

An illustration of the Great Fire of London. In the background, a large, dark, multi-story building is on fire, with bright orange and yellow flames rising from its roof and windows. The sky is a solid, vibrant orange. In the foreground, a dark, charred landscape shows the ruins of buildings. A horse-drawn cart with a driver and passengers is visible on the left. On the right, a person is lying on the ground, and a small, dark, arched structure, possibly a tomb or a small shelter, is visible. The overall scene is one of destruction and tragedy.

THE

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ARCHIVES

Great Fire of London: Examine the evidence

Was the fire caused by 'treachery or chance' or 'heavy judgement'?

Key Stages 2-5 | Early modern 1485 - 1750

Themed collection

Introduction

The purpose of this document collection is to allow students and teachers to develop their own questions and lines of historical enquiry on the political and social aspects of the Great Fire of London in 1666.

Suitable for:

KS 2-5

Time period:

Early modern
1485 - 1750

Connections to curriculum:

Key Stage Five

- AQA GCE. Monarchy restored and restrained: Britain, 1649–1702
- Edexcel GCE Britain, 1625–1701: conflict, revolution, and settlement.
- OCR GCE: The Execution of Charles I and the Interregnum 1646–1660: The Restoration of Charles II

Key Stage Four

- AQA GCSE Restoration England, 1660–1685

Key Stage Three

- The Restoration, 'Glorious Revolution' and power of Parliament

Key Stage Two

- The National Curriculum theme 'Events beyond living memory'.

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Teacher's notes

Use this collection of original documents for teaching:

- GCSE units for AQA GCSE Restoration England, 1660–1685.
- A level AQA GCE. Monarchy restored and restrained: Britain, 1649–1702.
- A level Edexcel GCE Britain, 1625–1701: conflict, revolution, and settlement
- A level OCR GCE: The Execution of Charles I and the Interregnum 1646–1660: The Restoration of Charles II.
- Key Stage 3 topic: The Restoration, 'Glorious Revolution' and power of Parliament.
- Primary schools: The National Curriculum theme: 'Events beyond living memory' topic The Great Fire of London, or for Charles II within the 'Significant People' theme.

This curated collection can be used to help students develop their own historical enquiries as well as to prepare and practice source-based exam questions. The collection includes a range of sources to encourage them to think more broadly about the reign of Charles II beyond the Great Fire. Teachers have the flexibility to download all documents and transcripts and simplified transcripts to create their own resources. Teachers may also prefer to use document extracts if the sources appear too long.

With each document we have provided a caption about the content and 3-4 suggested prompt questions. We hope this will allow students to work independently if wished on any document, or within small class discussion groups, or to assist teachers in the development of their own questions. We hope too, that exposure to original source material may also foster further document research.

Suggested Starter Activity

Aim: Familiarise learners with the types of sources contained in the collection.

15 minutes

- Make a list of the different types of sources students can see [maps, proclamations, letters, diary extracts, broadsides, 'Gazette' paper, photographs; illustrations] in the whole collection.
- Explain the differences between these source types.

Teacher's notes

- Watch video – '[Spotlight On: Charles II and the Restoration](https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/students/videos/spotlight-on/spotlight-on-charles-ii/)' to understand more about this collection, as many of documents here come from The National Archives' collection of State Papers. This explains why many of the document references start with 'SP'. The video shows what type of information is held for the early modern period of the State Papers before the government departments of Foreign Office and Home Office were created, and why The National Archives has these records.

Having had this initial introduction through the starter, students can examine individual sources more closely. Students can briefly work out what is being said (use a transcript if necessary) and how is it being said. Use the document prompt questions to promote discussion of the content. Encourage them to 'look behind the source'. Where has the record come from and why has it been created? Does it offer a national or local perspective? If the source is an image or illustration, what factors need to be considered? Encourage students to consider both the 'witting' and 'unwitting' testimony a source may reveal. Part of this evaluation is to consider if there are any gaps in the evidence. Why would we trust/not trust this source? What other sources might be needed to provide additional information/context? Does the document support other knowledge that you already have for a certain line of enquiry?

Here are some general questions to help analyse, evaluate, and understand the documents to develop interpretations and draw conclusions. Teachers may wish to print out them for discussion prior looking at the collection.

- What is the date of the source?
- Who wrote/created it?
- Do you know anything about the author?
- What type of source is it? (Letter, proclamation, broadside, illustration, map, photograph)
- What is the source saying/showing?
- Check the meaning of any words you are unsure about. Use the transcripts.
- How useful is this information, does it support what you know already?
- Does the document show the writer's opinions/values?
- Why was the document created?
- Does it have any limitations or gaps?
- Does it share the same ideas, attitudes, and arguments with other sources in this group?

¹ <https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/students/videos/spotlight-on/spotlight-on-charles-ii/>

Teacher's notes

Suggested enquiry questions using documents in this themed collection:

Ensure that students refer to specific named documents as part of any of these enquiries. Break the class up into groups and get students to feedback and/or annotate on a white board which sources could be relevant to any of these suggested enquiries:

1. For what reasons was London a fire risk?
2. Use Wenceslaus Hollar's map and diary extracts from Samuel Pepys and John Evelyn to plot the course of the fire.
3. How did the king and authorities fight the fire?
4. How were the causes of the fire explained by people at the time, 'treachery or chance' or 'heavy judgement'? Explore sources that point to: Dutch/French involvement; God's judgement; fireballs/arson; chance; Catholics; religious sects: Anabaptists; Quakers; or strangers.
5. What was the impact of the fire on trade and commerce in the short and long term?
6. Discuss the language used in some sources to describe the fire, what are the similarities and differences?
7. What do the documents reveal about religion and religious tolerance in Restoration England?
8. How and why did Charles II use royal proclamations to help him govern?
9. Select THREE sources that you have found most interesting/shocking/surprising and compare with a partner/discuss in class.
10. Use the documents here, the Background, and your own research to write a report entitled: 'London in flames, causes and consequences of the Great Fire.'
11. Use appropriate documents from this collection to provide a national context for your own GCSE historic environment local Restoration England.
12. Research how London was rebuilt, exploring the role of Sir Christopher Wren and John Evelyn.
13. Learn more about the growth of fire insurance, firefighting methods, and techniques.

Primary history teachers

We also hope to encourage primary school teachers teaching the Great Fire of London as part of a scheme work supporting the National Curriculum theme 'Events beyond living memory' to use the original documents in this collection.

Teacher's notes

Please note all documents have transcripts and simplified transcripts and are available for download. Teachers could use reduced document extracts with the simplified transcripts if preferred. Here are some activities using the collection. Bold text shows where to find suggested documents on the webpage for each activity.

- Use Wenceslaus Hollar's map with the diary extracts from Samuel Pepys and John Evelyn to see where the fire started in Pudding Lane and how it spread across the city of London. See sources labelled: **Extracts from John Evelyn's diary; Extracts from Samuel Pepys diary; Hollar's map of the 'ruined city'**
- Use Wenceslaus Hollar's map to find specific landmarks using the key. What the jobs did people do? What does the map show about how people travelled or what they believed? **Hollar's map of the 'ruined city'**
- Compare Wenceslaus Hollar's map to the 1680 map which shows London rebuilt. **Hollar's map of the 'ruined city'; Map to show London rebuilt in 1680.** What differences can you see?
- What can we learn about the life of Thomas Farriner from his will? **Will of Thomas Farriner 1670**
- Draw a picture of a jettied building and label the fire hazards. **Jettied buildings helped the fire spread**
- Write a letter to Joseph Williamson asking for news about the Great Fire and what caused it. Use the sources to include some suggestions people used at the time. **Foreigners fear for own safety; Fear fire started by French and the Dutch; The fire was a 'heavy judgement'; Fire caused 'by treachery or chance?'; Questions about the fire; A plot to 'fire' other cities?**
- Produce your own illustrated newspaper [broadside] story about the Great Fire of London 1666. **London Gazette reports start of Great Fire; Dutch illustrated news sheet including the Great Fire**
- Small groups prepare and perform a freeze frame an aspect of the story of the Great Fire of London [Pepys and Evelyn provide vivid accounts]. **Extracts from John Evelyn's diary; Extracts from Samuel Pepys diary; 'Destruction by a consuming fire'; London Gazette reports start of Great Fire**
- Write and perform a drama based on the story of Edward Taylor. **Fire caused by fire balls thrown in Pudding Lane?**

Teacher's notes

- Role play an interview Charles II about the fire: What did he do? Did he try to help the poor? How did he help those who lost their possessions? What did he try to change about building after the fire? **Troops used to put out 'a raging fire'; Stop the fire: 'remove combustible matter'; Hollar's commission for a map of London 'ruined by fire'; Charles' II plan to control building in London after the fire; Food shortage caused by fire; Restoring goods stolen during the fire; Monument to the Fire of London 1677**
- Examine the sources on Victorian firefighting and firefighting in the Second World War. What has changed or stayed the same since 1666? **Victorian fire fighters 1884; Second World War fire service**

Great Fire Quiz

We have also developed a Great Fire Quiz, which could serve as an introduction to the topic for the Great Fire of London or perhaps be used for an assessment. This can be used as class activity for groups or individuals as part of a scheme work.

The quiz contains sources (listed at the end), which also appear in this collection to encourage students to engage with original material and to think about how we can find out about the past using primary evidence. Transcripts and simplified transcripts have been provided for all written documents where necessary in the quiz. Teachers may wish to follow up in more detail the quiz sources using the prompt questions found in the collection for those sources.

[Take the Great Fire of London quiz here](https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/students/quizzes/quiz-yourself-on-the-great-fire-of-london/)¹

¹ <https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/students/quizzes/quiz-yourself-on-the-great-fire-of-london/>

Background

Dr Bethan Davies, University of Roehampton

Shortly after midnight on 2 September 1666, the King's baker Thomas Farriner woke up to the smell of smoke: his house was on fire. He gathered up his family and maidservant and urged them to leave. Everyone escaped the flames, except the maid who feared heights. She became the first casualty of the Great Fire of London.

The fire was to change the course of London's history, leaving only a fifth of the Medieval city standing. The easterly wind, dry weather, and closely compacted wooden houses all helped the fire's path through 460 streets, destroying 13,200 houses, 89 churches, and some of London's most iconic buildings, including London's religious epicentre, St. Paul's. In panic and distress, people used buckets of water to stem the fire, to little avail. King Charles II, along with his brother, the future James II, actively helped to stop the fire in the streets. The fire raged through the city for four excruciatingly hot days. Finally, the ceasing of the wind and the authorities' tactical deployment of gunpowder to destroy houses in the path of the fire brought it to an end. By then, 100,000 people were homeless. While officials recorded only 6 deaths from the fire, it is important to remember that the deaths of poor and middle-class people were not recorded anywhere. The heat of the fire may have left no recognizable remains.

It is not clear how the fire started; some blamed it on the spark from one of Farriner's ovens, others said it was the will of God, a divine punishment for immoral behaviour. Many suspected foreign involvement believing Dutch and French immigrants and Catholics were to blame. A document in this collection shows that a ten-year-old boy called Edward Taylor and his family were questioned for throwing fireballs at an open window in Pudding Lane and in the streets. Fireballs were made from animal fat (called tallow), set alight and used to start fires. But the fire was most likely caused by accident or chance rather than by an intentional act to cause harm. A parliamentary inquiry eventually concluded the conflagration was an accident.

Two people have left us eyewitness accounts of the fire. The first was Samuel Pepys, who worked for the navy, and who kept a diary from 1660-1669. The second was the diarist John Evelyn, who described the terrible sight of the fire blazing across the city:

"Oh, the miserable and calamitous spectacle! such as haply the world had not seen since the foundation of it. All the sky was of a fiery aspect, like the top of a burning oven, and the light seen above 40 miles roundabout for many nights.'

Background

Professor Kate Loveman's research shows that 'despite all the investigations into how the fire started, there is no one clear record of who was there in Farriner's bakery that night. Important witnesses to the fire, such as servants, were not considered important enough to be named in most reports. A letter from the MP Edward Harley reported that it was Farriner's 'man' who sounded the alarm. Although Harley didn't name this man, Thomas Dagger is listed among witnesses to events that night in a court document, while the Baker's Company records confirm he worked for Farriner. Also in the house, according to reports, were Farriner's maid and his two adult children. Afterwards, like many Londoners, Thomas Dagger worked quickly to rebuild his life, setting up on his own as a baker'.

The documents in this themed collection come from The National Archives' State Papers. This means that the documents were originally part of the private papers of the Secretaries of State (the most important ministers serving the monarch) relating to the business and affairs of government at the time of the Great Fire. We can find a range of different documents in this collection. There are private letters addressed to Joseph Williamson (1633-1701), the Under-Secretary of State at the time. His correspondents from around England variously express grief at the rumours of fire in England's capital, crave news of the fire's progress in the city, offer aid and provisions to the needy, and share fears that foreigners are involved in the calamity. These private letters provide us with a great deal of information, including important insights into how news was shared and transmitted in the seventeenth century, and the growing importance of the postal service.

Other sources in this collection are 'official' printed proclamations or reports of events, including from the London Gazette, a newspaper established by Joseph Williamson in 1665. The royal proclamations are concerned with regulating the rebuilding of houses after the fire, restoring goods to their rightful owners, encouraging charitable donations to the afflicted, and announcing a solemn day of fasting and penitence to seek God's mercy. These proclamations provide us with an understanding of how the government tried to restore law and order in the aftermath of the fire, and how they sought to help individuals in need.

The Great Fire of London was a calamity in the early years of Charles II's reign, and it changed people's lives irrevocably. The city was devastated, and suspicion of who began the fire inaugurated a host of complex religious, political, and social issues that Charles II and his government had to contend with. This collection also reveals the wealth of information to be found in the state papers at The National Archives that shed light on this crucial event in English history, and shows us the reactions of individuals from across the social spectrum, from the king to people who lost their homes and possessions in the fire.

Background

Some of the sources in this collection are printed but others are handwritten in a style known as 'secretary hand'. All of the sources have had sections transcribed, but in a few instances words are missing due to indecipherable handwriting or damage that the documents have experienced since their creation.

Sources

Charles II reminds his subjects of their duties 1662

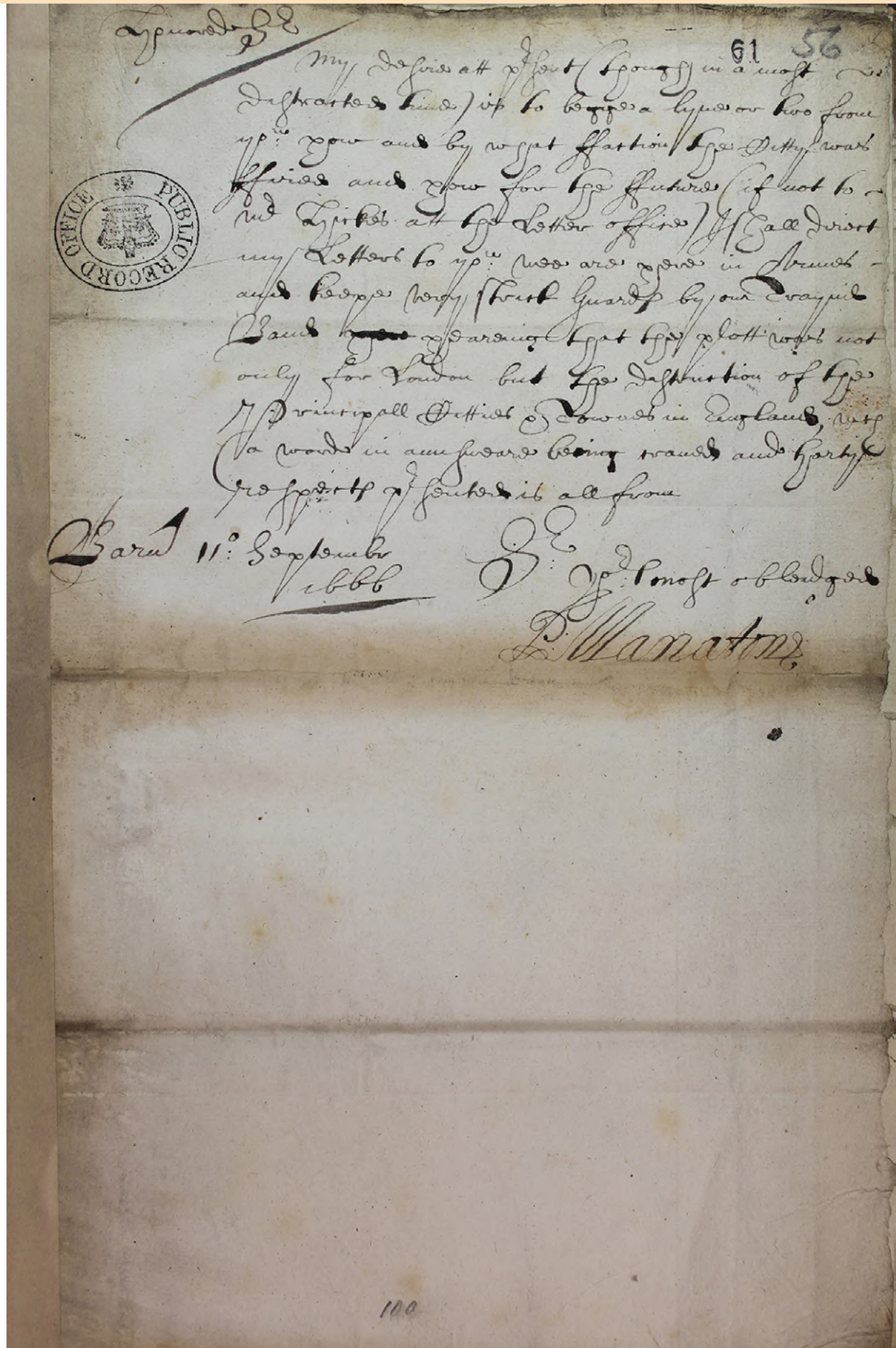
A proclamation 'For the Reprinting, Publishing, and Using of a book, entitled, God and the King', 5 December 1662. Catalogue ref: SP 45/11 f130.

- Explain why Charles II refers to King James as 'our late royal grandfather'? [Clue: consult a family tree of the Stuart Royal House].
- Why do you think Charles II has asked for this book to be reprinted two years after the Restoration?
- What is the name given to the theory of kingship described in this book?

[Charles II (1630 –1685) was King of Scotland (1649 -1651); King of England, Scotland, and Ireland after the Restoration of the monarchy in 1660 until he died in 1685.]

A plot to 'fire' other cities?

Catalogue ref: SP 29/171 f56



A plot to 'fire' other cities?

Catalogue ref: SP 29/171 f56

P. Manton from Barnstaple to Jospeh Williamson, 11 September 1666. Catalogue ref: SP 29/171 f56.

Joseph Williamson (1633-1701) was the Under-Secretary of State 1660-74 and Keeper of the State Papers which he reorganised from 1661-1701. He also started the 'Oxford Gazette' at the time of the Great Plague in 1665, which later became established as the 'London Gazette'.

- Why did Manton write this letter?
- What does he believe about the cause of the fire?
- Why was the town of Barnstaple under armed guard

Transcript

By the king. A proclamation for the Reprinting, Publishing, and Using of a book, entitled, God and the King.

Charles R.

Whereas by the special command our late royal grandfather, king James (of blessed memory) there was compiled and printed a book of treatise, entitled, God and the King; or a dialogue, showing that the king of England being immediate under god, within his dominions doth rightfully claim whatsoever is required by the oath of allegiance; which said book or treatise, being universally dispersed through the realms and dominions, did in those times (by the blessing of Almighty God) prove an effectual means, both for the instruction of the people in their duty and allegiance, and for avoiding the penalties of the laws and statutes made and provided concerning the same; in respect whereof, and to the end our loving subjects may not be ignorant of, but rightly understand the said duty, and the true meaning thereof, which by reason of the late times of libertism and distraction hath been by many too much neglected, and not duly considered, we have been graciously pleased to direct, that the said book, or treatise, be forthwith reprinted and published. And our further will and pleasure is, and we do by this our royal proclamation (by and with the advice of our pricy council) will and command all and every the archbishops, bishops, mayors, sheriffs, bailiffs, and all other officers and ministers whatsoever within these our realms and dominions, that they and every of them respectively, within their several diocese, limits, liberties and jurisdictions, do (by such ways and means, as they in their wisdoms and discretions shall think fit) advise and direct all school matters and teachers of

A plot to 'fire' other cities?

Catalogue ref: SP 29/171 f56

the English and Latin tongue, to teach their scholars the said book or treatise, either in Latin or English, according to their respective capacities. And also, that it be recommended to all matters of families and apprentices, to have one of the said Books or treatises, with advice to read and be instructed in the same, and the contents and true meaning thereof, thereby to enable themselves to understand and perform the said oath, and avoid the penalties of the laws and statutes made and provided against such as infringe or neglect the same. And for the better encouragement of our subjects in so good and necessary a work, we do by these presents straightly charge and command all printers, stationers and booksellers, and all other persons whatsoever, that they or any of them do not at any time or times hereafter ask, take, or demand for the said book, or treatise, above the price or sum of six pence of lawful money of England, as they render our pleasure, and will answer the contrary at their uttermost perils.

Given at our Court at Whitehall, December the fifth, 1662, in the Fourteenth year of our reign.

God Save the King

Printed by John Bull and Christopher Barker, Printers to the Kings Most Excellent Majesty, 1662.

Simplified transcript

Our grandfather King James I ordered a book to be printed, called God and the King, which declared that the king was all powerful, and that the people in his kingdom should obey him. In recent times of difficulty, people have forgotten about this book and the messages contained in it. Therefore, we order that this book should be reprinted, and it be read throughout the country, and especially in schools and places of learning. So that it can be readily available, we ask that all printers and booksellers sell this book for only six pence or less, otherwise they will be in trouble with the authorities.

Anxious for news of fire from Isle of Wight

Catalogue ref: SP 29/170 f.155

Much Honoured Sir
 West Down the 9th 4to 1666
 153
 178
 I'm in my last unto you of y^e 5th Instant I have not heard
 any thing from you. w^{ch} I wonder is in regard of y^e great
 distractions about the unhappy fire in London, I of w^{ch}
 we have not heard and I believe I believe I believe I believe
 as yett, we are all amazed to think what the future
 of it is or will be. As for his Maties Fleet is still at

sea men since the fire at London and elsewhere. I am
 and outrageous as well as the land men for we are upon
 the Enemy (and not without just cause) the Lord Be a
 God for it and stand by us, I hope any sudden change
 happen to advise you, it would be very necessary that a
 post warrant be sent down to Cambridge. Expresses
 others may be sent Boatmen on post m^t will be no more
 but by the ordinary post, I hope to hear a good news
 from you, I hope by post shall and what passes, and to advise
 you that I am.
 Your most Obedient Humble and
 Devoted servant T. Brown
 153
 178



Anxious for news of fire from Isle of Wight

Catalogue ref: SP 29/170 f.155

John Lysle to Joseph Williamson, 8 September 1666, from West Cowes, Isle of Wight.

Catalogue ref: SP 29/170 f.155.

Joseph Williamson (1633-1701) was the Under-Secretary of State (1660-74) and Keeper of the State Papers which he reorganised from 1661-1701. He also started the 'Oxford Gazette' at the time of the Great Plague in 1665, which later became established as the 'London Gazette'.

- What is John Lyle's attitude towards (a) the fire of London (b) the Dutch?
- What does his letter reveal about the difficulties of receiving information via the post?

Transcript

West Cowes the 9 September 1666

Much Honoured Sir,

Since my last unto you of the 5th instant, I have not heard anything from you which I conceive is in regards of the present distractions about the unhappy fire in London of which we have no certain intelligence come to this Island, as yet we are all amazed to think of what the issue of it is or will be.

.....

Seamen since the fire at London are extremely rampant and outrageous as well as landmen for revenge upon the enemy and not without just cause. The Lord be our comfort and stand by us if any sudden things should happen to advise you. It would be very necessary that a post warrant be sent done to compel expresses other ways no Boatmen or postmaster will take notice but by the ordinary post. I hope to hear good news from you and by ... shall send what passes and assure you that I am,

Your most unfeigned Humble and devoted servant
John Lysle.

Simplified transcript

I have not heard anything from you since the 5th September, which I conclude is due to present difficulties caused by the fire, which have no definite information on the Island [Isle of Wight] we are all concerned what tis the cause of the fire and what its consequences will

Anxious for news of fire from Isle of Wight

Catalogue ref: SP 29/170 f.155

Since the fire at London, seamen and landmen are keen for revenge upon our enemy [the Dutch] and not without just cause. May the Lord comfort and stand by us. If there is an emergency, or anything we need to know, it will be necessary issue a post warrant for an express delivery otherwise boatmen or postmasters will just send letters in the ordinary post. I hope to hear good news from you. Be assured you that I am, your most unfeigned Humble and devoted servant.

John Lysle

Call for a public fast to remember the fire.

Catalogue ref: SP 45/12 f230



By the King.

A P R O C L A M A T I O N

For a General Fast through *England and Wales*, and the Town of
Barwick upon Tweed, on Wednesday the Tenth of *October* next.

CHARLES R.



