



# Chicago Skyscrapers, 1871-1934

*Thomas Leslie*

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## **Chicago Skyscrapers, 1871-1934** Thomas Leslie

For more than a century, Chicago's skyline has included some of the world's most distinctive and inspiring buildings. This history of the Windy City's skyscrapers begins in the key period of reconstruction after the Great Fire of 1871 and concludes in 1934 with the onset of the Great Depression, which brought architectural progress to a standstill. During this time, such iconic landmarks as the Chicago Tribune Tower, the Wrigley Building, the Marshall Field and Company Building, the Chicago Stock Exchange, the Palmolive Building, and many others rose to impressive new heights, thanks to innovations in building methods and materials. Solid, earthbound edifices of iron, brick, and stone made way for towers of steel and plate glass, imparting a striking new look to Chicago's growing urban landscape. Thomas Leslie reveals the daily struggles, technical breakthroughs, and negotiations that produced these magnificent buildings. The book includes detailed analyses of how foundation materials, framing structures, and electric lighting developed throughout the years, showing how the skeletal frames of the Rookery, Ludington, and Leiter Buildings led to the braced frames of the Masonic Temple and Schiller Building and eventually to the concealed frames of the City Opera, Merchandise Mart, and other Chicago landmarks. Leslie also considers how the city's infamous political climate contributed to its architecture, as building and zoning codes were often disputed by shifting networks of rivals, labor unions, professional organizations, and municipal bodies. Featuring more than a hundred photographs and illustrations of the city's physically impressive and beautifully diverse architecture, *Chicago Skyscrapers, 1871 - 1934* shows how during these decades, Chicago's architects, engineers, and builders learned from one another's successes and failures to create an exceptionally dynamic, energetic period of architectural progress.

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