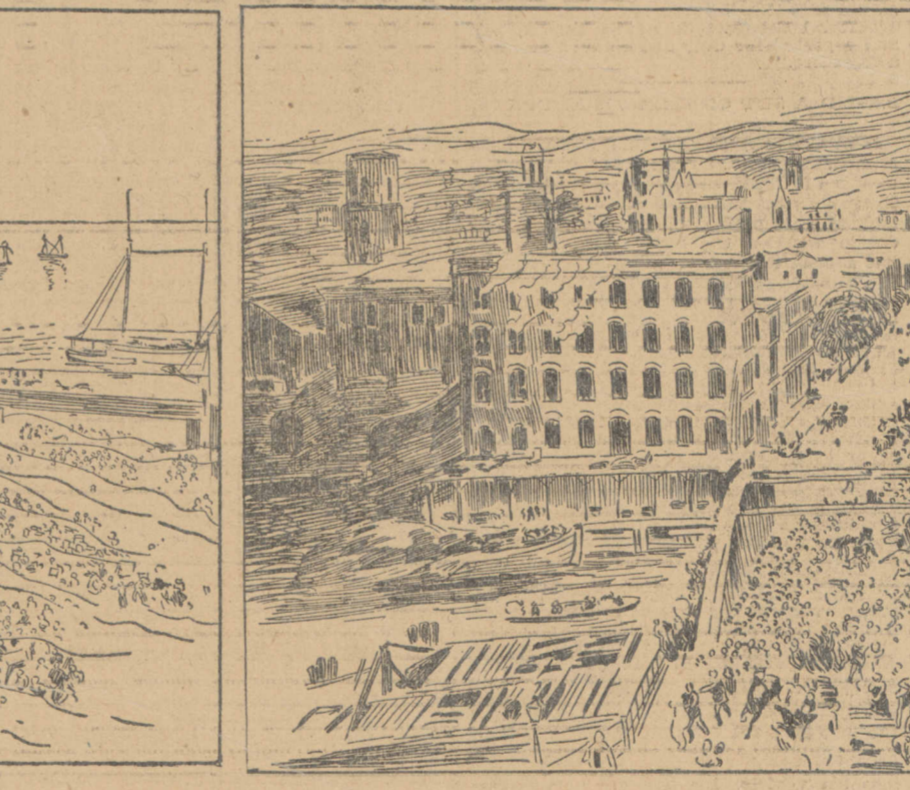
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MARINE HOSPITAL NEAR THE MOUTH OF THE RIVER.



NORTHERN END OF MICHIGAN AVENUE.

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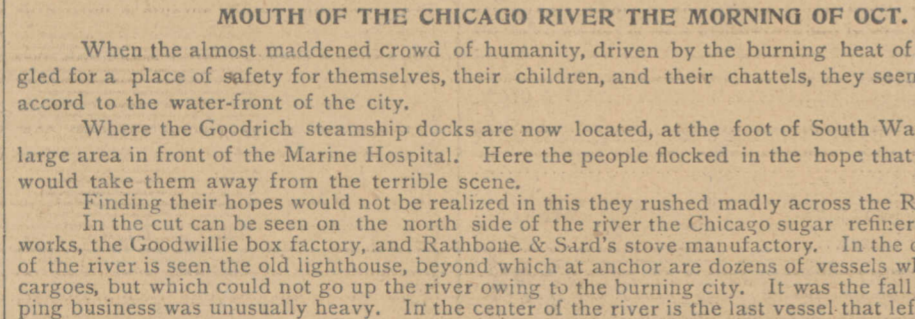
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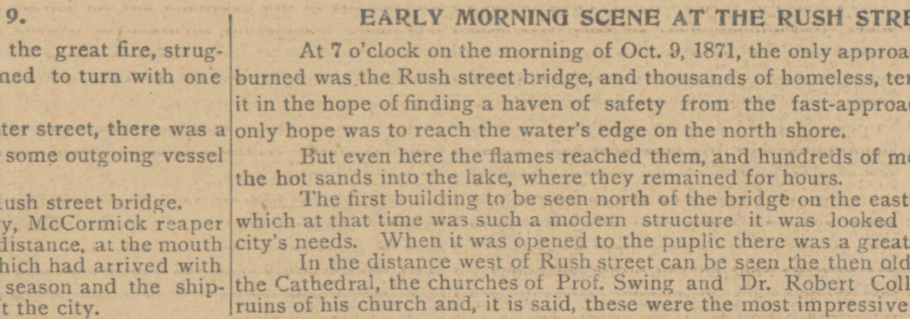
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MOUTH OF THE CHICAGO RIVER THE MORNING OF OCT. 9.



EARLY MORNING SCENE AT THE RUSH STREET BRIDGE OCT. 9, 1871.

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