Whereas it hath pleased Almighty God by a most lamentable and devouring Fire (which broke out upon Sunday the Second of September, about two of the Clock in the morning near Thames-Street, and continued raging till Thursday night, or Friday following) to lay waste the greatest part of the City of London within the Walls, and some part of the Suburbs, whereof more then Fourscore Parishes, and all the Houses, Churches, Chappels, Hospitals, and other the great and Magnificent Buildings of pious or publique use which were within that Circuit, are now brought into Ashes, and become one ruinous Heap: A Visitation so dreadful, that scarce any Age or Nation hath ever seen or felt the like; wherein although the afflicting hand of God fell more immediately upon the Inhabitants of this City, and the parts Adjacent, yet all men ought to look upon it as a Judgment upon the whole Nation, and to humble themselves accordingly. His Majesty therefore out of a deep and pious sense of what himself and all his People now suffer, and with a Religious care to prevent what may yet be feared, unless it shall please Almighty God to turn away his Anger from Us, doth hereby publish and Declare his Royal Will and pleasure, That Wednesday, being the Tenth of October next ensuing, shall be set apart and kept and observed by all his Majesties Subjects of England and Wales, and the Town of Barwick upon Tweed, as a Day of Solemn Fasting and Humiliation, to implore the mercies of God, That it would please him to pardon the crying sins of this Nation, those especially which have drawn down this last and heavy Judgment upon Us, and to remove from Us all

other his Judgments which our sins have deserved, and which we now either feel or fear: And to the end that his Majesties Subjects may be assisted in the performance of the duties of that Day, and that all his good People may be united in such common Devotions and Supplications as may be fit and proper for the occasion, his Majesty will take care, by and with the Advice of his Reverend Bishops, That a Form of Prayer fit for that purpose shall be timely and seasonably published: And his Majesty doth strictly charge and command all his Subjects of what Estate or Degree soever, That they duly observe this Day of Fasting and Humiliation in such decent and devout manner as becomes so sad and solemn an Occasion, as they will answer the neglect thereof unto Almighty God, and upon pain of incurring the utmost severities which can be inflicted upon the wilful breakers and contemners of this his Majesties Royal Command: And because many Persons and Families, who were formerly able to give great relief to others, are now become great objects of Charity themselves, having not only lost all they had by Fire, but being destitute of all Habitation: his Majesty doth therefore require and command all Ministers, Parsons, Vicars, or Curates who shall preach on that Day, That they earnestly recommend the distressed estate and condition of those who have been undone by this Fire, unto the charity of all good and well disposed Christians. And that they cause Collections for this purpose to be made in all Churches and Chappels whatsoever, and the Monies so collected to be faithfully and entirely returned up to London, and there paid in to the Lord Mayor of the City of London, or such as he shall appoint, to the end the same may be duly and orderly distributed by the advice and directions of the Lord Mayor, and Lord Bishop of London, unto and amongst such poor Sufferers by this Fire, as shall be found to have most need thereof: And that all good people may be the better prepared for their Devotions, and provided for their charitable benevolence that Day, It is his Majesties further Pleasure, that this his Royal Proclamation be read in all Churches and Chappels on some Lords Day precedent to the said Day of Fasting and Humiliation.

Given at our Court at *Whitehall* the Thirteenth day of *September* in the Eighteenth year of Our Reign.

God save the King.

L O N D O N,

Printed by *John Bill* and *Christopher Barker*, Printers to the Kings most Excellent Majesty, 1666.

Call for a public fast to remember the fire.

Catalogue ref: SP 45/12 f230

A proclamation for a 'General Fast throughout England & Wales', 10 October 1666.

Catalogue ref: SP 45/12 f230

- Why did Charles II make this proclamation?
- What was the reason for the fire suggested in the proclamation?
- How did Charles II hope to support those who suffered because of the fire?

Transcript

A proclamation for a General Fast throughout England & Wales and any town of Barwick upon Tweed on Wednesday 10th October next.

Whereas it hath pleased Almighty God by a most Lamentable and Devouring Fire (which broke out upon Sunday 2nd September about two of the clock in the morning near Thames Street and continued raging till Thursday night or Friday morning following) to lay waste the Greatest part of the City of London within the walls & some parts of the Suburbs. Whereof more then four score Parishes and all the Houses, churches, chapels, hospitals & other the great and magnificent Buildings of pious or public use which were within that circuit are now brought into Ashes and become one Ruinous Heap. A visitation so dreadful that scarce any Age or Nation hath ever seen or felt the Like, wherein although the afflicting hand of God fell more immediately upon the inhabitants of this city and the parts adjacent. Yet, all men ought to Look upon as a Judgment upon the whole Nation to Humble themselves accordingly.

His Majesty therefore out of deep and pious sense of himself and all his people now suffer and with a Religious care to prevent what may yet be feared unless it shall please Almighty God to turn away his Anger from Us, doth hereby publish and Declare his Royall will and pleasure, That Wednesday being the tenth October next ensuing, shall be set apart and kept and observed by all his Majesty's subjects of England and Wales and the town of Barwick upon Tweed as a Day of Solemn Fasting and humiliation to implore the mercies of God. That it would please him to pardon the crying sins of this Nation, those especially which have drawn down this last and heavy judgement upon us, and to remove from us all other his Judgements which our sins have deserved, and which we now either feel or fear. And to the end that his Majesties subjects may be afflicted in the performance of the duties of that Day, and that all his good people may be united in such common Devotions and supplications as may be fit and proper for the occasion, his majesty will take care, by and with the Advice of his reverend bishops, that a form of prayer fir for that purpose shall

Call for a public fast to remember the fire.

Catalogue ref: SP 45/12 f230

be timely and reasonably published: And his Majesty both strictly charge and command all his subjects of what estate or degree soever. That they duly observe this Day of Fasting and Humiliation in such decent and devout manner as becomes to sad and solemn an Occasion, as they will answer the neglect thereof unto Almighty God, and upon pain of incurring the utmost liberties which can be inflicted upon the wilful breakers and contemners [person disobeying an order] of this his Majesty's Royal Command: And because many persons and families, who were formerly able to give great relief to others, are become great objects of Charity themselves, having not only left all they had by fire, but being destitute of all habitation; His Majesty doth therefore require all Ministers, parsons, vicars or curates who shall preach on that Day, that they earnestly recommend the distressed estate and condition of those who have been undone by this fire, unto the charity of all good and well disposed Christians. And that they cause collections for this purpose to be made in all Churches and chapels whatsoever, and the monies so collected to be faithfully and entirely returned up to London, and there paid in to the Lord Mayor of the City of London, or such as he shall appoint to the end the same may be duly and orderly distributed by the advice and directions of the Lord Mayor and the Lord Bishop of London, unto and amongst such poor sufferers by this fire, as shall be found to have most need thereof. And that all good people may be the better prepared for their Devotions and provided for their charitable benevolence that Day. It is his Majesty's further pleasure, that his Royal Proclamation be read in all churches and Chapels on some Lords Day [Sunday] precedent to the said Day of Fasting and Humiliation.

Given at our Court at Whitehall the Thirteenth day of September in the Eighteenth year of our Reign.

God Save the King

Printed by John Bill and Christopher Barker, Printers to the Kings Most Excellent Majesty, 1666.

Simplified transcript

It pleased God that a terrible Fire broke out in London, and destroyed much of the city in London, including many churches, chapels, hospitals, and other magnificent buildings in the city. It was a terrible punishment on the city by God, and we need to look upon this divine judgement and humble ourselves before god.

Call for a public fast to remember the fire.

Catalogue ref: SP 45/12 f230

Therefore, the king asks that a solemn day of fasting to plead for God's grace and mercy be held on Wednesday 10th October. He hopes his subjects will be united in their devotions, and he will ensure that the bishops and priests have a suitable prayer for this day. If people do not obey this command to observe this day of fasting and penitence, they will be punished. As many people who have been extremely charitable to those in need have now become in need of charity themselves, he also asks that on Wednesday 10th October priests ask people for charitable donations for those affected by the fire, and all those in need.

Call for people to pay their hearth tax.

Catalogue Ref: SP 45/12 pt 1 f239



By the King.

A P P R O C L A M A T I O N

For the more exact and punctual Collecting and Answering His Majesties Revenue arising upon Fire-hearths and Stoves.

CHARLES R.

Whereas Our Revenue arising by Fire-hearths and Stoves, hath of late time been very much in arrear, and continues still behind and unpaid in many parts of Our Kingdom, partly through the misdeemeanours of some persons who have presumed to conceal many Fire-hearths and Stoves, for which by Law they are chargeable, And to prevent the discovery of such Frauds, refuse to permit Our Officers or their Deputies to make their views, or to take Distresses; And partly through the neglect or connivence of several Justices of Peace, chief Magistrates, Ministers, Constables, and Churchwardens, who have given too much countenance to illegal and undue Certificates, and too little assistance to Our Officers and their Deputies in Collecting the said Revenue, whom they have in some places suffered to be reproached, and sometimes assaulted, without punishing the Malefactors; although it be the Duty of all Constables, Headboroughs, and other inferior Officers, to accompany, assist, and defend Our Officers and their Deputies in their Collections, and the duty of all Justices of the Peace, and chief Magistrates in their respective places and Callings, and with the utmost of their Authority to support Our Revenue, so well established by Law, and so necessary to the safety and defence of Us and Our good Subjects: We therefore resolving for the time to come to take a strict Account of all such persons as shall hereafter be found wanting in their Duty to Us, and to the Laws of Our Kingdom, have thought fit by the advice of Our Council, to Declare, and do hereby Publish Our Royal Will and pleasure, That all Arrears of Our said Revenue, as well those which were incurred at or before the Feast of St. Michael, in the year of Our Lord One thousand six hundred sixty and five, as those which have incurred since, and all future growing duties, shall forthwith, and with all possible speed and diligence, be collected and levied by, and paid unto Our respective Officers and their Deputies appointed for that purpose; That is to say, That was due, at or before Michaelmas 1665, to such Receivers or Collectors as already are, or shall be Commissioned by Us in pursuance of the Act of Parliament in that behalf, and to none other;

Call for people to pay their hearth tax.

Catalogue Ref: SP 45/12 pt 1 f239

An extract from a proclamation about lapses in payment of the hearth tax for fireplaces and stoves, 19 December 1666. Catalogue ref: SP 45/12 pt 1 f239

- Why did Charles make this proclamation?
- In what ways have some people avoided paying hearth tax?
- How is the payment of hearth tax to be strictly enforced?

Transcript

By the King

A PROCLAMATION

For the more exact and punctual Collecting and Answering His Majesties Revenue arising upon Fire-hearths and Stoves.

CHARLES R

Whereas Our Revenue arising by fire-hearths and Stoves, hath of late time been very much in arrear, and continues still behind and unpaid in parts of Our Kingdom, partly through the misdemeanours of some persons who have presumed to conceal many fire-hearths and Stoves for which by Law they are chargeable, And to prevent the discovery of such frauds, refuse to permit Our Officers or their Deputies to make their views, or to take Distresses; And partly through neglect or connivence of several Justices of Peace, chief Magistrates, Ministers, Constables and Churchwardens, who have given too much countenance to illegal and undue certificates, and too little assistance to Our Officers and their Deputies in Collecting the said revenue, who they have in some places suffered to be reproached and sometimes assaulted without punishing the Malefactors, although it be the Duty of all Constables, headboroughs, and other inferior Officers, to accompany, assist and defend Our Officers and their Deputies in their Collections, and the duty of all Justices of the Peace, and chief Magistrates in their respective places and Callings and with the utmost of their Authority to support Our Revenue so well established by Law, and so necessary to the safety and defence of Us and our good Subjects: we therefore resolving for the time to come to take a strict Account of all such persons as shall hereafter be found wanting in their Duty to Us, and to the Laws of Our Kingdom, have thought fit by the advice of Our Council, to Declare, and do hereby publish Our Royal Will and pleasure, that all Arrears of our said Revenue, as well those which were incurred at or before the Feast of St Michael, in the year

Call for people to pay their hearth tax.

Catalogue Ref: SP 45/12 pt 1 f239

of Our Lord One thousand six hundred sixty and five, as those which have incurred since, and all future growing duties, shall forthwith and with all possible speed and diligence, be collected and levied by, and paid unto Our respective Officers and their Deputies appointed for that purpose; That is to say, what was due, at or before Michaelmas 1665 to such Receivers or Collectors as already are, or there it be commissioned by Us in pursuance of the Act of Parliament in that behalf, and to none other;

...

Simplified transcript

A proclamation by the King for the strict and punctual collection of his Majesty's tax on fireplaces and ovens.

CHARLES R

Our income from taxation on fireplaces and ovens is due and continues to remain unpaid in parts of the Kingdom, partly owing to wrongdoing of some people who have blocked up many fireplaces and ovens to avoid paying the tax. To prevent being discovered, some people have refused to let our officers do their inspections.

Several government officials have accepted certificates for excusing payment and little help has been given to officials trying to collect the taxes. In some places these officers have been attacked and the troublemakers not punished by constables and others whose duty it is to assist and defend them. It the duty of all justices of the peace and magistrates to use their powers to support the collection of this legal revenue which is necessary for the safety and defence of the King and country.

It is now time to make a strict record of those who have failed in their duty to the monarchy and to the laws of the kingdom. With advice from my council, I publish my royal command that all previous payments unpaid and those due on or before the Feast of St Michael [29 September] in the year of 1665, and those after, shall be collected immediately and paid to my officers and deputies appointed for the purpose. Taxes are due to be paid, at or before Michaelmas [September to December] 1665 to the usual collectors, or to those sent by the King by Act of Parliament and to no one else.

...

Call not to 'lodge strangers' in Norwich.

Catalogue Ref: SP 29/171 f32

32
Norwich the 10th of Sept: 1666
Mr James Hicks, we are sorry to heare of the sad fire lately
happon in London, upon the newes of it the Mayor ordered
the Bellman to cry, becaus the citty to give the Mayor his
not to lodge any strangers before the Mayor had examined
them not to suffer them to go out of the City without his
order & also for the inhabitants not to lodge any strangers
then the our from whence they come the County Militia are
now summoned to be in. It is advised we heare that the
duties are totally voids can give no credit to it great
ropes of gunpowder about of the fire this was
not so at present but my humble service
to your Honors &c &c
Yr humble servant
to Command
Robt Serivener

Call not to 'lodge strangers' in Norwich.

Catalogue Ref: SP 29/171 f32

Robert Scrivener from Norwich to James Hicks, 10 September 1666. Catalogue ref: SP 29/171 f32.

- What steps were taken in Norwich on news of the fire in London?
- Why do you think these steps were taken?
- What is 'the sickness' the writer mentions in his letter?
- What news is given concerning the Dutch fleet. Find out more about the conflict.

Transcript

Norwich the 10 September 1666

Robert Scrivener to James Hicks

Sir, we are sorry to hear of the sad fire lately happen in London, upon news of it here the Mayor ordered the Bellman to cry about the city to give innkeepers notice not to lodge any strangers before the Mayor had examined them nor to suffer them to go out of the city without his order & also for the inhabitants not to lodge any strangers without knowing from whence they come. The county militia are now summoned to be in readiness. We hear that the Dutch are totally routed. Can give no credit to it. Great hopes of much abatement of the sickness this [damaged document- we?], not other at present but my humble [damaged document- service/servant?] presented remains.

Your Humble servant for command

Robert Scrivener

Simplified transcript

Norwich 10 September 1666

Robert Scrivener to James Hicks

Sir, we are sorry to hear of the recent sad fire in London. Upon news of it here, the mayor ordered the bellman to cry around the city and give innkeepers warning not to give lodgings to any strangers before the mayor had questioned them or allowed them to go out of the city without his permission. Also, the inhabitants of the town are not to lodge any strangers

Call not to 'lodge strangers' in Norwich.

Catalogue Ref: SP 29/171 f32

without knowing where they come from. The county militia [soldiers] are now summoned to be in readiness. We hear that the Dutch are totally defeated but cannot believe it. Great hopes of much reduction of the sickness, not at the moment, but I present to you my humble service.

Your Humble servant for command

Robert Scrivener

Charles II reminds his subjects of their duties 1662

Catalogue Ref: SP 45/11 f130



By the King.

A PROCLAMATION

For the Re-printing, Publishing, and Using of a Book, intituled, *God and the King*.

CHARLES R.



Whereas by the special Command of Our late Royal Grand-father, King James (of blessed memory) there was Compiled and Printed a Book or Treatise, Intituled, *God and the King*; or a Dialogue, shewing that the King of England being immediate under God, within his Dominions, doth rightfully claim whatsoever is required by the Oath of Allegiance: which said Book, or Treatise, being universally dispersed through these Realms and Dominions, did in those times (by the blessing of Almighty God) prove an effectual means, both for the instruction of the People in their Duty and Allegiance, and for avoiding the Penalties of the Laws and Statutes made and provided concerning the same; in respect whereof, and to the end Our loving Subjects may not be ignorant of, but rightly understand the said Duty, and the true meaning thereof, which by reason of the late times of Libertism and Distraction hath been by many too much neglected, and not duly considered, We have been graciously pleased to Direct, That the said Book, or Treatise, be forthwith re-printed and published. And Our further Will and pleasure is, and We do by this Our Royal Proclamation (by and with the advice of our Privy Council) Will and Command all and every the Archbishops, Bishops, Mayors, Sheriffs, Bayliffs, and all other Officers and Ministers whatsoever within these Our Realms and Dominions, That they and every of them respectively, within their several Diocese, Limits, Liberties and Jurisdictions, do (by such ways and means, as they in their Wisdoms and Discretions shall think fit) advise and direct all School-masters and Teachers of the English and Latine Tongue, to teach their Scholars the said Book, or Treatise, either in Latine or English, according to their respective capacities. And also, that it be recommended to all Masters of Families and Apprentices to have one of the said Books or Treatises, with advice to read and be instructed in the same, and the contents and true meaning thereof, thereby to enable themselves to understand and perform the said Oath, and avoid the penalties of the Laws and Statutes made and provided against such as infringe or neglect the same. And for the better encouragement of Our Subjects in so good and necessary a work; We do by these presents strictly Charge and Command all Printers, Stationers and Booksellers, and all other persons whatsoever, That they or any of them do not at any time or times hereafter ask, take, or demand for the said Book, or Treatise, above the price or sum of six pence of lawful money of England, as they tender Our pleasure, and will answer the contrary at their uttermost perils.

Given at the Court at Whitehall, December the fifth, 1662. in the Fourteenth year of Our Reign.

GOD SAVE THE KING.

LONDON, Printed by John Bill and Christopher Barker, Printers to the KING'S most Excellent MAJESTY, 1662.

Charles II reminds his subjects of their duties 1662

Catalogue Ref: SP 45/11 f130

A proclamation 'For the Reprinting, Publishing, and Using of a book, entitled, God and the King', 5 December 1662. Catalogue ref: SP 45/11 f130.

- Explain why Charles II refers to King James as 'our late royal grandfather'? [Clue: consult a family tree of the Stuart Royal House].
- Why do you think Charles II has asked for this book to be reprinted two years after the Restoration?
- What is the name given to the theory of kingship described in this book?
- [Charles II (1630 –1685) was King of Scotland (1649 -1651); King of England, Scotland, and Ireland after the Restoration of the monarchy in 1660 until he died in 1685.]

Transcript

By the king. A proclamation for the Reprinting, Publishing, and Using of a book, entitled, God and the King.

Charles R.

Whereas by the special command our late royal grandfather, king James (of blessed memory) there was compiled and printed a book of treatise, entitled, God and the King; or a dialogue, showing that the king of England being immediate under god, within his dominions doth rightfully claim whatsoever is required by the oath of allegiance; which said book or treatise, being universally dispersed through the realms and dominions, did in those times (by the blessing of Almighty God) prove an effectual means, both for the instruction of the people in their duty and allegiance, and for avoiding the penalties of the laws and statutes made and provided concerning the same; in respect whereof, and to the end our loving subjects may not be ignorant of, but rightly understand the said duty, and the true meaning thereof, which by reason of the late times of libertism and distraction hath been by many too much neglected, and not duly considered, we have been graciously pleased to direct, that the said book, or treatise, be forthwith reprinted and published. And our further will and pleasure is, and we do by this our royal proclamation (by and with the advice of our pricy council) will and command all and every the archbishops, bishops, mayors, sheriffs, bailiffs, and all other officers and ministers whatsoever within these our realms and dominions, that they and every of them respectively, within their several diocese, limits, liberties and jurisdictions, do (by such ways and means, as they in their

Charles II reminds his subjects of their duties 1662

Catalogue Ref: SP 45/11 f130

wisdoms and discretions shall think fit) advise and direct all school matters and teachers of the English and Latin tongue, to teach their scholars the said book or treatise, either in Latin or English, according to their respective capacities. And also, that it be recommended to all matters of families and apprentices, to have one of the said Books or treatises, with advice to read and be instructed in the same, and the contents and true meaning thereof, thereby to enable themselves to understand and perform the said oath, and avoid the penalties of the laws and statutes made and provided against such as infringe or neglect the same. And for the better encouragement of our subjects in so good and necessary a work, we do by these presents straightly charge and command all printers, stationers and booksellers, and all other persons whatsoever, that they or any of them do not at any time or times hereafter ask, take, or demand for the said book, or treatise, above the price or sum of six pence of lawful money of England, as they render our pleasure, and will answer the contrary at their uttermost perils.

Given at our Court at Whitehall, December the fifth, 1662, in the Fourteenth year of our reign.

God Save the King

Printed by John Bull and Christopher Barker, Printers to the Kings Most Excellent Majesty, 1662.

Simplified transcript

Our grandfather King James I ordered a book to be printed, called God and the King, which declared that the king was all powerful, and that the people in his kingdom should obey him. In recent times of difficulty, people have forgotten about this book and the messages contained in it. Therefore, we order that this book should be reprinted, and it be read throughout the country, and especially in schools and places of learning. So that it can be readily available, we ask that all printers and booksellers sell this book for only six pence or less, otherwise they will be in trouble with the authorities.

Charles' II plan to control building in London after the fire

Catalogue Ref: SP 29/171 f95

shortly published, with many other particular Orders and Rules, which I cannot yet be adjured, in the mean time, We resolve though all Streets cannot be of equal breadth, yet none shall be so narrow as to make the passage uncouth, or inconvenient, especially towards the Water-side; nor will we suffer any Lanes or Alleys to be erected, but whereupon mature deliberation the same shall be found absolutely necessary, except such places shall be set aside which shall be designed only for buildings of that kind, and from whence no publick mischief may probably arise.

The irreparable damage and loss by the late Fire, being next to the hand of God in the terrible Wind, to be imputed to the place in which it first brake out, amongst small Timber houses standing so close together, that as no remedy could be applied from the River for the quenching thereof, to the contiguity of the Buildings hindering and keeping all possible relief from the Land side; We do resolve and declare, That there shall be a fair Key or Wharf on all the River side, that no house shall be erected within so many foot of the River

In the first place the woful experience in this late heavy visitation hath sufficiently convinced all men of the pernicious consequences which have attended the building with Timber, and even with Stone it self, and the notable benefit of Brick, which in so many places hath resisted and even extinguished the Fire; And we do therefore hereby declare Our express Will and Pleasure, That no man whatsoever shall presume to erect any House or Building, great or small, but of Brick, or Stone, and if any man shall do the contrary, the next Magistrate shall forthwith cause it to be pulled down, and such further course shall be taken for his punishment as he deserves; And We suppose that the notable benefit many men have received from those Cellars which have been well and strongly arched, will persuade most men who build good Houses, to practice that good husbandry, by Arching all convenient places.

We do declare, That Fleetstreet, Cheapside, Cornhill, and all other eminent and notorious Streets, shall be of such a breadth, as may with Gods blessing prevent the mischief that one side may suffer if the other be on fire, which was the case lately in Cheapside, the precise breadth of which several Streets, shall be upon advice with the Lord Mayor and Aldermen

for the ornament of the City, any houses to be inhabited by Brewers, or Dicers, or Sugar-Bakers, which Trades by their continual Smokes contribute very much to the unhealthiness of the adjacent places; but We require the Lord Mayor and Aldermen of London upon a full consideration, and weighing all conveniences and inconveniences that can be foreseen, to propose such a place as may be fit for all those Trades which are carried on by smokes to inhabit together, or at least several places for the several quarters of the Town for those occupations, and in which they shall find their accompt in convenience and profit, as well as other places shall receive the benefit in the distance of the neighbourhood, it being Our purpose that they who exercise those necessary professions, shall be in all respects as well provided for, and encouraged as ever

(11)



HIS MAJESTIES

DECLARATION

TO

His City of LONDON,

Upon occasion of the late Calamity by the lamentable FIRE.

CHARLES R.

AS no particular Man hath stained any loss or damage by the late terrible and deplorable Fire in his Fortune or Estate, in any degree to be compared with the loss and damage We Our Self have sustained, so it is not possible for any Man to take the same more to heart, and to be more concerned and solicitous for the rebuilding this Famous City, with as much expedition as is possible: And since it hath pleased God to lay this heavy Judgment upon

A 2

upon Us all in this time, as an evidence of his displeasure for Our sins, We do comfort Our Self with some hope, that he will upon Our due humiliation before Him, as a new instance of his signal blessing upon Us give Us life, not only to see the foundations laid, but the buildings finished, of a much more beautiful City then is at this time consumed; and that as the seat and situation of it is the most convenient and notable, for the advancement of Trade, of any City in Europe;

Charles' II plan to control building in London after the fire

Catalogue Ref: SP 29/171 f95

Extracts from a pamphlet entitled: 'His Majesty's Declaration to His City of London Upon the occasion of the late Calamity by the Lamentable FIRE', printed by John Bull and Christopher Barker Printers to the KING'S most Excellent Majesty, 1666. Catalogue ref: SP 29/171 f95.

Preparing for the rebuilding of London, Charles II published a series of building regulations for the city. Hopefully these would reduce the chance of a similar fire.

- List the key words used to describe the fire in the title page. These are often used in other documents in this collection. Can you suggest why?
- Why does Charles II explain his own feelings about the fire do you think?
- Create a table. One side explain the new rule. On the other, explain how the rule was designed to reduce the threat of fire.
- How does this source link to the 1671 proclamation 'Against New buildings' in parts of London without royal permission seen in this collection?

Transcript

[Title page]

'His Majesty's Declaration to His City of London Upon the occasion of the late Calamity by the Lamentable FIRE', printed by John Bull and Christopher Barker Printers to the KING'S most Excellent Majesty

[Pamphlet extracts]

Page 1

As no particular Man hath sustained any loss or dammage by the late terrible and deplorable Fire in his Fortune or Estate, in any degree to be compared with the loss and damage We Our Self have sustained, so it is not possible for any Man to take the same more to heart, and to be more concerned and sollicitous for the rebuilding this famous City, as with much expedition as is possible: And since it has pleased God to lay this heavy judgment upon

Page 2

Us all this time, as evidence of his displeasure for Our sins, We do comfort Our Self with

Charles' II plan to control building in London after the fire

Catalogue Ref: SP 29/171 f95

some hope, that he will upon Our due humiliation before him, as a new instance of his signal blessing upon Us, give Us life, not only to see the foundations laid, but the buildings finished, of a much more beautiful city then is at tis time consumed; and that as the seat and situation of it is most convenient and noble, for the advancement of Trade , of any City in Europe

Page 5

In the first place the woful experience in this late heavy visitation hath sufficiently convinced all men of the pernicious consequences which have attended the building with Timber, and even with Stone itself, and the notable benefit of Brick, which in so many places hath resisted and even extinguished the Fire; And we do therefore declare Our express Wil and Pleasure, That no man whatsoever shal presume to erect any House or Building, great or small, but of Brick or Stone, and if any man shal do the contrary, the next Magistrate shall forthwith cause it to be pulled down, and such further course shal be taken for his punishment as he deserves; And We suppose that the notable benefit many men have received from those Cellars which have been well and strongly arched, wil persuade most men who build good Houses, to practice that good husbandry, by Arching all convenient places.

