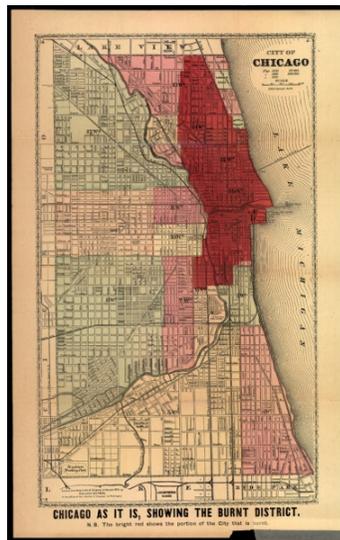


This Week in History, October 6 – October 12

1816: The first double-decked paddlewheel steamboat, which became an iconic symbol of the Old South and the Mississippi River, arrived in New Orleans on October 7. Steamships were still new at the time but soon became very popular. The powerful flat-bottomed boats revolutionized river traffic, especially shortening trips north up the Mississippi, which involved going against the current.



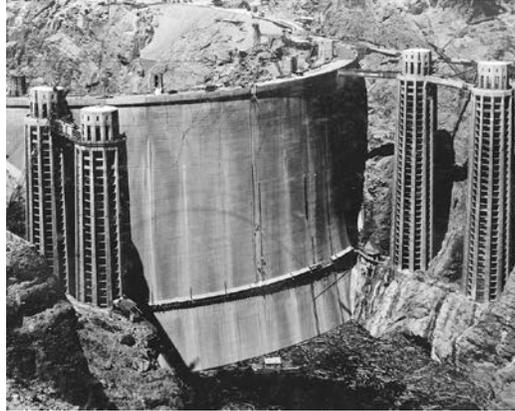
1871: At 9:00 PM on October 8, a small fire began in a barn in Chicago. The low humidity and high winds in the city during the next two days helped spread the fire that ultimately destroyed one-third of Chicago, left 100,000 homeless, and killed 250 people. The city's downtown and most important commercial and governmental buildings were wiped out along with thousands of homes. The city burned easily since it was a frontier boom-town in 1871, and many of its buildings had been built cheaply and quickly of wood with little space between structures. Stricter fire codes followed in the years after the fire



1908: On October 6 the Austro-Hungarian Empire annexed Bosnia, which had formerly belonged to the Turkish Ottoman Empire, and would later form part of Yugoslavia. A large part of the population was Serbian, and wished to join the country of Serbia. A Serbian nationalist would assassinate the heir to the Austrian throne in 1916, setting in motion events leading to World War I, which many historians think in turn led to World War II.



1936: The massive Hoover Dam hydroelectric plant began transmitting electricity to Los Angeles on October 9. Work on the project began under President Herbert Hoover (hence the name), though many think it was a Great Depression public works project of President Roosevelt. While it did provide many needed jobs during the Depression, the project had been planned years before the Roosevelt administration. At the time of completion, Hoover Dam was the tallest in the world.



1991: On October 6, Elizabeth Taylor celebrated her marriage to the seventh in her line of husbands. The oft-married Taylor wed Larry Fortensky at Michael Jackson's Neverland Ranch in California. The odds were against the marriage from the start. While Taylor was a wealthy celebrity, her new husband was an unemployed construction worker and former addict twenty years her junior, whom she had met while visiting a rehab clinic. After the marriage ended in 1996, Taylor never married again.