We do declare, That Fleet Street, Cheapside, Cornhill, and all other eminent and notorious Streets, shall be such a breath, as may with God's blessing prevent the mischief that one side may suffer if the other be on fire, which was the case lately in Cheapside, the precise breath of which several streets, shall be upon advice with the Lord Mayor and Aldermen

Page 6

shortly published with many other particular Orders and Rules, which cannot yet be adjusted; in the meantime, We resolve though all streets cannot be of, equal breath, yet none shal be so narrow as to make the passage un-easie or inconvenient, especially towards the Water-side, nor wil we suffer any Lanes or Allyes to be erected, but where upon mature deliberation the same shal be found absolutely necessary, except such place shal be set aside which shal be designed onely for buildings of that kind, and from whence no publick mischief may probably arise.

Their irreparable damage and loss by the late Fire, being next to the hand of God in the terrible Wind, to be imputed to the place in which it first brake out, amongst small Timber houses standing so close together, that as no remedy could be applied from the River for

Charles' II plan to control building in London after the fire

Catalogue Ref: SP 29/171 f95

the quenching thereof, to the contiguousness of the Buildings hindering and keeping all possible relief from the Landside, We do resolve and declare, That there shal be a fair Key or Wharf on all the Riverside, that no house shall be erected within so many foot of the River

Page 7

.any houses to be inhabited by Brewers, or Diers, or Sugar-Bakers, which Trades by their continual Smoaks contribute very much to the unhealthiness of the adjacent places, but We require the Lord Mayor and Aldermen of London upon a ful consideration, and weighing all conveniences and inconveniences that can be foreseen, to propose such a place as may be fit for all those Trades which are carried on by smoak to inhabit together, or at least several places for the several quarters of the Town for those occupations, and in which they shal find their accompt in convenience and profit as wel as other places shal receive the benefit in the distance of the neighbourhood, it being Our purpose that they who exercise those necessary professions, shal be in all respects as wel provided for and encouraged as ever ...

Simplified transcript

Page 1

Nobody has experienced the as much loss or damage caused by the recent terrible fire as your own King. It is not possible for any man to take this more to heart, or to be more caring and concerned about the rebuilding of this famous city as quickly as possible. Just as God has placed this heavy judgment upon

Page 2

us because of our sins, we take comfort from his forgiveness as an example of his blessing. He gives us life not only to see the foundations laid, but the buildings finished, for an even more beautiful city than before it was destroyed by fire. The city will be suitable and impressive for the advancement of trade as any in Europe.

Page 5

In the first place the sad experience of this terrible event has convinced all men of the danger of building with wood or even using stone. It has shown the advantage of using brick, which in many places resisted and even stopped, the fire. We therefore wish that no man shall build any house or building, great or small unless made of brick or stone. If any man fails to do this, the Magistrate will order it to be pulled down, and the person will be

Charles' II plan to control building in London after the fire

Catalogue Ref: SP 29/171 f95

punished. We hope that the benefit many have seen from cellars built with strong arches, will persuade most men who build good houses, to use the same practice when necessary.

We do declare that Fleet Street, Cheapside, Cornhill, and all other important and famous streets, shall be wider. This with God's blessing will prevent the other side from catching fire at the same time. This was seen in Cheapside. The width of various streets will be decided by the Lord Mayor and his officers.

Page 6

All the rules will be published soon and cannot be changed. In the meantime, we accept that all streets cannot be the same width. But none shall be so narrow that they are difficult to use, especially near the river. We will not allow any lanes or alleys to be built, unless absolutely necessary.

The great damage and loss by the late fire, next to the hand of God, was caused by the terrible wind. The fire is believed to have first broken out amongst the small closely built wooden houses. The river [Thames] could not be used to put out the flames because the buildings were so close together preventing getting help inland. We declare be there will be a quay [dockside area] along the riverside and no house shall be built near river. [Thames]

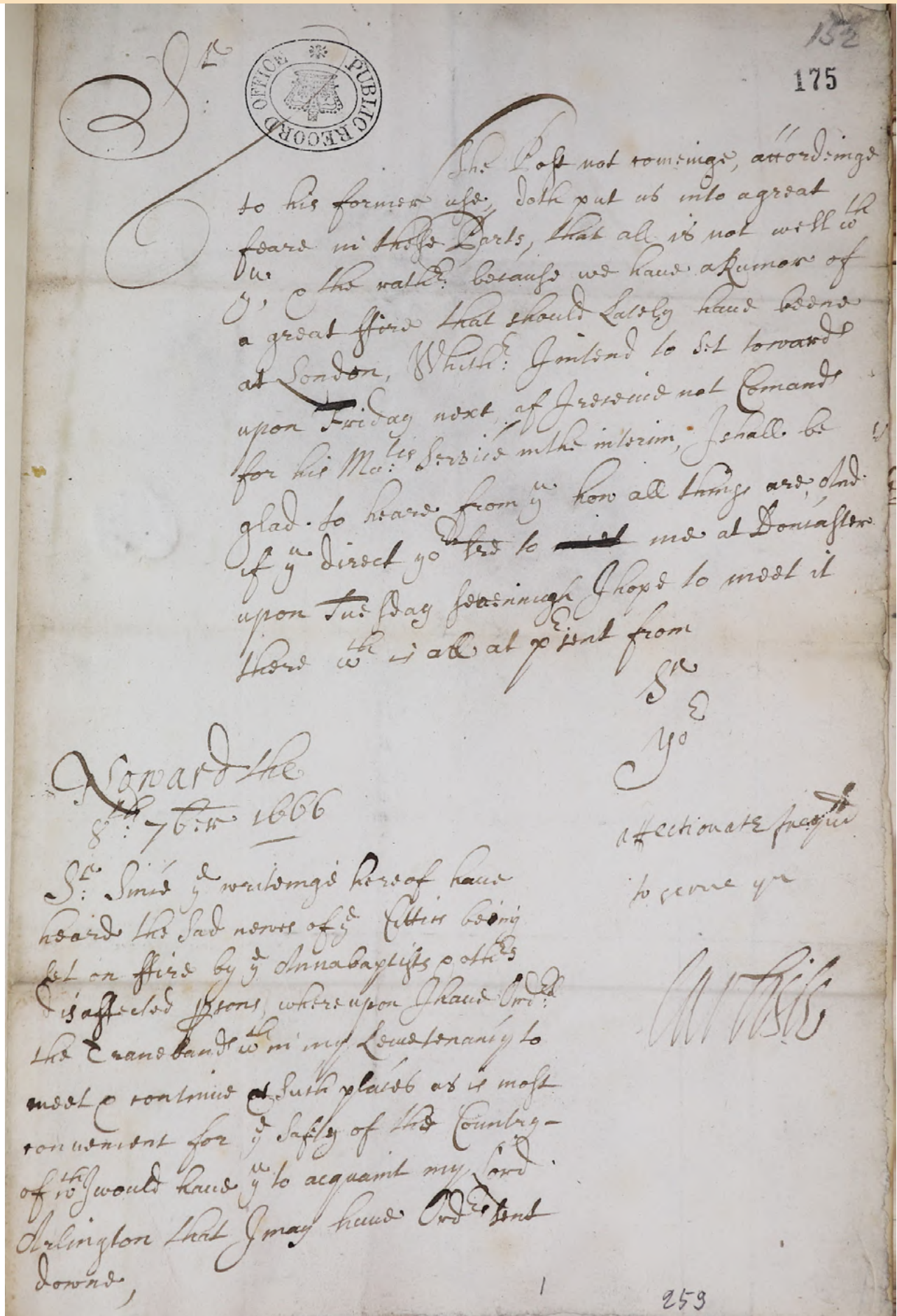
Page 7

Houses used by brewers [making beer], or dyers [colouring cloth], or sugar-bakers [refining raw sugar] whose constant smoke makes nearby places unhealthy will be advised by the Lord Mayor and the men who run London. They will suggest a place where all those trades which use fire can be housed together or moved to different parts of the city. These occupations, it is hoped will find it convenient and profitable and people will benefit from their distance. It is hoped that these trades will be looked after and encouraged.

...

City 'set on fire by Anabaptists'

Catalogue ref: SP 29/170 f152



City 'set on fire by Anabaptists'

Catalogue ref: SP 29/170 f152

A letter from Earl of Carlisle at Naworth to Joseph Williamson. Catalogue ref: SP 29/170 f152.

Naworth has a castle near Brampton in Cumbria.

Joseph Williamson (1633-1701) was the Under-Secretary of State (1660-74) and Keeper of the State Papers which he reorganised from 1661-1701. He also started the 'Oxford Gazette' at the time of the Great Plague in 1665, which later became established as the 'London Gazette'.

Anabaptists, (from Greek ana, 'again') were a radical movement of the Protestant Reformation. They believed in the public confession of sin and faith, and baptism for adults only.

- Who does this writer believe started the fire in London?
- Why do you think the lack of regular post encouraged rumours about the causes of the fire?
- What does this letter reveal about how the country was defended?

Transcript

The post not coming according to his former use doth put us unto a great fear in these parts, that all is not well with you, and the rather because we have a rumour of a great fire that should lately had beene at London. Whether I intend to set towards upon Friday next if I remain not commanded for his Majesty's service much interim. I shall be glad to hear from you how all things are, and if you direct your letter to me at Doncaster upon Tuesday fortnight. I hope to meet it there which is all at present from

Sir, your affectionate friend to serve, Carlisle.

Forward the 8 September 1666

Sir,

Since the writings here of I have heard the sad news of the city being set on fire by

City 'set on fire by Anabaptists'

Catalogue ref: SP 29/170 f152

Anabaptists and other disaffected persons whereupon I have ordered the trained bands with my Lieutenants to meet and continue at such places as is most convenient for safety of the country of which I would have you to acquaint my Lord Arlington that I may have Orders sent down.

Simplified transcript

As the post is not coming as usual, there a great fear in these parts, because we have a rumour of a great fire in London. I intend to set out there on Friday next unless commanded by his Majesty to remain. I shall be glad to hear from you what is being said. If you direct your letter to the inn at Doncaster upon Tuesday fortnight. I hope to meet it there.

Sir, your affectionate friend to serve,

Carlisle.

Forward the 8 September 1666

Since writing, I have heard the sad news of the city being set on fire by Anabaptists and other disaffected persons whereupon I have ordered the trained bands with my Lieutenants to meet and continue in places that are most convenient for safety of the country. I would have you let my Lord Arlington know that I may have Orders sent down.

Cloth trade affected by the fire, fireballs, and sheep theft

Catalogue Ref: SP 29/171 f12

12
 13
 13
 23

OFFICE OF PUBLIC RECORD

Novemb^r 7th the 9th 1666

The impossible for pen to express the sad influence the calamitous & deplorable state of poor London. has generally had upon our sorrowfully sympathizing cities, wherein I think is not that person in whose countenance may not apparently be read the lively character of real grief, every man having espoused for patheticall a sense of y^e generall misfortune, of his hard to say whether it or his owne concerns in it he regards with y^e greatest regret. Our Witne, ^{with humble} prove enough god knows before, has had a very ample share in y^e loss, many being undone by it. Especially our poor clothiers, many or most of whom had their whole estates lying there in cloth, and now all or the greatest part destroyed. We have frequent & hot alarms of y^e firing of severall other places, of apprehending persons, & the discovery of plots, designs, fire balls &c, many of w^{ch} upon a strict enquiry being found Romantick, were just the less credit to the rest. yet I had it last night out of Lancashire from a very serious hand, that at Lancaster are feared severall upon very eminent suspicion, that at Richwell neare Lutterworth were some persons apprehended and being searched had severall fire balls found upon y^m of the bigness of Tennis balls. he himself affirming to have seen one of them. They were immediately sent to prison, nor are we failing here to be most industriously vigilant, our trained bands are in arms, & most punctually strict watching & warding is kept, every housekeeper of what degree formerly going personally upon the duty, we have been very much startled by a strange kind of robbery committed in severall places hereabouts, many shopkeepers having been killed in the field, and only their Ballows taken away, both flesh & felle left behind, of w^{ch} some gave this construction, that the Ballow might probably be intended for the making up of fire balls and such combustible compositions, one of the malefactors is apprehended, who confesses

S^r
 Yesterday afternoon, in y^e Mayor and y^e Alder Men
 of our Republick, both y^e upon respect given
 went out to Church, and descended a considerable
 of several persons, against whom they intend to proceed
 all much favouring

conspires y^e fact, but that it was done purely through poverty, and y^e the loss of
 Cotton, how it will prove y^e Honourable

most strict & good
 Robert Hope

Cloth trade affected by the fire, fireballs, and sheep theft

Catalogue Ref: SP 29/171 f12

Letter from Ralph Hope to Joseph Williamson. Catalogue ref: SP 29/171 f12

Joseph Williamson (1633-1701) was the Under-Secretary of State (1660-74) and Keeper of the State Papers which he reorganised from 1661-1701. He also started the 'Oxford Gazette' at the time of the Great Plague in 1665, which later became established as the 'London Gazette'.

- How have people in Coventry responded to news of the fire, according to Ralph Hope?
- How has the fire damaged Coventry's cloth trade?
- What anti-Catholic sentiment is inferred by the letter?
- Why do you think the town is under armed guard with a night watch?

Transcript

Coventry, 7 September 1666

Ralph Hope to Williamson

'Tis impossible for pen to express the sad influence the calamitous & deplorable fate of poor London has generally had upon our sorrowfully sympathizing city wherein. I think is not that person in whose countenance may not apparently be read the lively character of real grief, every man having espoused so pathological a sense of the general disaster yet tis hard to say whether it or his own particular concerns in it be receive with the greatest regret. Our city proves enough God knows before, has had a very ample share in the loss, may being undone by it especially our poor clothiers, many or most of whom had their whole estates lying there in cloth and now all or the greatest part destroyed. We saw frequent & hot alarms of firings of several other places of apprehending persons & discovery of plots, designs, fireballs etc., many of which, upon a strict enquiry being found Roman Catholic, we give the less credit to the rest. Yet I had it, last night out of Leicestershire from a very serious hand that at Leicester are seized several upon very eminent suspicion that at Bricknell near Lutterworth were some persons apprehended and being searched had several fire balls found upon them of the bigness of tennis balls. He himself affirming to have seen one of them. They were immediately sent to prison. Now are we finding here to be most industriously vigilant, trained bands are in arms, & most severely strict watching & warding is kept, every housekeeper of what degree soever going

Cloth trade affected by the fire, fireballs, and sheep theft

Catalogue Ref: SP 29/171 f12

personally upon the duty. We have been startled by a strange kind of robbery committed in several places hereabout. Many sheep having been killed in the field and only their tallow taken away. Both flesh & fell [animal hide] left behind of which some gave this conviction that the tallow might probably be intended for the making up of fire balls and such combustible compositions. One of the malefactors is apprehended, who confesses-

Side of document

Confesses the fact, but that it was done mainly through poverty, and he had sold the tallow. How it will prove I know not. Yesterday afternoon, the Mayor and Sir Thomas Norton, one our Deputy Lieutenants, upon notice given went out of Church and discovered a conventicle [secret, unlawful meeting] of several persons against whom they intend to proceed with much severity.

Most obligated servant

Ralph Hope

Simplified transcript

Coventry, 7 September 1666

Ralph Hope to Williamson

It is impossible put into words the sad effect the awful and unforgivable fate of poor London has generally had upon our sad city. In everyone's face you can see real grief, though it is hard to say if its due to the fire or his own particular worries. Our city has also had a very real share in the loss, especially our poor clothiers, many had their businesses for the most part destroyed. We have seen frequent and false alarms of firings of several other places and the arrest of people and the discovery of plots, plans, and fireballs. After enquiries being made many have been found to be Roman Catholic. We do not believe the others. But I heard, last night that in Leicestershire, from a very important source, in Leicester some people were seized on serious suspicion and, that at Bricknell (near Lutterworth) some people were stopped. When searched, several fire balls were found, the size of tennis balls. The source said they have seen one of them. These people were immediately sent to prison.

Cloth trade affected by the fire, fireballs, and sheep theft

Catalogue Ref: SP 29/171 f12

Here, we are highly vigilant, and the trained bands are armed. A strict night watch and patrol is kept. Every housekeeper, whoever they are, is personally doing this. We have also been shocked by a strange kind of robbery committed in several places here. Many sheep have been killed in the field and only their animal fat [tallow] removed. Both meat and animal skin left behind, some have concluded that the animal fat might probably be intended to make fire balls and such things to cause fire. One of culprits has been arrested and confessed that it was done mainly because of poverty, and he sold the tallow. What will happen, I don't know. Yesterday afternoon, the Mayor and Sir Thomas Norton, one our Deputy Lieutenants, when warned, discovered a secret, unlawful meeting of several persons against whom they intend to take strong action.

Most obliged servant

Ralph Hope

Dutch illustrated news sheet including the Great Fire

Catalogue Ref: MPF 1/232



EEUWIGE GEDENCK-TEKENEN,
Van de Engelsche en Nederlansche
OORLOGH en VREEDI

26. Zey-fach wiffen d'Engell en Nederlanders, den 11 Junij 1665.

2007-11-01 08:00:00 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32. 33. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38. 39. 40. 41. 42. 43. 44. 45. 46. 47. 48. 49. 50. 51. 52. 53. 54. 55. 56. 57. 58. 59. 60. 61. 62. 63. 64. 65. 66. 67. 68. 69. 70. 71. 72. 73. 74. 75. 76. 77. 78. 79. 80. 81. 82. 83. 84. 85. 86. 87. 88. 89. 90. 91. 92. 93. 94. 95. 96. 97. 98. 99. 100. 101. 102. 103. 104. 105. 106. 107. 108. 109. 110. 111. 112. 113. 114. 115. 116. 117. 118. 119. 120. 121. 122. 123. 124. 125. 126. 127. 128. 129. 130. 131. 132. 133. 134. 135. 136. 137. 138. 139. 140. 141. 142. 143. 144. 145. 146. 147. 148. 149. 150. 151. 152. 153. 154. 155. 156. 157. 158. 159. 160. 161. 162. 163. 164. 165. 166. 167. 168. 169. 170. 171. 172. 173. 174. 175. 176. 177. 178. 179. 180. 181. 182. 183. 184. 185. 186. 187. 188. 189. 190. 191. 192. 193. 194. 195. 196. 197. 198. 199. 200. 201. 202. 203. 204. 205. 206. 207. 208. 209. 210. 211. 212. 213. 214. 215. 216. 217. 218. 219. 220. 221. 222. 223. 224. 225. 226. 227. 228. 229. 230. 231. 232. 233. 234. 235. 236. 237. 238. 239. 240. 241. 242. 243. 244. 245. 246. 247. 248. 249. 250. 251. 252. 253. 254. 255. 256. 257. 258. 259. 260. 261. 262. 263. 264. 265. 266. 267. 268. 269. 270. 271. 272. 273. 274. 275. 276. 277. 278. 279. 280. 281. 282. 283. 284. 285. 286. 287. 288. 289. 290. 291. 292. 293. 294. 295. 296. 297. 298. 299. 300. 301. 302. 303. 304. 305. 306. 307. 308. 309. 310. 311. 312. 313. 314. 315. 316. 317. 318. 319. 320. 321. 322. 323. 324. 325. 326. 327. 328. 329. 330. 331. 332. 333. 334. 335. 336. 337. 338. 339. 340. 341. 342. 343. 344. 345. 346. 347. 348. 349. 350. 351. 352. 353. 354. 355. 356. 357. 358. 359. 360. 361. 362. 363. 364. 365. 366. 367. 368. 369. 370. 371. 372. 373. 374. 375. 376. 377. 378. 379. 380. 381. 382. 383. 384. 385. 386. 387. 388. 389. 390. 391. 392. 393. 394. 395. 396. 397. 398. 399. 400. 401. 402. 403. 404. 405. 406. 407. 408. 409. 410. 411. 412. 413. 414. 415. 416. 417. 418. 419. 420. 421. 422. 423. 424. 425. 426. 427. 428. 429. 430. 431. 432. 433. 434. 435. 436. 437. 438. 439. 440. 441. 442. 443. 444. 445. 446. 447. 448. 449. 450. 451. 452. 453. 454. 455. 456. 457. 458. 459. 460. 461. 462. 463. 464. 465. 466. 467. 468. 469. 470. 471. 472. 473. 474. 475. 476. 477. 478. 479. 480. 481. 482. 483. 484. 485. 486. 487. 488. 489. 490. 491. 492. 493. 494. 495. 496. 497. 498. 499. 500. 501. 502. 503. 504. 505. 506. 507. 508. 509. 510. 511. 512. 513. 514. 515. 516. 517. 518. 519. 520. 521. 522. 523. 524. 525. 526. 527. 528. 529. 530. 531. 532. 533. 534. 535. 536. 537. 538. 539. 540. 541. 542. 543. 544. 545. 546. 547. 548. 549. 550. 551. 552. 553. 554. 555. 556. 557. 558. 559. 560. 561. 562. 563. 564. 565. 566. 567. 568. 569. 570. 571. 572. 573. 574. 575. 576. 577. 578. 579. 580. 581. 582. 583. 584. 585. 586. 587. 588. 589. 590. 591. 592. 593. 594. 595. 596. 597. 598. 599. 600. 601. 602. 603. 604. 605. 606. 607. 608. 609. 610. 611. 612. 613. 614. 615. 616. 617. 618. 619. 620. 621. 622. 623. 624. 625. 626. 627. 628. 629. 630. 631. 632. 633. 634. 635. 636. 637. 638. 639. 640. 641. 642. 643. 644. 645. 646. 647. 648. 649. 650. 651. 652. 653. 654. 655. 656. 657. 658. 659. 660. 661. 662. 663. 664. 665. 666. 667. 668. 669. 670. 671. 672. 673. 674. 675. 676. 677. 678. 679. 680. 681. 682. 683. 684. 685. 686. 687. 688. 689. 690. 691. 692. 693. 694. 695. 696. 697. 698. 699. 700. 701. 702. 703. 704. 705. 706. 707. 708. 709. 710. 711. 712. 713. 714. 715. 716. 717. 718. 719. 720. 721. 722. 723. 724. 725. 726. 727. 728. 729. 730. 731. 732. 733. 734. 735. 736. 737. 738. 739. 740. 741. 742. 743. 744. 745. 746. 747. 748. 749. 750. 751. 752. 753. 754. 755. 756. 757. 758. 759. 760. 761. 762. 763. 764. 765. 766. 767. 768. 769. 770. 771. 772. 773. 774. 775. 776. 777. 778. 779. 780. 781. 782. 783. 784. 785. 786. 787. 788. 789. 790. 791. 792. 793. 794. 795. 796. 797. 798. 799. 800. 801. 802. 803. 804. 805. 806. 807. 808. 809. 810. 811. 812. 813. 814. 815. 816. 817. 818. 819. 820. 821. 822. 823. 824. 825. 826. 827. 828. 829. 830. 831. 832. 833. 834. 835. 836.

[illegible]

G. 7 Verbruden van d'Engelle Oorlogschepen op de Rivier van Rochester.
den 21 en 22 Junij 1667.

Dutch illustrated news sheet including the Great Fire (close-up)

Catalogue Ref: MPF 1/232

E. de brandt van London, op den 12. 13. 14. 15. en 16 September Anno 1666.



Dutch illustrated news sheet including the Great Fire

Catalogue Ref: MPF 1/232

A broadside sheet of ten illustrations with descriptions written in Dutch showing incidents during the Dutch War, 1665-1667: battle between the English and Dutch fleets, 13 June 1665; the English attack on Bergen, Norway, 12 August 1665; four day battle, 11-14 June 1666; burning of ships in the Vlie and the Schelling, 19-20 August 1666; the Fire of London, 12-16 September 1666; Dutch attack on Sheppey and Sheerness, 20 June 1667; burning of English ships at Rochester, 22-23 June 1667; peace conference at Breda, 31 July 1667; the publication of the Peace at Breda, 24 August 1667; and the fireworks celebrating the peace, 7 September 1667. By Marcus Doornick, (1633-1703). Catalogue ref: MPF 1/232

The Great Fire of London is shown with the city in large clouds of smoke on the side of the river Thames dated, 12-16 September 1666. The point view is from the south bank of the Thames looking north over Southwark Cathedral and the Globe Theatre over the old London Bridge to the city of London in flames. Huge clouds of smoke cover the city.

The source says that the fire happened from September 12 – 16. This is incorrect, the real dates are September 2 – 6. This could be explained by the delay between the event and spread of news abroad. It is also an example of a foreign report of the fire and shows the international interest in the event.

A broadside was a large sheet of paper printed on one side and used like a poster. They were often illustrated and contained news of events, political views, songs, ballads or even advertisements.

A larger version of the image showing the Great fire of London can found in another broadside by Marcus Doornick at the British Museum: https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/P_1885-1114-150

- Why do you think the dates of this article are incorrect?
- The article mentions 'victory fires of the English in the Vlie and on Terschelling'. Look at picture D in the right column of the whole broadside image. Explain why this event is mentioned at the start and end of the article?
- What information does the article give about the damage to trade caused by the fire?
- What does this article reveal about interest in the Great Fire of London from abroad?
- Compare the picture of the Great Fire (with this article) to that shown with Hollar's map. Which one do you think is more useful?

Dutch illustrated news sheet including the Great Fire

Catalogue Ref: MPF 1/232

Image description

A broadside sheet including ten illustrations, with descriptions written in Dutch showing incidents during the Dutch War, dated 1665-1667. By Marcus Doornick (1633-1703), 1667.

Left column, from top to bottom:

A. A battle between the English and Dutch fleets with two large ships in flames and a smaller ship sinking in the foreground dated, 13 June 1665.

B. The English fleet are shown attacking Bergen, Norway with several ships in the harbour and they are fired at from the shore with cannons, dated, 12 August 1665.

E. The Great Fire of London is shown with the city in large clouds of smoke on the side of the river Thames dated, 12-16 September 1666. The point view is from the south bank of the Thames looking north over Southwark Cathedral and the Globe Theatre over the old London Bridge to the city of London in flames. Huge clouds of smoke cover the city.

I. On the publication of the Peace at Breda a huge crowd is standing outside the gates of a large ornate building dated, 24 August 1667. Bottom left column.

Right column, from top to bottom:

C. A four-day battle showing burning ships and black smoke, a large galleon sinks in the foreground, dated 11-14 June 1666.

D. The burning of ships in the Vlie and the Schelling. This was an English raid on Dutch islands where burning houses are shown, dated 19-20 August 1666.

F. Dutch ships attack Sheppey and Sheerness where the English have assembled with weapons. Behind these men are two farmers with a flock of sheep. A fortified building is on fire, dated 20 June 1667. Right column.

G. Burning of several English ships at Rochester, dated, 22-23 June 1667.

Dutch illustrated news sheet including the Great Fire

Catalogue Ref: MPF 1/232

Middle column, from top to bottom:

H. The Peace conference at Breda where a crowd of men stand around a circular table, on the right stands Charles II with his hand held to his heart. Above the table hangs a large cloud with two cherubs with trumpets and the goddess of peace holds an olive branch and wreath. Various documents are on the table, dated 31 July 1667. Top middle column

K. A city scene by a canal with people celebrating the peace of Breda with fireworks and firing a canon dated, 7 September 1667. Bottom middle column.

Transcript

E. The Fire of London, 12, 13, 14. and 15 September 1666.

The victory fires of the English in the Vlie and on Terschelling were perhaps confirmed as far away as London, because less than 3 weeks later, it being 12 September 1666, a fire arose by night in a bakery there in Pudding Lane, not far from the great bridge where the city is densely built up, that spread so quickly fanned by an east wind that, before the arrival of dawn, one could see the whole quarter full of smoke, fire and flames. This fire was not considered to be serious at first, as it raged the next day through Grace Church and Cannon Street and along the waterfront past the three cranes, the bravest men began to flee with such confusion, that the narrow alley ways, especially in this part of the city, were teeming so full of people burdened with household goods that one could not turn in any direction. The fire continued to spread and destroyed the old Exchange and the very large, but now ruinous, St. Paul's Church, around which are to be found the largest and most expensive shops for linen and silk goods, gold and silversmiths and other merchandise. And, because this fire burned for four days, the goods were burnt of those who had fled from one house into another.

The King with his brother the Duke of York took great trouble to bring everything as far as possible under control, because the cries and groans, the fear, hurry and dejection, scurrying and rushing about were indescribable. The fire was first stopped at the Tower on the one side and at Temple Bar on the other, it being a good hour's walk from one to the other, i.e. covering nearly the whole of the old city of London. Since the greater part of the merchandise and wealth had been burned the damage is incalculable. And, however much

Dutch illustrated news sheet including the Great Fire

Catalogue Ref: MPF 1/232

effort was made, the fire could not be stopped nor put out until some houses were blown up as a last resort. The common people whose homes had been burned were given shelter in churches around London. Some also stayed to guard their property, lying day and night under the open sky.

It was eventually estimated that 86 parishes had been burned, 85 churches (only the German church remained standing in the middle of the fire), 30 guild houses, about 35,000 houses, consisting of 60,000 dwellings, comprising 93 both large and small streets. Londoners will remember this day of fire all their lives and perhaps even see the same ruinous properties as those on the island of Terschelling.

Simplified transcript

Maybe the victory fires of the English in the Vlie and on Terschelling were confirmed in London, at least 3 weeks later. On 12 September 1666, a fire broke out at night in a bakery in Pudding Lane, not far from the great bridge where the city is densely built. It spread very quickly fanned by an east wind. Before dawn, one could see the whole area full of smoke, fire and flames. This fire was not considered to be serious at first, as it raged the next day through Grace Church Street and Cannon Street and along the waterfront past the Three Cranes Inn. The bravest men began to flee with such confusion, that the narrow alley ways, especially in this part of the city, were so full of people carrying household goods. The fire continued to spread and destroyed the old Exchange and the large now ruined, St. Paul's Church, including the largest and most expensive shops for linen and silk goods, gold and silversmiths and other goods. And, because this fire burned for four days, the goods were burnt of those who had fled from one house into another.

The King with his brother the Duke of York took great trouble to try and bring everything under control, as the cries and groans, the fear, dejection and rushing about were indescribable. The fire was first stopped at the Tower on the one side and at Temple Bar on the other, a good hour's walk between the two, covering nearly the whole of the city of London. As most of the merchandise and wealth had been burned the damage is incalculable. Despite huge efforts, the fire could not be stopped nor put out until some houses were blown up as a last resort. The common people whose homes had been burned were given shelter in churches around London. Some also stayed to guard their property, lying day and night under the open sky.

Dutch illustrated news sheet including the Great Fire

Catalogue Ref: MPF 1/232

It was eventually estimated that 86 parishes had been burned, 85 churches (only the German church remained standing in the middle of the fire), 30 guild houses, about 35,000 houses, consisting of 60,000 houses, comprising 93 both large and small streets. Londoners will remember this day of fire all their lives and perhaps even see the same ruinous properties as those on the island of Terschelling.

Extracts from John Evelyn's diary

Image: Portrait of John Evelyn (1620-1706), by Godfrey Kneller. [Wikimedia Commons](#)



Extracts from John Evelyn's diary

Image: Portrait of John Evelyn (1620-1706), by Godfrey Kneller. [Wikimedia Commons](#)

Extracts from the diary of John Evelyn, volume 2. According to John Evelyn, on 2 September 1666, began 'that deplorable fire, near Fish Street in London.' These extracts come from the e-book by Project Gutenberg. The highlighted extracts have simplified transcripts. John Evelyn was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1663.

[The first volume of John Evelyn's diary is available online and provides details of his background and family. These extracts relate to the Great Fire of London and can be found in the second volume of his diary.]

- How can we use these diary extracts to find out about the Great Fire of London? Use the following headings: extent of the fire and areas affected; impact of fire on the poor and wealthy; effect of the fire on St Paul's Cathedral.
- Why are diaries useful for finding out about past events?
- Look at the extracts from Samuel Pepys' diary in this collection. In what ways is Pepys' account similar/different?

Transcript

2nd September, 1666. This fatal night, about ten, began the deplorable fire, near Fish Street, in London.

3rd September, 1666. I had public prayers at home. The fire continuing, after dinner, I took coach with my wife and son, and went to the Bankside in Southwark, where we beheld that dismal spectacle, the whole city in dreadful flames near the waterside; all the houses from the Bridge, all Thames street, and upward toward Cheapside, down to the Three Cranes, were now consumed; and so returned, exceedingly astonished what would become of the rest.

The fire having continued all this night (if I may call that night which was light as day for ten miles round about, after a dreadful manner), when conspiring with a fierce eastern wind in a very dry season, I went on foot to the same place; and saw the whole south part of the city burning from Cheapside to the Thames, and all along Cornhill (for it likewise kindled back against the wind as well as forward), Tower street, Fenchurch street, Gracious street, and so along to Baynard's Castle, and was now taking hold of St. Paul's church, to which the scaffolds contributed exceedingly. The conflagration was so universal, and the

Extracts from John Evelyn's diary

Image: Portrait of John Evelyn (1620-1706), by Godfrey Kneller. [Wikimedia Commons](#)

people so astonished, that, from the beginning, I know not by what despondency, or fate, they hardly stirred to quench it; so that there was nothing heard, or seen, but crying out and lamentation, running about like distracted creatures, without at all attempting to save even their goods; such a strange consternation there was upon them, so as it burned both in breadth and length, the churches, public halls, Exchange, hospitals,[Pg 21] monuments, and ornaments; leaping after a prodigious manner, from house to house, and street to street, at great distances one from the other. For the heat, with a long set of fair and warm weather, had even ignited the air, and prepared the materials to conceive the fire, which devoured, after an incredible manner, houses, furniture, and everything. Here, we saw the Thames covered with goods floating, all the barges and boats laden with what some had time and courage to save, as, on the other side, the carts, etc., carrying out to the fields, which for many miles were strewn with movables of all sorts, and tents erecting to shelter both people and what goods they could get away. Oh, the miserable and calamitous spectacle! such as haply the world had not seen since the foundation of it, nor can be outdone till the universal conflagration thereof. All the sky was of a fiery aspect, like the top of a burning oven, and the light seen above forty miles round about for many nights. God grant mine eyes may never behold the like, who now saw above 10,000 houses all in one flame! The noise and cracking and thunder of the impetuous flames, the shrieking of women and children, the hurry of people, the fall of towers, houses, and churches, was like a hideous storm; and the air all about so hot and inflamed, that at the last one was not able to approach it, so that they were forced to stand still, and let the flames burn on, which they did, for near two miles in length and one in breadth. The clouds also of smoke were dismal, and reached, upon computation, near fifty miles in length. Thus, I left it this afternoon burning, a resemblance of Sodom, or the last day. It forcibly called to my mind that passage—"non enim hic habemus stabilem civitatem"; the ruins resembling the picture of Troy. London was, but is no more! Thus, I returned.

4th September, 1666. The burning still rages, and it is now gotten as far as the Inner Temple. All Fleet street, the Old Bailey, Ludgate hill, Warwick lane, Newgate, Paul's chain, Watling street, now flaming, and most of it reduced to ashes; the stones of Paul's flew like grenados, the melting lead running down the streets in a stream, and the very pavements glowing with fiery redness, so as no horse, nor man, was able to tread on them, and the demolition had stopped all the passages, so that no help[Pg 22] could be applied. The eastern wind still more impetuously driving the flames forward. Nothing but the Almighty power of God was able to stop them; for vain was the help of man.

5th September, 1666. It crossed toward Whitehall; but oh! the confusion there was then

Extracts from John Evelyn's diary

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at that Court! It pleased his Majesty to command me, among the rest, to look after the quenching of Fetter-lane end, to preserve (if possible) that part of Holborn, while the rest of the gentlemen took their several posts, some at one part, and some at another (for now they began to bestir themselves, and not till now, who hitherto had stood as men intoxicated, with their hands across), and began to consider that nothing was likely to put a stop but the blowing up of so many houses as might make a wider gap than any had yet been made by the ordinary method of pulling them down with engines. This some stout seamen proposed early enough to have saved near the whole city, but this some tenacious and avaricious men, aldermen, etc., would not permit, because their houses must have been of the first. It was, therefore, now commended to be practiced; and my concern being particularly for the Hospital of St. Bartholomew, near Smithfield, where I had many wounded and sick men, made me the more diligent to promote it; nor was my care for the Savoy less. It now pleased God, by abating the wind, and by the industry of the people, when almost all was lost infusing a new spirit into them, that the fury of it began sensibly to abate about noon, so as it came no farther than the Temple westward, nor than the entrance of Smithfield, north: but continued all this day and night so impetuous toward Cripplegate and the Tower, as made us all despair. It also broke out again in the temple; but the courage of the multitude persisting, and many houses being blown up, such gaps and desolations were soon made, as, with the former three days' consumption, the back fire did not so vehemently urge upon the rest as formerly. There was yet no standing near the burning and glowing ruins by near a furlong's space.

The coal and wood wharfs, and magazines of oil, rosin, etc., did infinite mischief, so as the invective which a little before I had dedicated to his Majesty and published,⁵[Pg 23] giving warning what probably might be the issue of suffering those shops to be in the city was looked upon as a prophecy.

The poor inhabitants were dispersed about St. George's Fields, and Moorfields, as far as Highgate, and several miles in circle, some under tents, some under miserable huts and hovels, many without a rag, or any necessary utensils, bed or board, who from delicateness, riches, and easy accommodations in stately and well-furnished houses, were now reduced to extreme misery and poverty.

In this calamitous condition, I returned with a sad heart to my house, blessing and adoring the distinguishing mercy of God to me and mine, who, in the midst of all this ruin, was like Lot, in my little Zoar, safe and sound.

Extracts from John Evelyn's diary

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6th September, 1666. Thursday. I represented to his Majesty the case of the French prisoners at war in my custody, and besought him that there might be still the same care of watching at all places contiguous to unseized houses. It is not indeed imaginable how extraordinary the vigilance and activity of the King and the Duke was, even laboring in person, and being present to command, order, reward, or encourage workmen; by which he showed his affection to his people, and gained theirs. Having, then, disposed of some under cure at the Savoy, I returned to Whitehall, where I dined at Mr. Offley's, the groom-porter, who was my relation.

7th September, 1666. I went this morning on foot from Whitehall as far as London Bridge, through the late Fleet street, Ludgate hill by St. Paul's, Cheapside, Exchange, Bishops-gate, Aldersgate, and out to Moorfields, thence through Cornhill, etc., with extraordinary difficulty, clambering over heaps of yet smoking rubbish, and frequently mistaking where I was; the ground under my feet so hot, that it even burnt the soles of my shoes. In the meantime, his Majesty got to the Tower by water, to demolish the houses about the graff, which, being built entirely about it, had they taken fire and attacked the White Tower, where the magazine of powder lay, would undoubtedly not only have beaten down and destroyed all the bridge, but sunk and torn the vessels in the river, and rendered the demolition beyond all expression for several miles about the country.

At my return, I was infinitely concerned to find that[Pg 24] goodly Church, St. Paul's—now a sad ruin, and that beautiful portico (for structure comparable to any in Europe, as not long before repaired by the late King) now rent in pieces, flakes of large stones split asunder, and nothing remaining entire but the inscription in the architrave showing by whom it was built, which had not one letter of it defaced! It was astonishing to see what immense stones the heat had in a manner calcined, so that all the ornaments, columns, friezes, capitals, and projectures of massy Portland stone, flew off, even to the very roof, where a sheet of lead covering a great space (no less than six acres by measure) was totally melted. The ruins of the vaulted roof falling, broke into St. Faith's, which being filled with the magazines of books belonging to the Stationers, and carried thither for safety, they were all consumed, burning for a week following. It is also observable that the lead over the altar at the east end was untouched, and among the divers monuments the body of one bishop remained entire. Thus lay in ashes that most venerable church, one of the most ancient pieces of early piety in the Christian world, besides near one hundred more. The lead, ironwork, bells, plate, etc., melted, the exquisitely wrought Mercers' Chapel, the sumptuous Exchange, the august fabric of Christ Church, all the rest of the Companies' Halls, splendid buildings, arches, entries, all in dust; the fountains dried up and ruined, while the very waters remained

Extracts from John Evelyn's diary

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boiling; the voragos of subterranean cellars, wells, and dungeons, formerly warehouses, still burning in stench and dark clouds of smoke; so that in five or six miles traversing about I did not see one load of timber unconsumed, nor many stones but what were calcined white as snow.

The people, who now walked about the ruins, appeared like men in some dismal desert, or rather, in some great city laid waste by a cruel enemy; to which was added the stench that came from some poor creatures' bodies, beds, and other combustible goods. Sir Thomas Gresham's statue, though fallen from its niche in the Royal Exchange, remained entire, when all those of the Kings since the Conquest were broken to pieces. Also the standard in Cornhill, and Queen Elizabeth's effigies, with some arms on Ludgate, continued with but little detriment, while the vast iron chains of the city streets, hinges, bars, and gates[Pg 25] of prisons, were many of them melted and reduced to cinders by the vehement heat. Nor was I yet able to pass through any of the narrow streets, but kept the widest; the ground and air, smoke and fiery vapor, continued so intense, that my hair was almost singed, and my feet insufferably surbated. The by-lanes and narrow streets were quite filled up with rubbish; nor could one have possibly known where he was, but by the ruins of some Church, or Hall, that had some remarkable tower, or pinnacle remaining.

I then went towards Islington and Highgate, where one might have seen 200,000 people of all ranks and degrees dispersed, and lying along by their heaps of what they could save from the fire, deploring their loss; and, though ready to perish for hunger and destitution, yet not asking one penny for relief, which to me appeared a stranger sight than any I had yet beheld. His Majesty and Council indeed took all imaginable care for their relief, by proclamation for the country to come in, and refresh them with provisions.

In the midst of all this calamity and confusion, there was, I know not how, an alarm begun that the French and Dutch, with whom we were now in hostility, were not only landed, but even entering the city. There was, in truth, some days before, great suspicion of those two nations joining; and now that they had been the occasion of firing the town. This report did so terrify, that on a sudden there was such an uproar and tumult that they ran from their goods, and, taking what weapons they could come at, they could not be stopped from falling on some of those nations whom they casually met, without sense or reason. The clamor and peril grew so excessive, that it made the whole Court amazed, and they did with infinite pains and great difficulty, reduce and appease the people, sending troops of soldiers and guards, to cause them to retire into the fields again, where they were watched all this

Extracts from John Evelyn's diary

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night. I left them pretty quiet and came home sufficiently weary and broken. Their spirits thus a little calmed, and the affright abated, they now began to repair into the suburbs about the city, where such as had friends, or opportunity, got shelter for the present to which his Majesty's proclamation also invited them.

Simplified transcripts and extracts

Extract A

The fire was everywhere and everyone so astonished, that from the beginning (I don't know if from feeling it was too hopeless or fate), they hardly made efforts to put it out. All that could be seen or heard was crying out & sobbing & running about like distracted creatures, with not attempt even to save their possessions. For everyone it was so unexpected, so the fire burned in breath and length spreading to churches, public halls, the Exchange, hospitals, monuments and statues, flames rapidly leaping from house to house & street to street, at great distances one from the other. The heat (after a long spell of fine warm weather) had even caused the air to burst into flames and helped more things to burn so the fire rapidly devoured houses, furniture, and everything: We saw the Thames covered with floating goods, all the barges and boats laden with what some had time and courage to save. On the other hand, carts carried goods out to the fields, which for many miles, were covered with possessions of all sorts. Tents were set up to shelter both people any goods they get could remove. Oh! the miserable and disastrous scene, such as thankfully the world had not seen since its beginning until this intensive fire, all the sky was on a light, like the top of a burning oven. And the light could be seen over 40 miles away for many nights. God grant that I may never see anything like it again, the ten thousand houses all in flames with all the noise and crackling and thunder of the powerful flames, the shrieking of women and children and the rush of people The fall of towers, houses and churches was like a ugly storm and the air all about so hot and burning that one not approach it and people were forced to stand still, and let the flames feed on everything for two whole miles in length and one mile wide. The clouds of smoke were terrible and stretched nearly 50 miles in length.

Extract B

The burning still rages: I went now on horseback, and it had reached the Inner Temple, all of Fleet Street, the Old Baily, Ludgate Hill, Warwick Lane, Newgate, Paul's Chain, [a street near St Paul's Church yard]. Wattling Street is now on fire and most of it reduced to ashes, the stones of Paules [St. Pauls] flew like grenades* the lead melting down the streets in a stream, and the actual pavements glowing with fiery redness, so as neither horse or man

Extracts from John Evelyn's diary

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was able to tread on them. The demolitions had blocked all the passages meant one could not get help. The East wind was still moving with great force driving the flames ahead. Nothing but the Almighty power of God was able to stop them. Useless was the help of man: on the fifth day the fire crossed towards Whitehall.

[small iron spheres filled with gunpowder fused with a length of slow match, the size of a tennis ball.]

Extract C

The poor Inhabitants spread from St. Georges, Moorfields, as far as Highgate and several miles around. Some were under tents, others in miserable huts and hovels without a rag, or any necessary tools, beds, or food. People who were used to a wealthy comfortable life and who lived in well-furnished houses were now reduced to extreme misery and poverty. From this terrible situation I returned with a sad heart to my house, blessing and greatly appreciating God's mercy to me and my family, who in all this loss, was like Lot, in my litte Zoar, safe and sound.

[According to the Old Testament, Zoar was the small city to which Lot and his daughters fled during the destruction of the cities Sodom and Gomorrah.]

Extract D

Thus, lay in ashes that most respected church, one of the oldest examples of Christian devotion to God, besides nearly a 100 other churches. The lead ironwork, bells and metal melted, the exquisitely designed Mercers Chapel, the splendid Exchange, the majestic Christ Church [in Newgate Street] all the rest of the companies' halls, magnificent buildings, arches, and entrances all reduced to dust. The fountains were dried up and ruined, whilst the waterways remained boiling. The deep chasms in the ground including cellars, wells, and dungeons, which were used as warehouses, were still burning, and stinking with dark clouds, like hell. In walking five or six miles, I did not see any timber that had not been burnt nor any stones that had not been heated white as snow, so as people walked about the ruins, appeared like men in some dismal desert, or rather in some great city laid waste by a thoughtless and cruel enemy. Added to this was the stench that came from some poor peoples' bodies, beds & other burnable goods.

Extracts from John Evelyn's diary

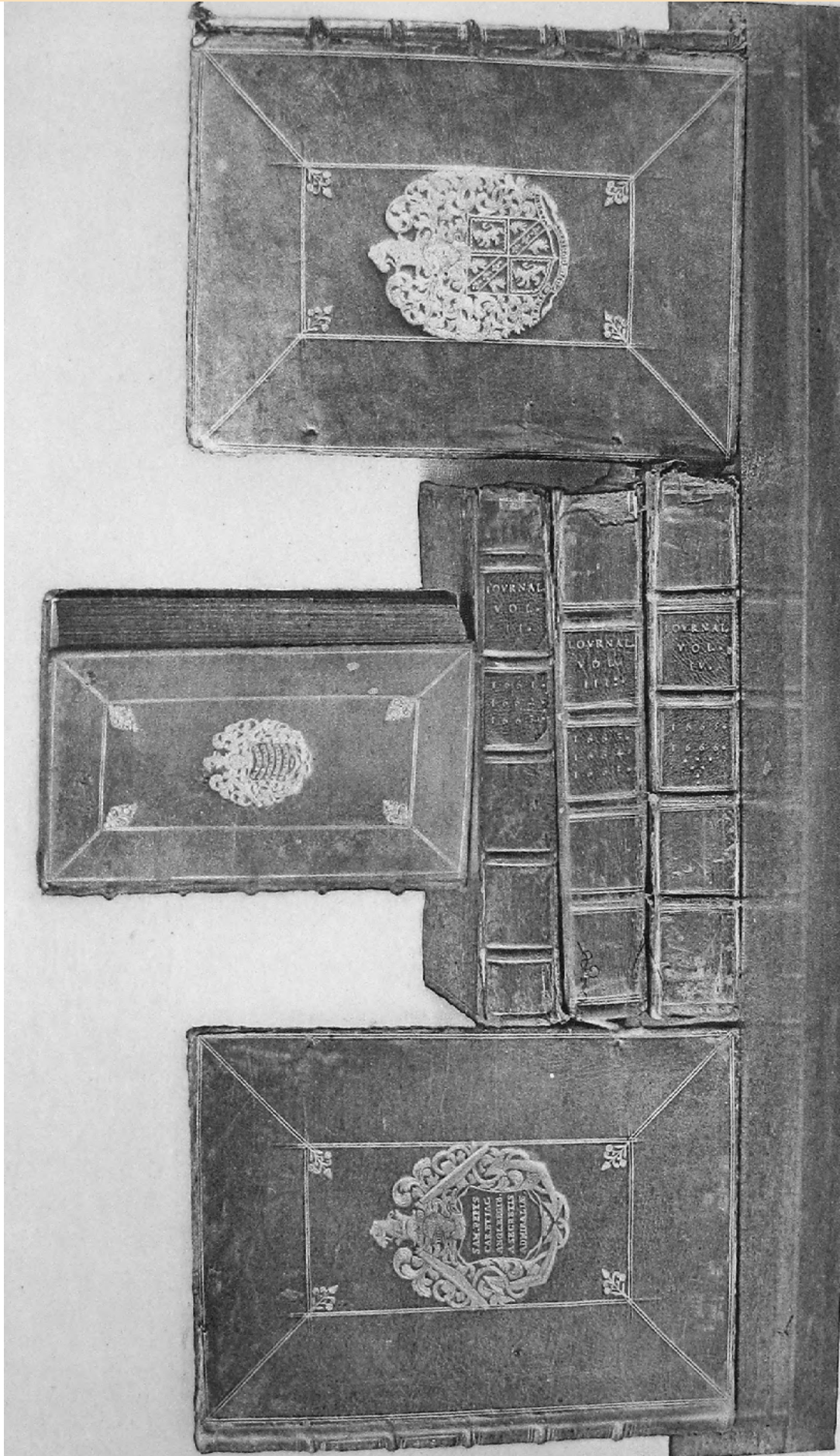
Image: Portrait of John Evelyn (1620-1706), by Godfrey Kneller. [Wikimedia Commons](#)

Extract E

I went towards Islington and Highgate, where you could have seen 200,000 people of all ranks and classes spread out. They were lying by heaps of what they could save from the fire. They expressed sadness at their loss and though ready to die from hunger and poverty, did not ask for one penny to help. To me, this appeared a strange sight, than any I had seen before. His Majesty and Council took all possible care for their relief. The King made a proclamation, for the countryside to provide them with food. In the middle of all this disaster and confusion, I know not now, an alarm was raised that the French and Dutch (with whom we are now at war) had landed and were entering the city. Truthfully, there had been great fear, some days before, that those two countries were joining together and even now, that they had caused the firing of the town.

Extracts from Samuel Pepys' diary

Image: H.B. Wheatley, ed, The Diary of Samuel Pepys (London, 1899). Wikimedia Commons



Extracts from Samuel Pepys' diary

Image: H.B. Wheatley, ed, *The Diary of Samuel Pepys* (London, 1899). [Wikimedia Commons](#)

Samuel Pepys (1633-1703) was an English diarist. He worked as an administrator for the Royal Navy and was a Member of Parliament. In his famous diary (1660-1669) he described events in Restoration England, including the Great Plague and the Great Fire of London. He also recorded details about his life.

Image is from H.B. Wheatley, ed, *The Diary of Samuel Pepys: Pepysiana* (London, 1899). Book editor died in 1917. Samuel Pepys died in 1703. [Wikimedia Commons](#)

- How can we use these diary extracts to find out about the Great Fire of London? Use the following headings: origin of the fire; areas affected; people's experience; efforts to stop the fire; responses of Charles II & Mayor of London.
- Why are diaries useful for finding out about past events?
- Look at the extracts from John Evelyn's diary in this collection. In what ways is Evelyn's account similar/different?

Extract A

Transcript

Sunday 2 September 1666

(Lord's day). Some of our mayds sitting up late last night to get things ready against our feast to-day, Jane called us up about three in the morning, to tell us of a great fire they saw in the City. So I rose and slipped on my nightgowne, and went to her window, and thought it to be on the backside of Marke-lane at the farthest; but, being unused to such fires as followed, I thought it far enough off; and so went to bed again and to sleep. About seven rose again to dress myself, and there looked out at the window, and saw the fire not so much as it was and further off. So to my closett to set things to rights after yesterday's cleaning. By and by Jane comes and tells me that she hears that above 300 houses have been burned down to-night by the fire we saw, and that it is now burning down all Fish-street, by London Bridge. So I made myself ready presently, and walked to the Tower, and there got up upon one of the high places, Sir J. Robinson's little son going up with me; and there I did see the houses at that end of the bridge all on fire, and an infinite great fire on this and the other side the end of the bridge; which, among other people, did trouble me for poor little Michell and our Sarah on the bridge. So down, with my heart full of trouble, to the Lieutenant of the Tower, who tells me that it begun this morning in the King's baker's

Extracts from Samuel Pepys' diary

Image: H.B. Wheatley, ed, *The Diary of Samuel Pepys* (London, 1899). [Wikimedia Commons](#)

house in Pudding-lane, and that it hath burned St. Magnus's Church and most part of Fish-street already. So I down to the water-side, and there got a boat and through bridge, and there saw a lamentable fire. Poor Michell's house, as far as the Old Swan, already burned that way, and the fire running further, that in a very little time it got as far as the Steeleyard, while I was there. Everybody endeavouring to remove their goods, and flinging into the river or bringing them into lighters that lay off; poor people staying in their houses as long as till the very fire touched them, and then running into boats, or clambering from one pair of stairs by the water-side to another. And among other things, the poor pigeons, I perceive, were loth to leave their houses, but hovered about the windows and balconys till they were, some of them burned, their wings, and fell down.

Having staid, and in an hour's time seen the fire: rage every way, and nobody, to my sight, endeavouring to quench it, but to remove their goods, and leave all to the fire, and having seen it get as far as the Steele-yard, and the wind mighty high and driving it into the City; and every thing, after so long a drought, proving combustible, even the very stones of churches, and among other things the poor steeple by which pretty Mrs. ——— lives, and whereof my old school-fellow Elborough is parson, taken fire in the very top, an there burned till it fell down: I to White Hall (with a gentleman with me who desired to go off from the Tower, to see the fire, in my boat); to White Hall, and there up to the Kings closett in the Chappell, where people come about me, and did give them an account dismayed them all, and word was carried in to the King. So I was called for, and did tell the King and Duke of Yorke what I saw, and that unless his Majesty did command houses to be pulled down nothing could stop the fire. They seemed much troubled, and the King commanded me to go to my Lord Mayor —[Sir Thomas Bludworth. See June 30th, 1666.]— from him, and command him to spare no houses, but to pull down before the fire every way. The Duke of York bid me tell him that if he would have any more soldiers he shall; and so did my Lord Arlington afterwards, as a great secret.¹ Here meeting, with Captain Cocke, I in his coach, which he lent me, and Creed with me to Paul's, and there walked along Watlingstreet, as well as I could, every creature coming away loaden with goods to save, and here and there sicke people carried away in beds. Extraordinary good goods carried in carts and on backs. At last met my Lord Mayor in Canningstreet, like a man spent, with a handkercher about his neck. To the King's message he cried, like a fainting woman, "Lord! what can I do? I am spent: people will not obey me. I have been pulling down houses; but the fire overtakes us faster than we can do it." That he needed no more soldiers; and that, for himself, he must go and refresh himself, having been up all night. So he left me, and I him, and walked home, seeing people all almost distracted, and no manner of means used to quench the fire. The houses, too, so very thick thereabouts, and full of matter for burning, as pitch and

Extracts from Samuel Pepys' diary

Image: H.B. Wheatley, ed, *The Diary of Samuel Pepys* (London, 1899). [Wikimedia Commons](#)

tarr, in Thames-street; and warehouses of oyle, and wines, and brandy, and other things. Here I saw Mr. Isaake Houblon, the handsome man, prettily dressed and dirty, at his door at Dowgate, receiving some of his brothers' things, whose houses were on fire; and, as he says, have been removed twice already; and he doubts (as it soon proved) that they must be in a little time removed from his house also, which was a sad consideration. And to see the churches all filling with goods by people who themselves should have been quietly there at this time.

By this time it was about twelve o'clock; and so home, and there find my guests, which was Mr. Wood and his wife Barbary Sheldon, and also Mr. Moons: she mighty fine, and her husband; for aught I see, a likely man. But Mr. Moone's design and mine, which was to look over my closett and please him with the sight thereof, which he hath long desired, was wholly disappointed; for we were in great trouble and disturbance at this fire, not knowing what to think of it. However, we had an extraordinary good dinner, and as merry, as at this time we could be.

While at dinner Mrs. Batelier come to enquire after Mr. Woolfe and Stanes (who, it seems, are related to them), whose houses in Fish-street are all burned; and they in a sad condition. She would not stay in the fright.

Soon as dined, I and Moone away, and walked, through the City, the streets full of nothing but people and horses and carts loaden with goods, ready to run over one another, and, removing goods from one burned house to another. They now removing out of Canning-streets (which received goods in the morning) into Lombard-streets, and further; and among others I now saw my little goldsmith, Stokes, receiving some friend's goods, whose house itself was burned the day after. We parted at Paul's; he home, and I to Paul's Wharf, where I had appointed a boat to attend me, and took in Mr. Carcasse and his brother, whom I met in the streets and carried them below and above bridge to and again to see the fire, which was now got further, both below and above and no likelihood of stopping it. Met with the King and Duke of York in their barge, and with them to Queenhith and there called Sir Richard Browne to them. Their order was only to pull down houses apace, and so below bridge the water-side; but little was or could be done, the fire coming upon them so fast. Good hopes there was of stopping it at the Three Cranes above, and at Buttolph's Wharf below bridge, if care be used; but the wind carries it into the City so as we know not by the water-side what it do there. River full of lighters and boats taking in goods, and good goods swimming in the water, and only I observed that hardly one lighter or boat in three that

Extracts from Samuel Pepys' diary

Image: H.B. Wheatley, ed, *The Diary of Samuel Pepys* (London, 1899). [Wikimedia Commons](#)

had the goods of a house in, but there was a pair of Virginalls in it. Having seen as much as I could now, I away to White Hall by appointment, and there walked to St. James's Parks, and there met my wife and Creed and Wood and his wife, and walked to my boat; and there upon the water again, and to the fire up and down, it still encreasing, and the wind great. So near the fire as we could for smoke; and all over the Thames, with one's face in the wind, you were almost burned with a shower of firedrops. This is very true; so as houses were burned by these drops and flakes of fire, three or four, nay, five or six houses, one from another. When we could endure no more upon the water; we to a little ale-house on the Bankside, over against the Three Cranes, and there staid till it was dark almost, and saw the fire grow; and, as it grew darker, appeared more and more, and in corners and upon steeples, and between churches and houses, as far as we could see up the hill of the City, in a most horrid malicious bloody flame, not like the fine flame of an ordinary fire. Barbary and her husband away before us. We staid till, it being darkish, we saw the fire as only one entire arch of fire from this to the other side the bridge, and in a bow up the hill for an arch of above a mile long; it made me weep to see it. The churches, houses, and all on fire and flaming at once; and a horrid noise the flames made, and the cracking of houses at their ruins. So home with a sad heart, and there find every body discoursing and lamenting the fire; and poor Tom Hater come with some few of his goods saved out of his house, which is burned upon Fish-streets Hill. I invited him to lie at my house, and did receive his goods, but was deceived in his lying there, the newes coming every moment of the growth of the fire; so as we were forced to begin to pack up our owne goods; and prepare for their removal; and did by moonshine (it being brave dry, and moon shine, and warm weather) carry much of my goods into the garden, and Mr. Hater and I did remove my money and iron chests into my cellar, as thinking that the safest place. And got my bags of gold into my office, ready to carry away, and my chief papers of accounts also there, and my tallys into a box by themselves. So great was our fear, as Sir W. Batten hath carts come out of the country to fetch away his goods this night. We did put Mr. Hater, poor man, to bed a little; but he got but very little rest, so much noise being in my house, taking down of goods.

[Sir William Coventry wrote to Lord Arlington on the evening of this day, "The Duke of York fears the want of workmen and tools to-morrow morning, and wishes the deputy lieutenants and justices of peace to summon the workmen with tools to be there by break of day. In some churches and chapels are great hooks for pulling down houses, which should be brought ready upon the place to-night against the morning" ("Calendar of State Papers," 1666-66, p. 95).]

Extracts from Samuel Pepys' diary

Image: H.B. Wheatley, ed, *The Diary of Samuel Pepys* (London, 1899). [Wikimedia Commons](#)

Simplified transcript

Sunday. As some of our servants stayed up late last night to get things ready for our feast to-day, Jane called us at about three in the morning, to tell us of a great fire that they saw in the city. I rose and put on my dressing gown, and went to her window, and thought it to be on the far side of Mark Lane, I thought it far away and so went to bed again and to sleep. At about seven I got up, dressed, looked out of the window, and saw the fire was nearer. I then went to my office [room] to clear up after yesterday's cleaning. Later, Jane came to tell me that she heard that over 300 houses have burnt down last night which was now burning Fish Street by London Bridge. So, I got ready quickly and walked to the Tower and got up high. Sir John Robinson's small son came with me. There I saw all the houses at that end of the bridge on fire. There was a huge fire on the other side at the end of the bridge. This worried me because amongst these people, was little Michell and our Sarah on the bridge. With a heavy heart I went to see the Lieutenant of the Tower, who told me that the fire began this morning in the King's baker's house in Pudding Lane, and that it burnt St. Magnus's Church and most part of Fish Street already. I went down to the waterside, and got a boat, through the bridge, I saw a terrible fire. Poor Michell's house, and as far as the Old Swan inn was burnt down. The fire was spreading further, and it got as far as the bank of the Thames with while I was there. Everybody tried to remove their goods by throwing them into the river [Thames] or putting them into barges. Poor people were staying in their houses until the fire touched them, and then running into boats, or clambering from one pair of stairs by the waterside to another. And among other things, the poor pigeons, I noticed were reluctant to leave their houses, and hovered about the windows and balconies until some burnt their wings and fell.

I stayed and, in an hour, saw the fire rage in all directions with nobody trying to put it out but rather try and remove their goods, and leave the rest to the fire. I saw it get as far as the banks of the Thames and the strong wind drive it into the city. Everything was so dry it burnt easily, even the stones of churches, and among other things the poor church where Mrs Horsely lives, and where my old school-fellow, Elborough, is parson. The fire started at the top and it burned until it fell. I went to Whitehall (with a gentleman with me who desired to go from the Tower, to see the fire, in my boat); and there up to the King's room in the Chapel, where people came up to me, and I gave them an account of the fire which worried everyone. News was sent to the King, and I was called for. I told his Majesty and the Duke of York what I had seen and that unless he ordered houses to be pulled down, nothing could stop the fire. They seemed very worried. The King commanded me to go to my Lord Mayor, Sir Thomas Bludworth and command him to spare no houses, and pull them down in the

Extracts from Samuel Pepys' diary

Image: H.B. Wheatley, ed, *The Diary of Samuel Pepys* (London, 1899). [Wikimedia Commons](#)

path of the fire... From St. Paul's, I walked along Watling Street, everyone was coming away laden with goods they were trying to save, and sick people were carried in beds. Expensive goods were carried in carts and on backs. At last, I met the Lord Mayor in Cannon Street. He was exhausted, with a handkerchief about his neck. To the King's message he cried, like a fainting woman, "Lord! what can I do? I am finished! People will not do as I say. I have been pulling down houses; but the fire overtakes us faster than we can do it." He said he did not need any more soldiers and that he had to go and rest, having been up all night. I left him and walked home seeing everyone confused, with no way of putting out the fire. Here, the houses were very close together and full of things which burn easily like tar in Thames Street, and warehouses containing oil, and wines, and brandy, and other things. Here I saw Isaac Houblon, well dressed and dirty, at his door at Dowgate [a dock on the Thames] receiving some of his brothers' things, whose houses were on fire; and, as he says and have been removed twice already. He doubted (as it was soon proved) that they must be soon removed from his house which was a sad thought. The churches were filling with goods rather than people who should have been quietly there at this time.

By now it was about twelve o'clock, so I went home. I found my guests, Mr. Wood and his wife Barbary Sheldon, and Mr. Moons... We were greatly disturbed by this fire, not knowing what to make of it. However, we had an excellent dinner, and as happy time as we could.

While having dinner, Mrs. Batelier came to ask after Mr. Woolfe and Thomas Stanes (who, it seems, is related to them) and whose houses in Fish Street are all burnt and in a bad state. She would not stay out of fear.

Soon after eating, I walked with Mr Moone through the City. The streets were full of nothing but people and horses and carts full of goods, ready to run over one another, and, removing goods from one burned house to another. They now removing out of Cannon Street (which received goods in the morning) into Lombard Street and beyond. I saw my goldsmith, Humphrey Stokes, receiving some friend's goods, whose house itself was burned the day after. We parted at St. Paul's where he lived. I went to St. Paul's Wharf, where I had arranged for a boat, and took Mr. Carcasse and his brother, whom I met in the streets and carried them below and above bridge to and again to see the fire. It had spread, below and above the bridge and nothing seemed to stop it. I met with the King and Duke of York in their barge, and with them to the north bank of the Thames and called Sir Richard Browne over to join them.

Extracts from Samuel Pepys' diary

Image: H.B. Wheatley, ed, *The Diary of Samuel Pepys* (London, 1899). [Wikimedia Commons](#)

Their order was to pull down houses without delay only below the bridge and the waterside; but little could be done as the fire was spreading so quickly. There were hopes of stopping it at the Three Cranes above, and at Buttolph's Wharf, below bridge, However, if the wind carries the fire into the city not by the waterside, it is not clear what to do. The river is full of boats carrying goods, and goods floating in the water. I noticed that less than one boat in three that contained household goods but there was a pair of Virginals [instrument like a harpsichord] in one. I went to an appointment in White Hall and walked to St. James's Park and met my wife and John Creed and Wood and his wife. I walked to my boat and on the water again the fire both up and down was growing with a powerful wind. As near to the fire as we could get, due to the smoke all over the Thames, with one's face in the wind, you were almost burned with a shower of sparks. This is true as houses were burnt by these sparks and flakes of fire, three or four, even, five or six houses, one to another. We could not stand being on the water any longer, we went to a little alehouse on Bankside over from the Three Cranes. We stayed there until it was nearly dark and saw the fire grow; and, as it grew darker, it appeared more and more in corners and on church steeples, and between churches and houses, as far as we could see up the hill of the city. It was a the most horrible evil bloody flame, not like the fine flame of an ordinary fire. ... We stayed until dark, and we saw an entire arch of fire from here to the other side the bridge... an arch of over a mile long: it made me weep to see it. The churches, houses, and all on fire and flaming at once; and a horrible noise the flames made, and the cracking of ruined houses. Then, I went home with a sad heart. There I found everyone discussing and grieving over the fire. Poor Tom Hater came over with a few goods saved from of his house, which is burned on Fish Street's Hill. I invited him to sleep at my house and received his goods. I was mistaken in letting him stay here as the news came that moment of the growth of the fire. We were forced to begin to pack up our own goods; and prepare for their removal; and did it by moonlight (it being dry, with warm weather). I carried many of my goods into the garden, and Mr. Hater and I did remove my money and iron chests into my cellar, believing that the safest place. And got my bags of gold into my office, ready to carry away, and my chief papers of accounts also there, and my accounts into a separate box. So great was our fear, as Sir W. Batten arranged for carts from the countryside to collect his goods tonight. We put Mr. Hater, poor man, to bed for a while but he got little rest as there was so much noise at home with the removal of my goods.

Extract B

Extracts from Samuel Pepys' diary

Image: H.B. Wheatley, ed, *The Diary of Samuel Pepys* (London, 1899). [Wikimedia Commons](#)

Transcript

Tuesday 4 September 1666

Up by break of day to get away the remainder of my things; which I did by a lighter at the Iron gate and my hands so few, that it was the afternoon before we could get them all away.

Sir W. Pen and I to Tower-streete, and there met the fire burning three or four doors beyond Mr. Howell's, whose goods, poor man, his trays, and dishes, shovells, &c., were flung all along Tower-street in the kennels, and people working therewith from one end to the other; the fire coming on in that narrow streete, on both sides, with infinite fury. Sir W. Batten not knowing how to remove his wine, did dig a pit in the garden, and laid it in there; and I took the opportunity of laying all the papers of my office that I could not otherwise dispose of. And in the evening Sir W. Pen and I did dig another, and put our wine in it; and I my Parmazan cheese, as well as my wine and some other things.

Simplified transcript

Up at daybreak to remove the remainder of my things which I did by barge at Irongate stairs [near the Tower of London] and with few servants to help. It was by the afternoon before we could get everything away. Sir William Penn and I went to Tower Street and saw the fire burning three or four doors beyond Mr Howells' house whose goods, poor man, his trays, and dishes, shovels etc. were flung all along Tower Street in the kennels [a poor shelter like to a doghouse]. People were working from one end to the other [to stop the fire] which was spreading fiercely along that narrow street, on both sides. Sir W. Batten not sure how to remove his wine, dug a pit in the garden and laid it there; and I took the opportunity of laying all the papers of my office that I could not otherwise remove. And, in the evening Sir W. Pen and I dug another pit and put our wine in it; and I my Parmazan cheese as well as my wine and some other things.

...

Fear fire started by French and the Dutch

Catalogue Ref: SP 29/170 f.137

Wee have not heard of our fleets nor of Dutch
 fleets since our fleet went out of Southwold Bay
 any further than as a Southwold man informed
 by the way that upon Saturday last towards evening
 he lost our fleets in a league off of Dutch fleets
 about ten leagues off of a mouth of Holland into
 West Channel; there is a French Seaman in now
 ready before a Haystack who's handling a sack now
 of a fire at London tells him by some young man
 who says it was good news if the French were a
 fleet too he would he did persecute to my place
 in English but upon the examination will not
 own he can speak a word of English. Wee
 had no post news to the town since Monday night
 last nor is any thing as was rumored by the said fire
 by happened in the City or as most how indeed willfully
 so that a fire by Dutch fleet about the
 City

Y^r humble Serv^t
 Rich^d A. Gordon

Yarmouth
 Sep 7: 1666

Fear fire started by French and the Dutch

Catalogue Ref: SP 29/170 f.137

Letter written from Richard Bower in Yarmouth to Joseph Williamson, 7 September 1666.
Catalogue ref: SP 29/170 f.137.

Joseph Williamson (1633-1701) was the Under-Secretary of State (1660-74) and Keeper of the State Papers which he reorganised from (1661-1701). He also started the 'Oxford Gazette' at the time of the Great Plague in 1665, which later became established as the 'London Gazette'.

- What was the cause of the fire according to the writer of this letter?
- How as the spread of news been affected by the fire?
- What does this letter infer about the international situation?

Transcript

7th September 1666

We have not heard of our fleet nor the Dutch fleet, since our fleet went out of Southwold Bay any further there, as a Southwold man informs us which was the upon Saturday last towards evening. We left our fleet within a league of the Dutch fleet, about ten leagues of the North Holland into the West Channel. Here is a French seaman just now had before the Bailiffs, who hearing the sad news of the fire of London told him by some young men under witness it was good news if this town (Yarmouth) were a fire too, with words he did pronounce using plain English but upon examination will not own he can speak a word of English. We had no post come to this town since Monday night last which is occasioned as we conceive by the sad fire that happened in the city or as most here judge wilfully, set a fire by the Dutch and French who lurk about the city.

Yarmouth

September 7, 1666.

Your humble servant

Richard Bower

Fear fire started by French and the Dutch

Catalogue Ref: SP 29/170 f.137

Simplified transcript

We have no news of our fleet or the Dutch ships off the coast of Holland. Here in Southwold a Frenchman has been arrested for saying that it would be good news if Southwold had a fire like the city of London. He now claims he can't speak English. We have had no post since Monday. Most people think that London was set on fire by the Dutch and the French.

Fire caused by fire balls thrown in Pudding Lane?

Catalogue Ref: SP 29/171 f11

Frenchmen, Dutchmen, women & boys did goe above
the City with fire-balls for that purpose. And
that his Uncle hired his father & gave him
powder to undertake this firing. And
alsoe hee saith that hee went to Aston with
his father & mother where they find a great
force, but knows not the names of any of
them that were with them, nor the Gent: name
that lived in it, But if hee saw any of y:
that did act with his father & his Uncle hee
should know them; His Mother goeth under y:
name of Mary Swan, & goeth in a black
silk jacket & black hood. And that his father
wore a black jacket & cloak. This boy lived
with M^r Whiting an Apothecary in Wallbrook
about two yeeres, & since about 3 weekes
agoe hee went from him & stayed with his
father untill hee was taken, but where his
Mother hee knoweth not, but saith hee hath
a house at Epson & more hee saith not.

Signed Justice.

1102
The Examination of Edm^d Taylor, a boy
aged about ten yeeres taken at Hurley
the 9th of Oct^r in the 18th yeere of the
Reigne of our Sovereigne Lord King
Charles the 2^d 1666. before John Lord
Lords: Baron of Hurley. W^{ts}

The Examined saith hee is the son of Jo: Taylor
living in York Street lower Garden, who was
employed by Jo: Taylor a Dutchman & baker
where hee is brother to this Examined's father.
And that this Examined was with his father
& his Uncle Jo: Taylor in Pudding Lane near
London Bridge upon Saturday night the second
day of this last Octob^r, where they found a
glasse window open, presently after they took
two fire-balls made of gunpowder & brimstone
& fired them, & then did bring them into y:
d windows & fired the house, but where it
was this Examined knoweth not. And this
was the first beginning of the firing of
London. And from Pudding Lane this Examined's
father & Uncle with two or three others went
into Thomas Street & that street & cast into
severall houses the like balls wady fire, and
after that they went to the Old Exchange
& did the like, and soe went on doing
such mischiefe two or three nights & dayes
one after another. And that there were divers
others.

Taylor

Fire caused by fire balls thrown in Pudding Lane?

Catalogue Ref: SP 29/171 f11

The examination (with document cover) of Edward Taylor, at Hurley, Berkshire, 9 September 1666. Catalogue ref: SP 29/171 f11.

This is a very interesting document found in the State Papers, where it is dated on its cover as 9 September 1666. The testimony it seems was made a month later in October, a month after the Great fire of London. However, Taylor in his testimony, also says he acted in October and says: 'this was the first beginning of the firing of London'. To add further to this question, it seems subsequently an archivist has pencilled on the document cover itself: 'September 9, 1666, Criminal local history or London?'.

Could there be an error in recording the month in the testimony itself, or was this a later case of arson? It would be interesting to know more.

- According to his statement, in which places did Edward Taylor throw fireballs?
- Who else was throwing fire balls?
- What are the issues with Edward's story that 'this was the first beginning of the firing of London'?
- How does this fit with the story of Thomas Farriner and his bakery in Pudding Lane?
- Why do you think Edward Taylor threw fireballs in London?

Transcript

[Cover]

Note added in pencil: September 9, 1666, Criminal local history, or London?

9 September. Hurley

Examination of Taylor

(a Boy of 10 years old) by the Lord Lovelace.

Confesseth that his father (of Yorke Street) & J Taylor a Dutch Baker fired the House in

Fire caused by fire balls thrown in Pudding Lane?

Catalogue Ref: SP 29/171 f11

Pudding Lane.

...

Berks

The examination of Edward Taylor, a boy aged about ten years taken at Hurley the 9th of October in the 18th year of the Reign of our sovereign Lord King Charles the 2nd, 1666 before John Lord Lovelace, Baron of Hurley viz.

The Examined saith hee is the son of John Taylor living in York Street, Covent Garden, who was employed by John Taylor a Dutchman & baker there & is brother to this examined's father. And that this Examined was with his father and his uncle John Taylor in Pudding Lane near London Bridge upon Saturday night the second day of this instant [of the current month] October, where they found a glass window open, presently after they took two fire balls made of gunpowder & brimstone and fired them. & then did fling them into the said windows & fired the house, but whose it was this Examined knows not. And this was the first beginning of the firing of London. And from Pudding Lane this Examined's father and uncle with two or three others went into Thames Street & Fleet Street & cast into several houses the like balls ready fired, and after they went to the Old Exchange & did the like, and soe went on doing such mischief two or three nights & days one after another. And that there were diverse

Frenchmen, Dutchmen, women & boys did goe about the city with fireballs for that purpose. And that his uncle hired his father & gave him seven pounds to undertake this firing. And also hee saith that he went to Acton with his father & mother where they fired a great house, but knows not the name of any of them that were with them, nor the Gentleman's name that lived in it. But if hee saw any of them that did act with his father & his uncle hee should know them. His Mother goeth under the name of Mary Swan, & goeth in a black silk suit & black hood. And that his father was with a black suit and cloak. This boy lived with Mr. Whiting an apothecary in Walbrook about two years and since about three weeks ago he went from him & stayed with his father until he was taken, but where his Mother is he knoweth not, but saith he hath a house in Epsom & more he saith not.

Signed Lovelace

Fire caused by fire balls thrown in Pudding Lane?

Catalogue Ref: SP 29/171 f11

Simplified transcript

[Cover]

Note added in pencil: September 9, 1666, Criminal, local history or London?

9 September. Hurley [in Berkshire]

Examination of [Edward] Taylor

(a boy of 10 years old) by the Lord Lovelace.

Confessed that his father (of Yorke Street) and J. Taylor, his uncle, a Dutch Baker, threw fireballs into the house in Pudding Lane.

...

Berkshire

The examination of Edward Taylor, a boy aged about ten years taken at Hurley the 9th of October in the 18th year of the Reign of our sovereign Lord King Charles the 2nd, 1666 before John Lord Lovelace, Baron of Hurley.

Edward says he is the son of John Taylor living in York Street, Covent Garden. He was employed by John Taylor, a Dutchman and baker there and is brother to the father of the examined. [Edward] was with his father and his uncle John Taylor, in Pudding Lane near London Bridge upon Saturday night the second day of this October, where they found a glass window open, presently after they took two fire balls made of gunpowder & brimstone and lit them and threw them into the windows and burnt the house, but whose it was, Edward knows not. And this was start of the firing of London. And from Pudding Lane Edward's father and uncle with two or three others went into Thames Street & Fleet Street & cast into several houses the burning fireballs balls. Then they went to the Old Exchange & did the same thing and so went on doing such mischief two or three nights and days one after another.

Fire caused by fire balls thrown in Pudding Lane?

Catalogue Ref: SP 29/171 f11

There were also various Frenchmen, Dutchmen, women, and boys who went about the city with fireballs for that purpose. His uncle had hired his father and given him seven pounds to do this firing. Edward also said he went to Acton with his father and mother where they fired a great house but does not know the name of any of them that were with them, nor the gentleman's name that lived in the house. But if he saw any of those with his father and his uncle, he would recognise them. His mother went under the name of Mary Swan and wore a black silk suit and black hood. His father wore with a black suit and cloak. This boy lived with Mr. Whiting. an apothecary in Walbrook for about two years until about three weeks ago when he went to stay with his father until he was arrested. He does not know where his mother is but said he has a house in Epsom and said nothing else.

Signed Lovelace

Fire caused by 'our sin'

Catalogue Ref: SP 29 171 f79

Mr Williamson
 Halmouth y^e 12th of 1666
 102
 Sir I have y^e by this post: & am now to lett y^e know
 that ~~all~~ all sort of people in the 15 parts of London
 much lament: the great loss that City of London in
 particular hath Received in this last fire: & also
 for sake of the lost the whole Kingdom will sustaine
 in general: the Lord give us all hearts to take notice
 of the threatening & judgement: god hath bin pleased
 to send: peace & bring upon this Nation to bring from
 our sins & wickedness: humbly acknowledging & leaving
 Repenting: for our sins past: & in doing every one
 of us in our private places & calling to breath downe
 all Approaches of the quints that the Lord may have
 mercy upon us & give us health & peace.
 y^e 6th these same are over to the Vice Admiral for
 the shipping of all Hamburgers in this harbor
 which was accordingly examined: & the leaders of
 two London with that wine & brady taken
 down & forwarded: this harbor is all sort of houses

Fire caused by 'our sin'

Catalogue Ref: SP 29 171 f79

Thomas Holden at Falmouth to Joseph Williamson, 12 September 1666. Catalogue ref: SP 29 171 f79.

Joseph Williamson (1633-1701) was the Under-Secretary of State 1660-74 and Keeper of the State Papers which he reorganised from 1661-1701. He also started the 'Oxford Gazette' at the time of the Great Plague in 1665, which later became established as the 'London Gazette'.

- Why has Thomas Holden written to Joseph Williamson?
- How does Holden explain the cause of the fire?
- Can you find two other documents in this collection where the same view is shared?
- How would you explain the cause of the fire?

Transcript

Falmouth 12th September 1666

Sir,

I have your letter by this post & now to let you know that all sorts of people in these parts do very much lament the great loss that the city of London in particular hath received in this last fire & also sensible of the loss the whole kingdom will sustain in general. The Lord gives us all hearts to take no time of the threatening & judgment. God hath being pleased to forshame & bring upon this nation to turn from our sin and wickedness, humbly acknowledging & repenting for our sins past & deferring every one of us in our several plans & calling to break down all apparatus of iniquity that the Lord may have mercy upon us & give us health & peace.

There came an order to the vice admiral for the stopping of all Hamburgers in this harbour which was accordingly executed & the sails of two laden with salt, wine and brandy taken down and secured.

Fire caused by 'our sin'

Catalogue Ref: SP 29 171 f79

Simplified transcript

Falmouth 12th September 1666

Sir,

I have received the post and want to let you know that many people in these parts express their sadness at the great loss that the city of London has received in this recent fire and appreciate the loss it means for the whole kingdom. The Lord hath has seen fit to make this judgement upon this nation to turn us our sin and wickedness. We acknowledge this and ask forgiveness for our past sins as he is looking over us in our future plans and calls us to end injustice and wickedness, that our God may have mercy on us, and give us health and peace.

There came an order to the vice admiral to the stop all Hamburgers [Germans] in this harbour which was accordingly carried out and the sails of two laden with salt, wine and brandy taken down and secured.

Fire caused 'by treachery or chance?'

Catalogue Ref: SP 29/171 f10

Mr William



10

this late calamity

has made us thirst more then ever after news, in hopes
 of hearing some yt would give us some comfort; but ha-
 ving neither yt letter, not so much as a gazett; our spirits
 are only more & more deprest wth sad stories of particu-
 lar peoples ruines; and by severall relations we are
 yet in ignorance whether this fire were by treachery,
 or chance; ~~divers~~ persons lately come into y^e Countie
 doe affirme yt 8 or 9 men were taken about Maribone who
 had made greates quantities of fire works, some whereof
 a servant of mine says he saw, & one yt was tried &
 burnt though put into a tub of water; he says also
 yt on friday morning there was a papist kt taken who
 had fired a house in holborne where he lay; thousands
 of such like reports we heare but know not what to be-
 lieve till I have it from you or some other credible hand.
 we heare also yt y^e fleet is come in, having beaten y^e duke
 & taken severall ships; such news would now be welcome
 to comfort our spirits, y^e lord in mercy grant us vs. I
 pray let Mr Francis give me as full an account of all
 thing both at home & abroad, as you may communicate; &
 if you would have any vision, let me know it by y^e re-
 turne of this bearer, whom I have appointed to call for
 yr letter tomorrow night about 8 a clock, & I shall take
 care to read it according to yr directions, & ever be

yr faithfull servant

19

Fire caused 'by treachery or chance?'

Catalogue Ref: SP 29/171 f10

Letter from Lord Maynard at Eton to Joseph Williamson, 9 September 1666. Catalogue ref: SP 29/171 f10.

Joseph Williamson (1633-1701) was the Under-Secretary of State (1660-74) and Keeper of the State Papers which he reorganised from 1661-1701. He also started the 'Oxford Gazette' at the time of the Great Plague in 1665, which later became established as the 'London Gazette'.

- Why is Lord Maynard keen to hear news about the fire from a 'Gazette'?
- What does his letter reveal about the possible explanations for the fire?
- What did he hear about conflict with the Dutch?
- Does the letter infer anything about his relationship to Joseph Williamson?

Transcript

To Mr Williamson

Eton September 9, 1666, from W. Lord Maynard

This sad late calamity has had us thirst more than ever after news in hopes of hearing some that would give us some comfort, but having neither your letter, nor much as a Gazette our spirits are only more and more depressed with sad stories of particular people's ruins, and by several relations we are in ignorance whether this fire were by treachery or chance. Diverse persons lately come into the country, do affirm that 8 or 9 men were taken about [Marylebone] who had made great quantities of fireworks, some whereof a servant of mine says he saw, & one [firework] that was tried & burnt though put in a tub of water. He says also that on Friday morning there was a papist knight taken who had fired a house in Holborn where he lay, thousands of such like reports we hear but know not what to believe till I have it from you or some other credible hand. We hear also that the fleet is come in having beaten the Dutch and taken several ships, such news would now be welcome to comfort our spirits. The lord in mercy grant it us. I pray let our Francis give me as full an account of all things back at home & abroad, as you may communicate & if you would like any venison, let me know by the return of this bearer whom I have appointed to call for your letter tomorrow night about 8 a clock & I shall take care to send it according to your directions &

Fire caused 'by treachery or chance?'

Catalogue Ref: SP 29/171 f10

Ever be your faithful servant, William Maynard.

Simplified transcript

To Mr Williamson

Eton, September 9, 1666, from W. Lord Maynard

After this sad recent disaster were desperate for some good news but having no letter from you or even a Gazette newspaper, our spirits are even more depressed with the sad stories of peoples' losses. We hear various accounts but are not sure whether this fire was caused by treachery or chance. Various people coming to the area say that 8 or 9 men were taken near Marylebone who had made great quantities of fireworks. A servant of mine says he saw, a firework that was tried & burnt, even though it was put in a tub of water. He says also that on Friday morning a Catholic knight was arrested as he had fired a house in Holborn where he was staying. There are thousands of similar reports, but don't know what to believe. I need to hear it from you or some other person I can trust. We hear also that the fleet has returned having beaten the Dutch and taken several ships, such news would now be welcome to comfort our spirits. Please God grant this to be true! I pray let our Francis give me as full an account of all things back at home & abroad, as you may communicate. If you would like any venison, let me know by the return of this carrier whom I have appointed to call for your letter tomorrow night about 8 o'clock and I shall take care to send it according to your directions &

Ever be your faithful servant, William Maynard.

Fire stops post reaching Berwick

Catalogue Ref: SP 29/171 f.2

2
 Berwick 9th of September
 1666 att 4 of the Clock in the
 Afternoon

30
 At yet the post of usually comes here
 on the sabbath day morning weekly
 it not arrived wth the great fear
 and doubt of y^e late fire wth the
 -man y^e same post here on Thursday last
 reported that saw my^e wth the
 but great doubt wth the if not what
 in the port only there are some
 soldiers that relate this morning they
 being in the Guard see the likeness of
 abundance of ships in the river
 it taken to be but the imagination
 are

Yours for duty
 M. Fleet

3

Fire stops post reaching Berwick

Catalogue Ref: SP 29/171 f.2

M. Scott to Joseph Williamson, 9 September 1666, 4pm Berwick, Northumberland,
Catalogue ref: SP 29/171 f.2

Joseph Williamson (1633-1701) was the Under-Secretary of State (1660-74) and Keeper of the State Papers which he reorganised from 1661-1701. He also started the 'Oxford Gazette' at the time of the Great Plague in 1665, which later became established as the 'London Gazette'.

- How has the lack of post in Berwick, Northumberland affected the people there?
- Can you explain the meaning of the 'ships in the air' seen by some soldiers on guard?

Transcript

Berwick the 9 September, 1666 at 4 of the o'Clock in the afternoon.

Sir

As yet the post that usually comes here on the Saturday morning weekly, if not arrived which breeds great fears and doubts that the late fire (which a gentleman that came past here on Thursday last reported he saw much of it) hath done great destruction. There is no men in these parts only there are some soldiers that relate this morning they being on the guard see the likeness of abundance of ships in the air which is taken to be but their strong imaginations.

Your servant,
M. Scott

Simplified transcript

Sir

Usually, the post comes here on the Saturday morning each week, but it has not arrived which brings us great fears and doubts. A gentleman that came here on Thursday last

Fire stops post reaching Berwick

Catalogue Ref: SP 29/171 f.2

reported that he saw that the fire had caused great destruction. There are some soldiers whilst on guard this morning state that they saw many ships in the air- which is taken to be their overactive imaginations!

Your servant,

M. Scott

Food shortage caused by fire

Catalogue Ref: SP 45/12 Pt.1. f229



By the King, A PROCLAMATION

For the keeping of Markets to supply the City of *London* with Provisions,
and also for prevention of Alarms and Tumults, and for appointing the
Meeting of Merchants,

CHARLES R.

Whereas most of the places wherein Markets were kept in our City of London are destroyed by the late fire, We are desirous, That Our loving Subjects may nevertheless be furnished with a constant Supply of Provisions, as well as the present Exigency will permit: It is therefore Our will and pleasure, That Markets be kept and held within and without Bishopsgate, at Towerhill, and Smithfield every day of the week, and also continued in Leaden-hall-street upon the daies wherein they have been accustomed to be held. Requiring all persons whom it may concern, duely and constantly to resort unto the places, and at the times above mentioned, We having taken care to secure the said Markets in safety, and prevent all disturbances by refusal of payment for their Goods, or otherwise. And We do further charge and command all Mayors, Sheriffs, Justices of the Peace, and other Our Officers and Ministers within the Counties from whence Provisions are or have been usually brought to Our said City of London, to take notice of this Our Will and pleasure, and to use their utmost diligence and Authority to see the same performed accordingly.

And whereas through the temerity and unadvisedness of some persons, groundless fears and apprehensions have been and may be cast into the minds of our people, to prevent all Tumults and Disorders which may thereby or otherwise arise, it is Our Will and pleasure, That upon any Alarm raised or taken, no man stir or disquiet himself by reason thereof, but only attend the business of quenching the fire, We having in our Princely Care taken order to draw together such a sufficient force both of Horse and Foot in and about Our said City, as may abundantly secure the peace and safety thereof, and prevent or repels any Attempts whatsoever that can be made to disturb the same.

And whereas the Royal Exchange is demolished and burned down by the late fire, It is Our pleasure, that Gresham Colledge in Bishopsgate street be for the present the place for the usual meeting and assembling of Merchants in the same manner as heretofore the Exchange was. Given at Our Court at Whitehall the sixth day of September 1666. in the Eighteenth year of Our Reign.

God save the KING.

*London, Printed by John Bill, and Christopher Barker, Printers to the
Kings most Excellent Majesty, 1666.*

Food shortage caused by fire

Catalogue Ref: SP 45/12 Pt.1. f229

A proclamation about keeping markets to supply London which shows the impact of the fire on local people, 1666. This comes from the collected charters of Charles II. Catalogue ref: SP45/12 Pt.1. f229.

- What are the two main aims of this proclamation?
- How has trade in goods been affected by the Great Fire?
- What steps has Charles II taken to prevent any future 'disturbances'?

Transcript

By the King

A PROCLAMATION

For the keeping of Markets to supply the City of London with Provisions and also for the prevention of Alarms and Tumults, and for appointing the Meeting of Merchants.

Charles R

Whereas most of the places wherein Markets were kept in our City of London are destroyed by the late fire. We are desirous, that Our loving Subjects may nevertheless be furnished with a constant Supply of Provisions, as well as the present exigency [demand] will permit. It is therefore Our Will and pleasure that Markets be kept and held within and without Bishopsgate, at Tower Hill, and Smithfield every day of the week, and also continued in Leaden Hall Street upon the days wherein they have been accustomed to be held. Requiring all persons whom it may concern, duly and continually resort unto the place and at the times above mentioned. We, having taken care to secure the said Markets in Safety, and prevent all disturbances by refusal of payment for their Goods or otherwise. And we do further charge and command all Mayors, Sheriffs, Justices of the Peace, and other Our Officers and Ministers within the Counties from whence Provisions are or have been usually brought to Our said City of London, to take notice of this Our Will and pleasure, and to use their utmost diligence and Authority to see the same performed accordingly.

And whereas through the temerity and unadvisedness of some persons groundless fears

Food shortage caused by fire

Catalogue Ref: SP 45/12 Pt.1. f229

and apprehensions have been and maybe cast into the minds of our people to prevent all Tumults and Disorders which may thereby or otherwise arise, it is Our Will and pleasure, That upon any alarm raised or taken, no man stir or disquiet by reason thereof, but only attend the business of quenching the fire. We having in our Princely Care taken order to draw together such a sufficient force both of horse and foot in and about our said city, as may abundantly secure the peace and safety thereof, and prevent or repress any Attempts whatsoever that can be made to disturb the same.

And whereas the Royal Exchange is demolished and burned down by the late fire, It is Our pleasure that Gresham College in Bishopsgate Street be for the present the place for the usual meeting and assembling of Merchants in the same manner as heretofore the Exchange was. Given at our Court of Whitehall the fifth day of September 1666 in the Eighteenth year of Our Reign.

God save the KING.

London, Printed by John Bill and Christopher Barker, Printers to the Kings Most Excellent Majesty, 1666

Simplified transcript

Many of the markets were destroyed by the Great Fire of London. The king desires that people should have food and other goods in abundant supply. Therefore, we permit markets can be held around Bishopsgate, at Tower Hill, and Smithfield every day, and also in Leaden Hall Street on certain days. We have taken care that these markets are safe and people pay for what they take.

Although the Royal Exchange [a shopping centre and market trading centre] was demolished by the fire, it is pleased to us that Gresham College will be the place where merchants meet and trade.

Foreigners fear for own safety

Catalogue Ref: SP 29/170 f.140

Robt. J.



159

I did perceive in the dismall time of fire, & foreigners were
ill accepted, w^{ch} compelled me in mine owne apprehension to hasten
out of town, where I resid^d in readiness to be comandd and
disposed according to his Ma:^{ties} good pleasure. & I was born at
Antwerp, a subject to y^e King of Spain; and I know no want
towards his Ma:^{ty} of England. I do therefore in this distress
and incertaintie most humbly desire y^e by the means of my
most Ex:^{ll} Lord Arlington to afford me such a paper of
securitie or direction as to your judgement shall seeme fit;
and in my prayers for y^e I shall beg leave to rest

Robt. J.

I am humbly of your most
faithfull servants

Jussu. nune Richister
77th Dec. 66.

Jacob. Hurisman.

Foreigners fear for own safety

Catalogue Ref: SP 29/170 f.140

Letter from Jacob Huisman to Joseph Williamson, 8 September 1666. Catalogue ref: SP 29/170 f.140.

Joseph Williamson (1633-1701) was the Under-Secretary of State (1660-74) and Keeper of the State Papers which he reorganised from 1661-1701. He also started the 'Oxford Gazette' at the time of the Great Plague in 1665, which later became established as the 'London Gazette'.

- Why has Jacob Huisman written to Joseph Williamson?
- What does his experience reveal about attitudes towards foreigners living outside London?
- How does the writer stress his loyalty to Charles II?

Transcript

Noble Sir

I did perceive in the dismal time of fire that foreigners were ill accepted, which compelled me in mine own apprehension to hasten out of town wherein I reside in readiness to be commanded and disposed according to his Majesties good pleasure. Sir I was born at Antwerp, a subject to your King of Spain, and I know innocent towards his Majesty of England. I do therefore in this distress and uncertainty Most humbly desire you by the warrants of my Honorable Lord Arlington to afford me such a paper of security or direction as to your judgement shall seem fit and in my prayers for your I shall bring leave to rest.

I am humblest of your most faithful servants.

Sussex near Chichester.

September 7, 1666.

Jacob Huisman

Foreigners fear for own safety

Catalogue Ref: SP 29/170 f.140

Simplified transcript

I felt that during the terrible time of the fire that people were unaccepting of foreigners, and I was forced to leave town where I live according to carry out the king's wishes. I was born in Antwerp, Holland, and am a subject of the King of Spain. I am alarmed and distressed, and so I ask you, Lord Arlington, if you can arrange me to have papers to travel.

I am your humble servant.

Sussex near Chichester.

September 7, 1666.

Jacob Huisman

Hearth tax for Thomas Farriner

Catalogue Ref: E 179/252/32 pt4 p6

(4)
 (4) LONDON

A Returne of the
 halfe yeares duty
 due at Lady day
 1666

In the severall
 Parrishes
 of

- 1 St Magnus.
- 2 Margarets new Fishstreet
- 3 Leonards Eastcheape

By the view
 of

John Webb Collect. 1666

Ex

x Mary Whittard Cindt	2
George Porter plasterer	3
Witt Gardner	1
Benjamin Burstow	1
Thomas Knight Glasser	4
Mrs Spensor	4
Empty	3
x John Bibb Turner	3
x Thomas Farriner Baker	5
William Ludford plasterer 1 step up	3
James	2
x Susanna Coodt	3
Empty	3
amble yard.	
William Burgis hook & eye Mkr	3
Joshua Sands plasterer	2
Empty	3
x Nicholas Sarter hook & eye Mkr	5
Witt Grimes	1
John Wardley Storkworker	4
x William Maltster Smysth	3
John Maltster porter	2
John Hasbly porter	2
x Witt pawlory	2
x William Green Turner	2
	60

Hearth tax for Thomas Farriner

Catalogue Ref: E 179/252/32 pt4 p6

Extract from a hearth tax record with front cover. It includes Pudding Lane, listing Thomas Farriner, baker, August 1666. Catalogue ref: E 179/252/32 pt4 p6.

This is a tax record for August 1666 and shows who lived in Pudding Lane in London. The numbers show the number of hearths (fireplaces) in each house.

People who owned a house had to pay a hearth tax to the king. They paid 1 shilling (5p) for each hearth. The tax was collected twice a year. Some people blocked up their fireplaces for part of the year, so they did not have to pay the tax twice.

- Can you find the name of the king's baker, Thomas Farriner?
- How many fireplaces and ovens did he have?
- What types of jobs can you find on the list?
- How many women had houses on the list?

Note:

Lady Day is commemorated every 25 March in the Christian calendar as the occasion when the archangel Gabriel announced that Mary would give birth to Christ.

These parishes are found in the area known as the City of London. Today, this is the location for the Monument to the Great Fire of London seen at the junction of Monument Street and Fish Street. See a photograph of monument in this document collection.

Transcript

A Return of the halfe yeares duty due at Ladyday 1666

In the Severall parishes of

1. Magnus
2. St Margaretts new Fish Street
3. Leonards Eastcheape

Hearth tax for Thomas Farriner

Catalogue Ref: E 179/252/32 pt4 p6

By the view of John Webb Collect. E. 1666

...

Stop up: blocked fireplace not in use.

[Name]	[Nr]
Mary Whittacre widow	2
George Porter plasterer	3
Widow Gander	1
Benjamin Burstow	1
John Bibie turner [person who works with a turning lathe, a tool for shaping and cutting wood, important in making barrels]	3
Thomas Farriner baker	5
1 oven	1
William Ludford plasterer	3
1 stop up	1
Jones	2
Susanna Noest	3
Empty	3
Lamb Yard	
William Burgis, hook & eye maker [maker of fasteners for clothing]	3
Joshua Sands plate worker [maker of plates, wooden or ceramic?]	2
Empty	3
Nicholas Carter hook & eye maker	5
Widow Grimes	1
John Wardley clothmaker	4
William Walter smyth [blacksmith who worked with metal and made horseshoes]	3
John Wells [porter- carried items for a fee]	2
John Hasleby [porter]	2
Widow Pawley	2
William Green [turner]	2
[Total]	68

Help the poor affected by fire

Catalogue Ref: SP 29/171 f49

54

49

Sir Knowing by expediente when this towne
 was burnt in Aprill last year youe
 the great want that many poore people
 were in for want of food, if I may begg
 your pardon I will munde you that the
 in this Country is now at a very low price
 and I question not but if youe letters
 were writt to your friends & frendes
 in those parts of the Country that might
 be freely given & brought to this towne
 I hope a number of that & other quantities
 to be a great assistance might be sent
 to London & distributed among the poore
 for their great welfare, if you thinke it fitt
 to write your letters to me I will send
 them & spare on the Rogues what I can
 will not to spend many days about it without
 any reward or recompence, I pray let it not
 be known that I move your thing for I have
 not space of what I write to any man nor
 nor how I will here under write the names of
 your men that I thinke may be forwarded thinke
 not a misse of him that is Sir

Southwold Sept 11th 1666: your humble servant

Sir John Pows: Sir Rob Cook: Will Daynfield

Sir Rob Kemp

Sir John Knodnit

per Rob & Gas

John Bodmifield

what others you please

87

Help the poor affected by fire

Catalogue Ref: SP 29/171 f49

Letter from William Waynflet in Southwold to Joseph Williamson, 11 September 1666.
Catalogue ref: SP 29/171 f49.

Joseph Williamson (1633-1701) was the Under-Secretary of State 1660-74 and Keeper of the State Papers which he reorganised from 1661-1701. He also started the 'Oxford Gazette' at the time of the Great Plague in 1665, which later became established as the 'London Gazette'.

- Why has William Waynflet written this letter?
- What is his plan to help relieve the suffering of the poor due to the fire?
- What is the value of the letter as a source for finding out about the Great Fire of London?

Transcript

11th September William Waynflet to Williamson

Sir

Knowing by experience when this town was burnt in surprise last was seven years ago, the great want that many poor people were in for want of food, if I may beg your pardon, I will remind you that cheese in this county is now at a very low price and I give then not but if some letters were written to some knights and Gentlemen in those parts of the country that much would be freely given and brought to this town. I hope enough of that and other provisions to load a small vessel with might be sent to London to be distributed among the poor for them present wherefore, if you think it fit to enclose such letters to me I will present them and spur on the business, what I can I am willing to spend many days about it without any reward or recompense. I pray let it not be known that I mean such a thing for shame not speak of what I write to any man one nor other. I will here under write the names of I pray let it not be known as that mover therein, for I have not spoke of what to write to any man. However, I will now under write the names of some men that I think may be forward think not a miss of him that is sir.

Southwold September 11 1666

Your humble servant

Help the poor affected by fire

Catalogue Ref: SP 29/171 f49

William Waynflet

Humble servant

Sir John Rous

Sir Rovert Brook

Sir Robert Kemp

Sir John Knevit

Richard Coke

John Bedingfield

What others you please

Simplified transcript

11th September William Waynflet to Joseph Williamson

Sir

Knowing from experience when Southwold was burnt seven years ago, many poor people needed food. I please beg your pardon, but I remind you, that cheese in this country is now cheap and I wondered if some letters could be written to some knights and gentlemen of this country known to this town. I suggest that other foods could be loaded on a small vessel with might be sent to London to be distributed among the poor. If you think it useful to send these letters I will give you a list of their names. Please don't let them know I am behind this as I have not spoken to them.

Southwold 11 September 1666.

William Waynflet

Humble servant

Sir John Rous

Sir Rovert Brook

Sir Robert Kemp

Sir John Knevit

Richard Coke

John Bedingfield

Hollar's commission for a map of London 'ruined by fire'

Catalogue Ref: SP 29/171 f20



20

22

22
I have his short bill appointed Vincentius Hollan & Francis Saundford
to take an exact plan & survey of y^e City of London & y^e Suburbs adjoining,
as y^e same was stand^t after y^e said Calamity of y^e late Fire, w^{ch} a particular
Description of y^e ruins thereof. There are in his sh^{ts} now & by his
express command to require y^e & every of y^e above to permit & suffer
y^e said Vincentius Hollan & Francis Saundford a Clerk Attornies, and
Leads as they shall find necessary to employ, freely & quietly to execute their
his sh^{ts} Pleasure & command, but also of those sh^{ts} shall be occasion^d to
further & assist the same w^{ch} y^e sh^{ts} shall be ^{directed} help^r in this last step of his
sh^{ts} pious care for y^e repairing y^e ruins of this his City. Whereof
y^e may not fail. Given &c.

To all Justices of Peace, Constables,
or other his Majesty's officers & ministers
as well as in City & Suburbs of London,
as aforesaid, & to all others who may receive.

Hollar's commission for a map of London 'ruined by fire'

Catalogue Ref: SP 29/171 f20

Instruction from Charles II to the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, and other Magistrates of London.
Catalogue ref: SP 29/171 f20.

- What have Wenceslaus Hollar and Francis Sandford been appointed to do by the King?
- Why has Charles II asked for this work to be done?
- Find out more about artist Wenceslaus Hollar (1607-1677)

Transcript

Whereas his majesty hath appointed Wenceslaus Hollar and Francis Sandford to take an exact plan & survey of the City of London and the suburbs adjoining as it now stands after the sad calamity of the late fire with particular description of the ruins thereof. These are in his Majesty's name and by his express command to require you & every of you are only to permit and suffer to assist Wenceslaus Hollar & Francis Sandford to such assistance and help as they shall find necessary to apply, freely & quietly & execute this His Majesty's pleasure & command, and also as there shall be occasion to further & assist them with your best help & command in this first step of his Majesty's pious care for the repairing the ruins of his city whereof he may not fail.

To all Justices of the Peace, Constables & others of His Majesty's Offices & Ministers, also all in the City and Liberties of London of Town, and to all others who may concern.

Simplified transcript

His majesty has appointed Wenceslaus Hollar and Francis Sandford to make an exact plan and survey of the city of London and its suburbs after the sad disaster of the recent fire with a description of the ruins. It is his Majesty's express command that everyone assists Wenceslaus Hollar & Francis Sandford in any request they make to help their work to carry His Majesty's wishes, and help them as much as you can, ensuring his Majesty does not fail in this first step to repair the ruins of his city.

To all Justices of the Peace, Constables & others of His Majesty's Offices & Ministers also all in the City Magistrates of London.

Hollar's map of the 'ruined city'

Catalogue Ref: ZMAP 4/18

'An Exact Surveigh of the Streets Lanes and Churches contained within the ruins of the City of London ... John Leake, John Jennings, William Marr, Will. Leybourn...' Subtitled: Hollar's 'Exact Survey' of the City of London, 1667. Catalogue ref: ZMAP 4/18.

- Can you find these places on the map: River Thames; Tower of London; St Paul's Cathedral (from above it looks like a cross); Pudding Lane (north of the river, near the bridge.)
- Why are there not many buildings shown in the white middle part of the map?
- Many halls, or meeting places for different craftsmen are shown in the key. See number 153 for example. Why is this information valuable for historians?

Visual description

The map is captioned Hollar's 'Exact Survey' of the City of London, 1667. It shows the city of London north of the river Thames which was damaged by fire. This walled blank area is surrounded outside by densely drawn houses, streets, a couple of green spaces and an artillery ground. On the left is an inset image of the city on fire and covered with billowing clouds of smoke. In the right corner of the map, is an inset box containing a key for the buildings, wards and guild halls in the walled city which were damaged by fire. At the end of the key the text says: Burnt 373 Acres within. 63 Acres & 3 roods [unit of measurement] without the walls; 89 Churches; 13200 Houses, ... Parishes within the walls entire.

Transcript

- | | | | |
|----|---------------------------|----|----------------------|
| 1 | Cathedral of St Paul | 13 | S. Matthew |
| 2 | S. Gregory | 14 | S. Forster |
| 3 | Christ Church | 15 | S. Leonard |
| 4 | S. Martin by Ludgate | 16 | S. John Zachary |
| 5 | S. Ann Blackfriars | 17 | S. Anns |
| 6 | S. Andrew in Wardrobe | 18 | S. Mary Stayning |
| 7 | S. Bennet by Paul's wharf | 19 | S. Olaves |
| 8 | S. Peters by Paul's wharf | 20 | S. Alphage |
| 9 | S. Mary Mounthaw | 21 | S. Mary Aldermanbury |
| 10 | S. Nicholas Cole | 22 | S. ALbans |
| 11 | S. Maudlins | 23 | S. Michael Bassishaw |
| 12 | S. Austin | 24 | S. Laurence |

Hollar's map of the 'ruined city'

Catalogue Ref: ZMAP 4/18

25	S. Michael in Wood Street	62	S. Mary Woolchurch
26	S. Peters by Wood Street	63	S. Mary Wolnoth
27	S. Maudlin's in Milk Street	64	S. Nicholas
28	All Hallows Honey Lane	65	S. Edmunds
29	S. Mary's Bow Church	66	All Hallowes
30	S. John Evangelist	67	S. Michaels in Cornhill
31	S. Margaret Moses	68	S. Peter
32	S. Nicholas Olaves	69	S. Bennet Finch
33	S. Mary Somerset	70	French Church
34	S. Michael by Queen Hythe	71	St Bartholomew by the RoyalExchange
35	Trinity Church	72	S. Margaret Lothbury
36	S. Mildred	73	S. Stevens in Coleman St.
37	All Hallows in Watling Street	74	Dutch Church
38	S. Mary Aldermary	75	All Hallowes in the Wall
39	S. James Garlickhythe	76	Ethelborough
40	S. Martin Wlntry	77	S. Ellens
41	S. Thomas Apostle	78	S. Catharine Creed Church
42	S. Antholins	79	S. Catharin Colmans
43	S. Pancras	80	S. Thomas Backchurch
44	S. Martin?	81	Grace Church
45	S. Olaves	82	S. Leonard
46	S. Mary Cole Church	83	S. Margaret on Fish Street Hill
47	S. Mildred	84	S. Magnus
48	S. Christophers	85	S. Botolphs in Thames Street
49	S. Benett Bucklersbury	86	S. George
50	S. John Baptist	87	S. Mary Hill Church
51	S. Michael in Elbow Lane	88	S. Dunstans East
52	S. Mary Bothaw	89	S. Mary Pattens
53	All Hallowes in Thames Street	90	S. Olaves
54	Little Hallowes	91	All Hallowes Barking
55	S. Lawrence Pountey	92	TempleChurch
56	S. Martin	93	S. Dunstans West
57	S. Michael by Crooked Lane	94	S. Brides
58	S. Clements	95	S. Andrew in Holborne
59	S. Mary Abchurch	96	S. Sepulchres
60	S. Swithins	97	Little S. Bartholomew
61	S. Stevens Walbrooke	98	Great S. Bartholomen

Hollar's map of the 'ruined city'

Catalogue Ref: ZMAP 4/18

- | | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| 99 S. Bottolpys by Aldersgate | 135 Cutlers Hall |
| 100 S. Giles by Cripple Gate | 136 Yoyners [Joiners] Hall |
| 101 S. Bottolpys by Bishopsgate | 137 Inn holders Hall |
| 102 S. Bottolpys by Aldgate | 138 Clarkes Hall |
| 103 S. Martins Outwich | 139 Vintners Hall |
| 104 Stationers Hall | 140 Fruiterers & Watermen Hall |
| 105 Apothecaries Hall | 141 Tallow Chandlers Hall |
| 106 Woodmongers Hall | 142 Skinners Hall |
| 107 Blacksmith Hall | 143 Plumbers Hall |
| 108 Painters Hall | 145 Fishmongers Hall |
| 109 Cordwainers Hall | 146 Backers hall |
| 110 Sadlers Hall | 147 Turners Hall |
| 111 Embroiderers Hall | 148 Pewterers Hall |
| 112 Butchers Hall | 149 Ironmongers Hall |
| 113 Poulters Hall | 150 East India House |
| 114 Cookes Hall | 151 Bricklayers Hall |
| 115 Barber Chirurgeons [surgeons] Hall | 152 Letherfellers Hall |
| 116 Scriveners [writer] Hall | 153 Clothworkers Hall |
| 117 Goldsmiths Hall | 154 Upholsterers Hall |
| 118 Wax chandler [candlemaker] Hall | 155 Plaisterers Hall |
| 119 Haberdashers Hall | 156 Bowyers Hall |
| 120 Curriers Hall | 157 Essex House |
| 121 Brewers Hall | 158 The Temple |
| 122 Girdlers Hall | 159 Salisbury Court & Dorset House |
| 123 Coopers Hall | 160 Baynards Castle |
| 124 Weavers Hall | 161 Heraulds Office |
| 125 Macons [Masons] Hall | 162 Christ Church Cloisters |
| 126 Mercers [dealer in fabric] Hall | 163 Sion College |
| 127 Grocers Hall | 164 Basing Hall |
| 128 Founders Hall | 165 The Stokes |
| 129 Armorers Hall | 166 Royal Exchange |
| 130 Carpenters Hall | 167 Gresham College |
| 131 Loriners [Make of metal items for horse's harness] & Glasser Hall | 168 Ledenhall |
| 132 Drapers Hall | 169 Customs House |
| 133 Merchant Taylors Hall | 170 Bedlam |
| 134 Salters Hall | |

Hollar's map of the 'ruined city'

Catalogue Ref: ZMAP 4/18

- A Tower Street Ward
- B Portsoken Ward
- C Aldgate Ward
- D Lime Street Ward
- E Bishopsgate Ward
- F Broad Street Ward
- G Cornhill Ward
- H Langborn Ward
- I Billingsgate Ward
- K Bridge Ward
- L Candlewick Ward
- M Wallbrook Ward
- N Dowgate Ward
- O Vintry Ward
- P Cordwayner Ward
- S Basinghall Ward
- T Cripple Gate Ward
- V Aldersgate Ward
- W Faringdon Ward within
- X Bread Street Ward
- Y Queen -Hythe Ward
- Z Castle-Baynard Ward
- ZZ Farringdon Ward without

Burnt 373 Acres within. 63 Acres & 3 roods [unit of measurement] without the walls; 89 Churches; 13200 Houses, ... Parishes within the walls entire.

Jettied buildings helped the fire spread. Copyright image owned by Philip Halling and is licensed for reuse under the Creative Commons.



Jettied buildings helped the fire spread. Copyright image owned by Philip Halling and is licensed for reuse under the Creative Commons.

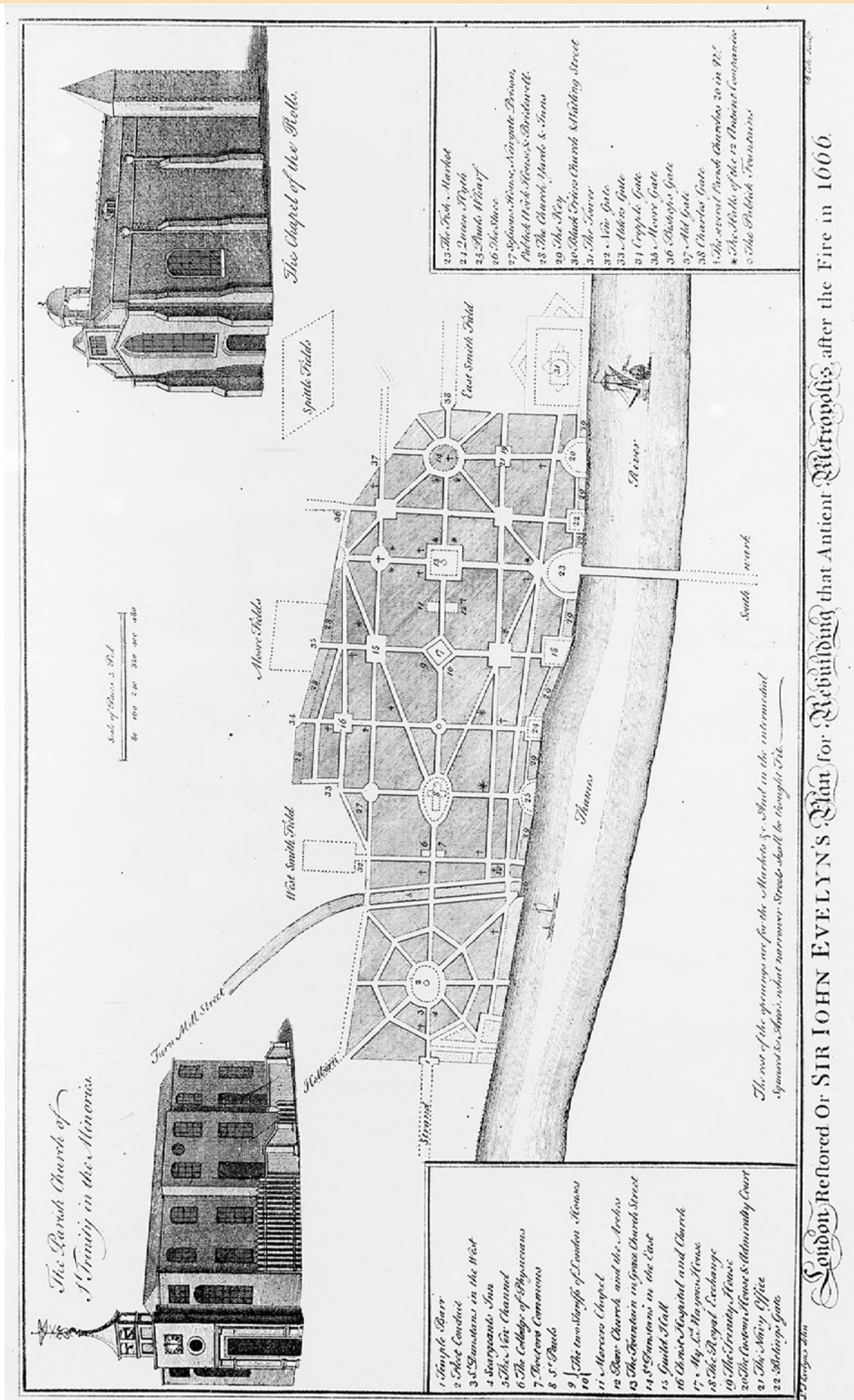
Photograph showing a jettied timber-framed building. This example comes from Tewkesbury. [Copyright image owned by Philip Halling and is licensed for reuse under the Creative Commons.]

Jettied timber-framed buildings on both sides of the street were common in the walled city of London. Windows jutted out into narrow streets towards each other. This made the street dark and tunnel like. The closely packed wooden thatched houses meant the fire spread rapidly from one side of the street to the other.

Why did jettied timber-framed buildings cause the Great Fire to spread so quickly? How did Charles II plan to control building in London after the fire? Read the King's pamphlet about this in the collection.

John Evelyn's plan for rebuilding London

Wellcome Collection. M0003249. WT/D/1/20/1/26/59



John Evelyn's plan for rebuilding London

Wellcome Collection. MOO03249. WT/D/1/20/1/26/59

Map entitled 'London restored or Sir John Evelyn's Plan for Rebuilding that Ancient Metropolis after the Fire in 1666, Wellcome Collection. MOO03249. WT/D/1/20/1/26/59

- What does the diary entry and map about reveal about Sir John Evelyn's relationship with King Charles II?
- What is the value of this map for understanding the Great Fire of London?
- Compare this map to the one drawn by Wenceslaus Hollar of the 'ruined city'.

Look at this quotation from John Evelyn's Diary entry for 11 September 1666.

'I presented his Majestie with a Survey of the ruines, and a Plot for a new Citty, with a discourse on it, whereupon, after dinner, his Majestie sent for me into the Queene's Bed-Chamber, her Majesty, the Duke onely present, where they examined each particular, & discoursed upon them for neere a full houre, seeming to be extremely pleasd with what I had so early thought on.'

Simplified transcript

I presented his Majesty with a survey of the damaged buildings and a plan to rebuild the city and discussed it. After dinner, his Majesty sent for me to come to the Queen's private room where only her Majesty and the Duke [of York] were present and they examined the details and discussed them with me for nearly an hour. They seemed very pleased with what I had first thought of.

Transcript [for map]

Key: Left hand side

- 1 Temple Barr
- 2 Fleet Conduit
- 3 St Dunstan's in the West
- 4 Sergeant's Inn
- 5 The New Channel
- 6 The College of Physicians

John Evelyn's plan for rebuilding London

Wellcome Collection. M0003249. WT/D/1/20/1/26/59

- 7 Doctors Commons
- 8 St. Paul's
- 9 The two
- 10 Sheriffs of London Houses
- 11 Mercers' Chapel
- 12 Bow Church and the Arches
- 13 The Fountain in Grace Church Street
- 14 St. Dunstan's in the East
- 15 Guild Hall
- 16 Christ's Hospital and Church
- 17 My Lord Mayor's House
- 18 The Royal Exchange
- 19 The Trinity House
- 20 The custom House & Admiralty Court
- 21 The Navy Office
- 22 Belings Gate [Billingsgate]

Key: Right hand side

- 23 The Fish Market
- 24 Queen Hythe
- 25 Paul's Wharf
- 26 The Sluce
- 27 Sessions House, Newgate Prison, Public Work House & Bridewell
- 28 The Church Yards & Inns
- 29 The Key
- 30 Black Friars Church & Watling Street
- 31 The Tower
- 32 New Gate
- 33 Alders Gate
- 34 Cripple Gate

- 35 Moore Gate
- 36 Bishops Gate
- 37 Ald Gate
- 38 Charles Gate
- + The several Parish Churches 20 in number
- The Public Fountains

Fields shown outside the city of London:
West Smith Field; Moore Fields; Spittle
Fields and East Smith Field.

Note on map: The rest of the openings are
for the Markets etc. And, in the intermedial
Squares & Areas what narrower Streets
shall be thought Fit.

Caption at bottom of map:

London restored or Sir John Evelyn's Plan
for Rebuilding that Ancient Metropolis after
the Fire in 1666

London Gazette reports start of Great Fire

Catalogue Ref: ZJ 1/1 (84v)

London, Sept. 2. About two a clock this morning a sudden and lamentable fire brake out in this City, beginning not far from *Thames-street*, near *London-Bridge*; which continues still with great violence, and hath already burnt down to the ground many houses thereabouts: Which said accident affected His Majesty with that tenderness and compassion, that He was pleased to go Himself in Person with His Royal Highness, to give order, that all possible means should be used for quenching the fire, or stopping its further spreading. In which care, the Right Honorable the Earl of *Craven* was sent by His Majesty, to be more particularly assisting to the Lord Major and Magistrates; and several Companies of His Guards sent into the City, to be helpful by what ways they could in so great a calamity.

London, Printed by Tho. Newcomb over against Baynards-Castle in Thames-street. 1666.

London Gazette reports start of Great Fire

Catalogue Ref: ZJ 1/1 (84v)

Extract from the 'London Gazette', dated 2 September 1666 recording the start of the Great Fire of London. Catalogue ref: ZJ 1/1 (84v)

In the seventeenth century, all kinds of rumours and stories were printed as pamphlets or handbills. The government felt that many posed a threat to national security and the monarchy. Press censorship was introduced in 1663 and all news publications had to be licensed. When plague broke out in 1665 in London, Charles II moved his court to Oxford and news from the Crown was published in the form of the 'Oxford Gazette'. When Charles II returned to London it was renamed the 'London Gazette'. The publication was positioned as the most authoritative source of information. It is interesting that one document in this collection refers to the lack of the 'gazettes' resulting in little reliable news about the fire. Later in 1674, Charles II published a proclamation 'to restrain the spreading of false news and licentious talking of matters of State and Government' (Catalogue ref: SP 45.12 pt.1 f320.)

- When and where did the fire start?
- How did Charles II respond to the outbreak of the fire?
- What is the value of the 'London Gazette' as a historical source?

Transcript

London, Sept. 2. About two a clock this morning a sudden and lamentable fire brake out in this City, beginning not far from Thames-Street, near London Bridge; which continues still with great violence, and hath already burnt down to the ground many houses thereabouts: Which said accident affected His Majesty with that tenderness and compassion that He was pleased to go Himself in Person with His Royal Highness, to give order, that all possible means should be used for quenching the fire, or stopping its further spreading. In which care, the Right Honourable Earl of Craven was sent by His Majesty, to be more particularly assisting to the Lord Major and the Magistrates and several Companies of His Guards sent into the City, to be helpful by what they could in so great a calamity.

London, Printed by Thomas Newcomb over against Baynards-Castle in Thames -Street, 1666

Simplified transcript

2nd September, London. At about 2 am this morning, a sudden and very bad fire broke out

London Gazette reports start of Great Fire

Catalogue Ref: ZJ 1/1 (84v)

in this city, beginning not far from Thames-Street, near London Bridge. It continues still with great force and has already burnt down many houses nearby. It is believed that His Majesty was so moved and concerned that he chose to go in person with his brother [James, Duke of York] to order, that all possible means should be used for putting out the fire or stopping it from spreading. To help, the Earl of Craven was sent by His Majesty to support the Lord Mayor and the magistrates and several companies of the king's guards were sent into the city to do anything they could to help in such a disaster.

Great Fire of London: Examine the evidence Was the fire caused by 'treachery or chance' or 'heavy judgement'?

Map to show London rebuilt in 1680

Catalogue Ref: WORK 30/6464/4



Map to show London rebuilt in 1680

Catalogue Ref: WORK 30/6464/4

'A Mapp of the Cityes of LONDON and WESTMINSTER and Burrough of SOUTHWARK with their suburbs As it is now rebuilt since the late dreadfull Fire': showing the area as reconstructed after the Great Fire of London'– Published by John Seller and are sold by him at the Hermitage in Wapping & by John Hill in Exchange Alley, London. 1680. Catalogue ref: WORK 30/6464/4

- Compare this map from 1680 to the one drawn by (a) Wenceslaus Hollar of the 'ruined city' (b) John Evelyn's 'Plan for Rebuilding that Ancient Metropolis after the Fire in 1666.'
- What does this map reveal about the rebuilding of London?

Visual description

A map to show the city of London and borough of Southwark with their suburbs rebuilt after the Great fire of London. There is a key provided for the places shown in the map. Above the map, in the centre sits Hermes, the Olympic god of speed and travellers wearing a winged helmet. On either side of him two cupids each clasp a large globe resting on several books and maps. In the bottom right-hand corner sits the river god, Father Thames. He has a beard and is bare chested. He is reclining besides the river Thames and two large fish lie in the water below him. The river Thames is also filled with many small galleons.

Transcript [Left hand map key]

Names of Places contained in this Mapp.

- | | |
|----------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Westminster Abbey | 11. Clarendon House |
| 2. Westminster Hall | 12. St James Market |
| 3. Palace yard | 13. Hay Market |
| 4. Petty France | 14. The Mews |
| 5. Old Palace Yard | 15. Leicester House |
| 6. Privy Garden | 16. Newport House |
| 7. Banqueting house | 17. Charing Cross |
| 8. White Hall Court | 18. Suffolk House |
| 9. S. James House | 19. Covent Garden Church |
| 10. Spring Gardens | 20. Bedford House |

Map to show London rebuilt in 1680

Catalogue Ref: WORK 30/6464/4

- | | |
|---------------------|------------------------|
| 21. St. Giles | 48. Cheapside |
| 22. Long Acre | 49. Cheapside Market |
| 23. Drury Lane | 50. Fleet Prison |
| 24. The Strand | 51. Newgate Market |
| 25. The Maypole | 52. Poultry Market |
| 26. St. Clements | 53. Cornhill |
| 27. Essex House | 54. Royal Exchange |
| 28. Arundel House | 55. Guild Hall |
| 29. Somerset House | 56. Gresham College |
| 30. The Savoy | 57. Leaden Hall |
| 31. Worcester House | 58. Leaden Hall Market |
| 32. Clare Market | 59. Fenchurch Street |
| 33. Boswell Court | 60. Tower Street |
| 34. Artillery Yard | 61. Gracious Street |
| 35. The Temple | 62. The Pyramid |
| 36. Lincolns Inn | 63. Dukes Place |
| 37. Gray's Inn | 64. Leaden Hall Street |
| 38. Furnwall Inn | 65. Coleman Street |
| 39. Hatton Garden | 66. Aldermanbury |
| 40. Chancery Lane | 67. New King Street |
| 41. S. Dunstan's | 68. New Queen Street |
| 42. Fleet Street | 69. Buds Row |

Transcript [Right hand map key]

Names of Places contained in this Mapp.

- | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| 43. Fleet Bridge | 71. Pauls Church Yard |
| 44. Old Bailey | 72. St. Martins Liberty |
| 45. Ludgate | 73. Aldersgate |
| 46. Newgate | 74. Cripplegate |
| 47. Christ Church Cloister | 75. Moregate |
| | 76. Bishopsgate |
| | 77. Aldgate |
| | 78. Custom House |
| | 79. Almonries * |
| | 80. S. Butolph |

Monument to the Fire of London 1677

Catalogue Ref: COPY 1/442/628



Monument to the Fire of London 1677

Catalogue Ref: COPY 1/442/628

Photograph of the Monument to the Great Fire of London, 1899. Catalogue ref: COPY 1/442/628.

Copyright owner of work: York & Son, 67 Lancaster Road, Notting Hill Middlesex. Copyright author of work: William York, 75 Lancaster Road, North Kensington, Middlesex.

The Monument is located at the northern end of London Bridge. It was built from 1671-1677 and stands near the location of the Pudding Lane bakery, where the fire started. The Monument commemorated the Great Fire of London and marked the rebuilding of the city. It was designed by Sir Christopher Wren, Surveyor General to King Charles II with Dr Robert Hooke. The column is 61 metres high, its distance from Pudding Lane. It has a viewing platform at the top with gilded vase full of flames to represent the fire.

- What does the building of the monument reveal about how people responded to the Great Fire of London in the seventeenth century?
- What is the value of a Victorian photograph of a monument built to commemorate the Great Fire of London in the 1670s?

Visual description

Photograph shows the monument to commemorate the Great fire of London. It is a fluted Doric column on a decorated pedestal. In front of the column two women stand wearing long dresses and hats. A figure of man, wearing dark clothes and a top hat stands to the right with his back towards the camera. The Monument stands in a street with tall brick buildings on either side. On the left there are shop fronts at ground level. On the right side the building is in shadow and covered with advertising posters, including one for the 'Daily Telegraph'. The word 'Monument' is written in the left-hand corner of the photograph.

More fears fire started by French & Dutch 'fanatics'

Catalogue Ref: SP 29/171 f52

Honour
 Sir

the sad condition of Regell Stately both burning
 murther; amaze us have, not as yet knowing
 a perfect relation, how soe many and great a
 Stately should be consumed so suddenly; because it
 is diversely reported; some say Dutch persons con-
 the fanaticity had a hand in it, and that there is
 divers taken with bills of wild officers in their
 hands; if we can reports, there is but of these not trouble
 you with the relation of them; Last night if
 Dutch persons; afraid out of Ray Stately well, I doo
 not as yet know of coming search after them; they have
 some friends that helped them to instruments to break
 through the wall they were in front of before they
 could get all out; the greater and other persons have
 these meetings in other numbers there formerly
 in Regell Stately last Sunday met about fifty; there is
 little done taken to hinder these meetings; which
 may be of ill consequence, and in means profane his
 last night, making and all his good friends from the
 in the night, of this sort of people; that I have
 the London that of all ways had some thoughts of
 you to go this way and profane them from the
 danger, they have no remedy I am

Newcastle this
 11th of September
 66

Yours assured & ready friend
 to serve you. Richard Hooker

I had no relation
 made last Sunday

More fears fire started by French & Dutch 'fanatics'

Catalogue Ref: SP 29/171 f52

Richard Forster from Newcastle to Joseph Williamson, 11 September 1666. Catalogue ref: SP 29/171 f52.

Joseph Williamson (1633-1701) was the Under-Secretary of State 1660-74 and Keeper of the State Papers which he reorganised from 1661-1701. He also started the 'Oxford Gazette' at the time of the Great Plague in 1665, which later became established as the 'London Gazette'.

- How does Richard Forster explain the cause of the fire?
- Why do you think there were Dutch prisoners in Newcastle jail?
- What is the value of this letter for understanding more about the fire of London?

Transcript

Honoured

Sir

The sad rendition of Royal Calamity doth ... much; amongst us here, not as yet hearing a perfect relation how so famous and great a city should be consumed so suddenly; though it is diversly reported; some say Dutch, French and other fanatics had a hand in it, and that there is diverse arson with balls of wild fire in their hands. Several reports there is but I shall not trouble you with the relation of them. Last night 17 Dutch prisoners escaped out of the Castle jail, I do not as yet hear of coming search for them; they have some friends that rallied them to instruments to break through the wall they were discovered before they could get all out; the quakers and other such sectaries have these meetings in greater Membury than formerly in Gateshead last Sunday met about sixty. There is little care taken to hinder their meetings; which may be of ill consequence, god in mercy preserve his sacred majesty and all his good subjects from the inveterate malice of this sort of people; I know the [London?] fleet of [Galway?] have some thoughts of god to so this time god preserve them from danger, they have no ... I am,

Sir,

Your afflicted ready friend

More fears fire started by French & Dutch 'fanatics'

Catalogue Ref: SP 29/171 f52

To serve you

Richard Forster

Simplified transcript

Honoured

Sir

The sad tale of the disaster worries so many of us here. We have not had a precise account of how so famous and great a city should be consumed so suddenly. It is widely reported by some that Dutch, French and other fanatics had a hand in it and arson was caused by various people in possession of fireballs. There are several reports, but I will not trouble you with them. Last night 17 Dutch prisoners escaped out of the Castle jail, although I did not hear about a search for them. The prisoners have some friends that supplied them with instruments to break through the wall. They were discovered before they could all escape. The Quakers and other sectarians [religious or political groups] have meetings in Greater Membury. In Gateshead sixty met last Sunday. There is little effort taken to stop these meetings, which I fear is dangerous. God in his mercy preserve his Majesty and his subjects from the malice and ill intent of these kinds of people.

I am your friend to serve you.

Richard Forster.

No new buildings without permission after the fire

Catalogue Ref: SP 45/12 Pt 1 f286



By the King. A PROCLAMATION

Against NEW BUILDINGS.

CHARLES R.



Whereas in the Fields commonly called the Wind-Mill-Fields, Dog-Fields, and the Fields adjoyning to So-Hoe, and severall other places in and about the Suburbs of London and Westminster, divers small and mean Habitations and Cottages have been lately Erected upon New Foundations, and more of that kind are daily preparing, not onely without any Grant or Allowance from His Majesty, but some of them against His Majesties Express Command, signified by His Surbeyor-general; Which kind of Buildings are likely to prove common and publick Nuisances, by being made use of for the most Noysom and Offensive Trades, and by becoming the Receptacles of a multitude of Poor, to the Damage of these Parishes, already too much Incumbred, and by rendring the Government of those parts more Unmannageable; But especially by Choaking up the Aire of His Majesties Palaces and Parks, and endangering the Infection, if not the total loss of those Waters, which by many Expencefull Drains and Conduits, are Conveyed from those Fields to His Majesties Palace at Whitehall; Whereof some Decay is already perceived by His Majesties Sergeant-Plummer, and more is daily feared: Therefore for prevention of such growing Mischiefs, Whereby His Majesties Palaces may be greatly Annoyed, the Houses of the Nobility and Gentry very much Offended, the Parishes Over-charged, the Perfecting of the City Buildings very much hindered, and the health both of City and Suburbs exceedingly endangered: His Majesty by Advice of His Privy Council, hath thought fit to Publish this His Royal Proclamation, and doth hereby Straightly Charge and Command all manner of persons Whom it doth or may concern, That they forbear to Erect, or cause to be Erected any more New Buildings in the Suburbs of London or Westminster, or to finish any Buildings in the said Suburbs already begun, without His Majesties Licence in that behalf, under His Great Seal first had and obtained: To the end, That if any more New Buildings be thought fit by His Majesty to be carried on, they may be Built firmly and Regularly, according to such Design and Order as may best suit with the Publick Benefit and Convenience, as they will answer the contrary at their Perils. And if any shall presume to Offend against His Majesties Royal Command herein Declared, His Majesty will cause such Buildings to be Abased and Thrown down, and the Persons of such Offenders to be Arrested and Seised, and further Proceeded against according to the utmost Rigour and Severity of Law.

Given at Our Court at Whitehall, the Seventh day of April, 1671.

GOD SAVE THE KING.

In the SAVOY,

Printed by the Assigns of John Bill, and Christopher Barker, Printers to the Kings most Excellent Majesty, 1671.

No new buildings without permission after the fire

Catalogue Ref: SP 45/12 Pt 1 f286

A proclamation 'Against New buildings' being built in Windmill Fields, Dog Fields, and areas near Soho in London and elsewhere without royal permission, 1671. Catalogue ref: SP 45/12 Pt 1 f286.

This comes from the collected charters of Charles II. The Proclamation reveals that London still felt the impact of losses caused by the fire in terms of housing and industry.

- Why did Charles II publish this proclamation?
- What does it suggest about the role of Charles II in government?
- How does this proclamation relate to the plans made by Charles II to control building in London after the fire seen in this collection?

Transcript

By the King.

A PROCLAMATION

Against NEW BUILDINGS

CHARLES R.

Whereas in the fields commonly called the Wind-Mill-Fields, Dog-fields, and the fields adjoining to Soho, and several other places in and about the Suburbs of London and Westminster, divers small and mean habitations and Cottages have been lately Erected upon new foundations, and more of that kind are daily preparing, not only without any Grant or Allowance from his Majesty, but some of them against His Majesty's Express Command, signified by His Surveyor-General; Which kind of buildings are likely to prove common and public nuisances, by being made use of for the most noisome and offensive Trades and by becoming the Receptacles of a multitude of Poor, to the Damage of these Parishes, already too much Incumbered, and by rendering the Government of those parts more Unmanageable, But especially by choaking up the Air of his Majesty's Palaces and Parks, and endangering the infection, if not the total loss of those waters, which by many expencefull Drains and Conduits, are conveyed from whole fields to his Majesty's Palace at

No new buildings without permission after the fire

Catalogue Ref: SP 45/12 Pt 1 f286

Whitehall, Whereof some Decay is already perceived by His Majesties Sergeant Plummer and more is daily feared. Therefore, for the prevention of such growing Mischiefs, whereby his Majesties Palaces may be greatly annoyed, the houses of the Nobility and Gentry very much offended, the Parishes Over-charged, the perfecting of the City buildings very much hindered and the health both of City and Suburbs exceedingly endangered; his Majesty by Advice of his Privy Council, hath thought fit to publish this his Royal Proclamation and doth hereby Straightly Charge and Command all manner of persons whom it doth or may concern, That they forbear to Create, or cause to be Erected any more new buildings in the Suburbs of London or Westminster, or to finish any Buildings in the said Suburbs already begun without his Majesty's Licence in that behalf under his Great Seal first had and obtained. To the end, that if anymore new buildings be thought fit by his Majesty to be carried on, they may be built firmly and regularly, according to such design and order as may best suit with the public benefit and convenience, as they will answer the contrary at their perils. And if any shall presume to offend against his Majesty's Royal Command herein Declared, his majesty will cause such Buildings to be Abased [demolished] and Thrown down, and the Persons of such Offenders to be Arrested and Seized, and further proceeded against according to the utmost Rigour and Severity of Law.

Given at our Court at Whitehall, the Seventh day of April, 1671

GOD SAVE THE KING

In the SAVOY,

Printers by the Assigns of John Bill and Christopher Barker, Printers to the Kings Most Excellent Majesty, 1671

Simplified transcript

By the King.

A proclamation against new buildings.

CHARLES R.

No new buildings without permission after the fire

Catalogue Ref: SP 45/12 Pt 1 f286

Since the Great Fire, there has been many new habitations and cottages built without the permission of the King, in places including Wind-Mill-Fields, Dog-Fields, and fields next to Soho. These buildings will be disruptive, noisy, and offensive, lived in by poor people and being used for noisy and offensive trades. We fear infection in these areas and the overpopulation of these areas in London. To prevent this becoming more of an issue, the King commands that no more buildings should be put up in the suburbs identified, without an explicit license from the king. If any buildings are permitted by the king to be erected, they should be built in an orderly and regular way, to public good. If any person does not obey this proclamation, they will be arrested and punished.

Other fires feared & Lynn guarded

Catalogue Ref: SP 29/170 f139

moved 8^r Lyn 7 703 1686: 139
 We are in this place in great trouble & sorrow & the
 sad & lamentable calamity by fire upon the city of
 London, we fear the loss to be out of all measure great
 & that it continued on Wednesday as before & furious
 as ever; we feared of the Male yesterday with in this
 calamitous time we could not expect; 158
 fear as reports of several towns to have been on
 on fire we fear the contrary of some of the towns
 yet never nominated to have been on fire so far as
 Doubt not but all is still concerning the rest;
 the Lord Mandonills hopes have been from some
 this 5 day; is come to town by his ~~own~~ Mornings & gone
 out againe by afternoon & town with 3 our bands
 fear strong guard upon 3 towns all July & French;
 bands, we make inquiry to send all to be engaged but fear
 we fear our flock & the July to be engaged but fear
 nothing of the issue; God in his great mercy send us
 victory over our enemies: by to command
 L.B.

Other fires feared & Lynn guarded

Catalogue Ref: SP 29/170 f139

E. Bodham from Lynn to Joseph Williamson, 7 September 1666. Catalogue ref: SP 29/170 f139.

King's Lynn, known until 1537 as Bishop's Lynn and locally as Lynn, is a port and market town in the borough of King's Lynn in the county of Norfolk.

Joseph Williamson (1633-1701) was the Under-Secretary of State (1660-74) and Keeper of the State Papers which he reorganised from (1661-1701). He also started the 'Oxford Gazette' at the time of the Great Plague in 1665, which later became established as the 'London Gazette'.

- What language is used to describe the fire in this letter?
- Can you find similar language used in this way in other sources?
- What does the letter suggest about how people were affected by the Great Fire outside London?
- Why do you think the town of Lynn was placed under armed guard?

Transcript

We are in this place in great trouble & sorrow from a sad and lamentable calamity by fire upon the city of London, we hear the loss to be out of all measure great & that it continued on Wednesday as fierce & furious as ever, we failed of the mail yesterday which in this calamitous time we could not expect.

Hear our reports of several townes to have been on fire. We hear the contrary of some of these towns yet were nominated to have been on fire so that we doubt not but all is fable concerning the worst. The Lord Mandeville's troop have been from here this 5 days is come to town this morning & gone out again this afternoon towards London. We keep here our strong guard upon our town with our own trained bands, we make inquiry to secure all Dutch & French; we hear our fleet & the Dutch to be engaged but hear nothing of the issue, God in his great mercy send us victory over our enemies.

Yours to command

Other fires feared & Lynn guarded

Catalogue Ref: SP 29/170 f139

E.B.[Bodham]

Simplified Transcript

Here we are very sad about the unfortunate disaster of the fire of London, we fear the losses to be great & that it continued Wednesday as fierce & furious as ever. We failed to get the mail yesterday, which in this terrible time we could not expect.

We hear reported that several towns have been on fire. We fear that these towns mentioned are falsely reported on fire. The Lord Mandeville's troops have been gone for 5 days and come to town this morning and gone out again this afternoon towards London. We keep a strong guard upon the town with our own trained bands. We make inquiries to secure all Dutch & Frenchmen. We worry that our fleet & the Dutch are engaged but hear no news, God in his great mercy send us victory over our enemies.

At your service

E.B. Bodham

Preventing the plague in May 1666

Catalogue Ref: SP 46/131 f.64



RULES and ORDERS

To be observed by all Justices of Peace, Mayors, Bayliffs, and other Officers, for prevention of the spreading of the Infection of the PLAGUE.

Published by His Majesties special Command.



You are to take care, That no stranger be permitted to lodge or abide in any City, Town, or Village without a sufficient Certificate of health, and the consent of the next Justice of Peace, or chief Magistrate (if within a Corporation) which said Certificate to be made by the Minister and Churchwardens of the Parish from whence such person came, and confirmed under the hand and Seal of the next Justice of Peace to the said Parish.

2. That no old Household-Goods whatsoever be received into any City, Burrough, Town, Village or Hamlet, coming from any place suspected to be Infected with the Plague, without sufficient Certificate.

3. That all publique Meetings and Concourses of people, as much as may be (especially to Funerals; Wakes or Revels) be prohibited, where there is any suspicion of the Plague.

4. That no vagabonds nor Beggars be permitted to go and wander about the Countrey, or in any other City or place; and, That you appoint Watching and Warding for that end; and that all publique places (especially Streets and Passages) be kept sweet and clean; and that all Laystalls, Dung-hills, and Slaughter-houses near any Dwelling-houses be removed to places more remote.

5. That Order be given to all Householders to keep their Dwelling-houses sweet and clean, and to keep shut all windows opening towards Infected houses.

6. That fires in moveable Pans, or otherwise, be made in all necessary publique Meetings in Churches, &c. and convenient places to correct the Air be burnt thereon.
 7. That care be taken that no unwholesome Meats, Drinking fish, flesh, musty Corn, or any other unwholesome Food be exposed to sale in any Shops or Markets.
 8. That no Swine, Dogs, Cats, or tame Pigeons be permitted to pass up and down in Streets, or from house to house, in places Infected.
 9. That the Laws against Inn-Houses be forthwith put in strict execution, and that no more Alehouses be Licensed then are absolutely necessary in each City or place, especially during the continuance of this present Contagion.
 10. That each City and Town forthwith provide some convenient place remote from the same, where a Pest-house, Huts, or Sheds may be Erected, to be in readines in case any Infection should break out; which if it shall happen to do, That able and faithful Searchers and Examiners be forthwith provided and Sworn to search all suspected bodie, for the usual signs of the Plague, viz. Swellings or Blisters under the Cars or Arm-pits, or upon the Throats, Blains, Carbuncles, or little Spots, either on the Breast or back, commonly called Tokens.
 11. That if any House be Infected, the sick person or persons be forthwith removed to the said Pest-house, Sheds, or Huts, for the preservation of the rest of the family: And that such house (though none be dead therein) be shut up for Forty days, and have a Red Cross, and Lord have mercy upon us, in Capital Letters affixed on the door, and Warders appointed, as well to find them necessities, as to keep them from conberling with the sound.
 12. That at the opening of each Infected house (after the expiration of the said forty days) a White Cross be affixed on the said door, there to remain Twenty days more, during which time, or at least before any stranger be suffered to lodge therein, That the said house be well fumed, Washed and Whitened all over within with Lime; And that no Clothes, or Household stuff be removed out of the said house into any other house, for at least Three moneths after, unless the persons so Infected have occasion to change their habitation.
 13. That none dying of the plague be buried in Churches, or Church-yards (unless they be large, and then to have a place assigned for that use (where other bodies are not usually buried) Boarded or Paled in Ten foot high) but in some other convenient places, and that a good quantity of unslacked Lime be put into the Graves with such bodies, and that such Graves be not after opened within the space of a year or more, lest they infect others.
 14. That in case any City, Burrough, Town or Village be so visited and Infected, that it is not able to maintain its own Poor, That then a Rate be forthwith made by the adjoining Justices of the Peace, and confirmed at the next Quarter-Sessions, for that use, upon the neighbouring Parishes, according to the Statute 1st Jacobi, so that such visited Poor may have sufficient Relief, want and necessity being great occasions of the Infection.
 15. That you your selves use your utmost endeavours, not only to see these Directions punctually observed, and be in a readines to render an Account as often as you shall be required, but that you strictly enjoin all High Constables, Petty Constables, Headburroughs and other Officers, to execute their respective Duties according to their places; and if any shall fail herein, to use the utmost severity against them according to Law.
- What relates to Physicians, Chyrurgeons, and such other persons as are necessary for the preservation and help of such who shall be Infected, the same is left to your particular care and discretion.
- Lastly, That you take special care, that not only the Monethly Fasts, but that the publique prayers on Wednesdays and Fridays also, be strictly and constantly observed according to his Majesties Proclamation; And that such Collections as shall be then made, be strictly applied to the relief and necessities of the poor in Infected places, by which means God may be inclined to remove his severe hand both from amongst you and us.

LONDON,

Printed by John Bill and Christopher Barker, Printers to the Kings most Excellent Majesty, 1666.

Preventing the plague in May 1666

Catalogue Ref: SP 46/131 f.64

A proclamation from Charles II which outlines the 'Rules and orders for preventing the spreading of the Plague' published at Whitehall on 11 May 1666. Catalogue ref: SP 46/131 f.64.

People continued to die from plague in London after the Great Fire although case numbers had already dropped significantly by the time of the fire. However, it would not be accurate to conclude that the Great Fire of London eliminated the plague.

- How do orders 1-9 try to prevent the spread of plague?
- What plague symptoms are described in the plague orders?
- What does this source reveal about medical knowledge of the causes of plague at the time?

Transcript

RULES AND ORDERS

To be observed by all Justices of Peace, Mayors, Bayliffs, and other Officers,
for prevention of the spreading of the Infection of the PLAGUE.

Published by His Majesties Special Command.

You are to take care, That no stranger be permitted to lodge or abide in any City, Towne or Village without Sufficient Certificate of health, and the consent of the next Justice of the Peace, or Chief Magistrate (if within a Corporation) which said Certificate to made by the Minister and Church Wardens of the Parish from whence such person came, and confirmed under the hand and Seal of the next Justice of Peace to the said Parish.

1. That no old household Goods whatsoever be received into any city, Burrough, Town, Village or hamlet, coming from any place suspected to be infected with the Plague, without sufficient Certificate.
2. That all publique [public] Meetings and Concourses [groups] of people, as much as may be (especially to Funerals; Wakes or Revels) be prohibited, where there is any suspicion of the Plague.
3. That no Vagabonds nor Beggars be permitted to go and wander about the Countrey, or

Preventing the plague in May 1666

Catalogue Ref: SP 46/131 f.64

in any other city or place, and, That you appointing Watching and Warding for that end, and that all publique places (especially Streets and Passages) be kept sweet and clean, and that all Laystalls, Dunghills, and Slaughter-houses near any Dwellings be removed to places more remote.

4. That Order to be given to all householders to keep their Dwelling-houses sweet and clean, and to keep shut all windows opening towards Infected houses.

5. That Fires in moveable Pans, or otherwise, be made in all necessary publique [public] Meetings in Churches, &c. and convenient Fumes to correct the Air be burnt thereon.

6. That care be taken that no unwholsom [unhealthy] Meats, stinking Fish, Flesh, musty Corn, or any other unwholesome Food be exposed to sale in any Shops or Markets.

7. That no Swine [pigs], Dogs, Cats or tame Pigeons be permitted to pass up and down in Streets, or from house to house, in places Infected.

8. That the Laws against Inn-Mates be forthwith put in strict execution, and that no more Alehouses be Licensed then are absolutely necessary in each City or place, especially during the continuance of this present Contagion.

9. That each City and Town forthwith provide some convenient place remote from the same, where a pest-house, huts, or sheds may be erected, to be in readiness in case any Infection should break out; which if it shall happen to do, That able and faithful Searchers and Examiners be forthwith provided and Sworn to Search all suspected bodies, for the usual signs of the plague, viz. Swellings or Risings under the Ears or Arm-pits, or upon the Groynes [groin]; Blains, Carbuncles, or little Spots, either on the Breast or back, commonly called Tokens.

10. That if any House be Infected, the sick person or persons be forthwith removed to the said pest-house, sheds, or huts, for the preservation of the rest of the Family: And that such house (though none be dead therein) be shut up for forty days, and have a Red Cross, and Lord have mercy upon us, in Capital Letters affixed on the door, and Warders appointed, as well to find them necessities, as to keep them from conversing with the found.

11. That at the opening of each Infected house (after the expiration of the said Forty Days) a White Cross be affixed on the said door, there to remain Twenty days more; during which time, or at least before any stranger be suffered to lodge therein, That the said house be well Fumed, Washed and Whited all over within with Lime; And that no Clothes, or Householdstuff be removed out of the said house into any other house, for at least Three months after, unless the persons so Infected have occasion to change their habitation.

12. That none dying of the Plague be buried in Churches, or Church-yards (unless they be large, and then to have a place assigned for that use (where other bodies are not usually buried) Boarded or Paled in Ten foot high) but in some other convenient places, and that

Preventing the plague in May 1666

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a good quantity of unslakt Lime be put into the Graves with such bodies, and that such Graves be not after opened within the space of a year or more, less they infect others.

13. That in case any City, Burrough, Town or Village be so visited and Infected, that it is not able to maintain its own poor, That then a Rate be forthwith made by the adjoining Justices of the Peace, and confirmed at the very next Quarter Sessions, for that use, upon the neighbouring Parishes, according to the Statute 1 Jacobi [James 1], so that such visited poor may have sufficient Relief; want and nastiness being great occasions of the Infection.

14. That you yourselves use your utmost endeavours, not only to see these Directions punctually observed, and be in a readiness to render an Accomt [Account] as often as you shall be required, but that you strictly enjoyn all high Constables, petty Constables, Headburroughs and other Officers, to execute their respective Duties according to their places; and if any shall fail herein, to use the utmost severity against them according to Law.

What relates to Physitians [doctors], Chysurgeons, [surgeons] and such other persons as are necessary for the preservation and help of such who shall be Infected, the same is left to your particular care and direction.

Lastly, That you take special care, that not onely [only] the Monethly Fasts, but that the publique prayers on Wednesdays and Fridays also, be strictly and constantly observed according to his Majesties Proclamation; And that such Collections as shall be then made, be strictly applied to the relief and necessities of the poor in Infected places, by which means God may be inclined to remove his severe hand both from amongst you and us.

LONDON

Printed by John Bill and Christopher Barker, Printers to the Kings most Excellent Majesty,
1666

Glossary

affixed – attached.

Alehouses – places where ale (beer) was sold.

Bayliffs – bailiffs, officials who could enforce written orders issued by a court and carry out arrests.

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Blains – sores, blisters.

Boarded or paled – fenced.

Burrough – any place larger than a village

Carbuncles – harmful tumours, caused by inflammation of the skin.

Chysurgeons – surgeons.

Contagion – epidemic

Dunghill- heap of dung

Enjoyn – direct, order.

Expiration – end of the time limit.

Forthwith – immediately.

Habitation – place where people live.

Headburroughs – officers with the same role as petty constables

Herein – in this.

High Constable – officer with duties and powers to keep the peace.

Fumed – treated with fumes.

Justice of the Peace – magistrate with the power to deal with lesser crimes, perform marriages and administer oaths.

Large – wealthy, important.

Laystall-laystall was a place where cattle going to market could be held.

Pest-house – a plague hospital, there were five in London holding about 600 people.

Petty Constable – officer whose task was to keep the peace.

Physitians – physicians, doctors.

Proclamation – public announcement.

Quarter Sessions – a local court of limited powers that sat every three months.

Relief – public assistance, aid

Render – give.

Revels- feasts or parties.

Searchers – officials appointed to view dead bodies and report on the cause of death.

Unwholsom – unhealthy.

Vagabond -a person who wanders from place to place without a home or job.

Viz.- that is.

Wakes- funeral receptions

Preventing the plague in May 1666

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Warders – guards or watchers of the locked-up houses.

Simplified transcript

RULES AND ORDERS

To be followed by all Justices of Peace, mayors, officers of the court
for prevention of the spreading of the plague

Published by special order of the King.

You are to take care, that no outsider is to be allowed to stay in any city, town or village without a certificate of health, and the agreement of the justice of the peace, or magistrate. If in a town, a certificate is needed from the cathedral and church wardens of the parish from where the person comes from with agreement from the Justice of Peace to the new parish.

1. That no old household goods be received, without a certificate, into any city, town, village, or hamlet, coming from a place suspected to be infected with the plague.
2. No public meetings or groups of people are to meet for funerals, wakes or parties, where there is any suspicion of the plague.
3. No tramps or beggars are allowed to move around the country or within a city. Wardens and watchmen will make sure this is done and keep for all public places (especially streets and passages) clean and make sure that any animal pens dunghills, and slaughterhouses near any houses are removed.
4. All householders must keep their houses sweet and clean, and to keep shut all windows opening towards infected houses.
5. Fires with moveable pans [metal grate for holding hot coals], to be placed in all public meetings held in churches, to improve the air by the burning fire.
6. Care be taken that no unhealthy meat, stinking fish, or rotten corn, or any other unhealthy food be sold in shops or markets.
7. That no pigs, dogs, cats, or tame pigeons be permitted to pass up and down in streets, or from house to house, in places infected with plague.
8. That laws against the owners of inns are strictly enforced, and that no more alehouses

Preventing the plague in May 1666

Catalogue Ref: SP 46/131 f.64

are allowed to do business other than necessary in the city or otherwise during this present outbreak of plague.

9. Each city or town must provide a remote place for a pest-house or huts, or sheds in readiness should an infection break out. If that happens, reliable searchers and examiners must be provided to search for those suspected of having the plague. They must check for the usual signs of swellings under the ears or armpits, or groin including sores, inflammation, or little spots, either on the chest or back, commonly called tokens.

10. If any house is infected, the sick person or persons must be immediately taken to the pest-house, sheds, or huts, for the safety of the rest of the family. And the house (even if nobody who has died there) is to be shut up for 40 days, and have a red cross, and 'Lord have mercy upon us', in capital letters attached to the door. Appointed warders will bring them necessities, so they don't have to go out.

11. When the infected house is opened after 40 days, a white cross is to be fixed to the door for another 20 days. Before anyone lives there, the house is to be fumigated, cleaned, and whitewashed inside with lime. No clothes, or household goods are to be removed from the house into any other house, for at least three months.

12. No one who has died from plague is to be buried in churches, or churchyards unless there is enough space for that purpose and the area is fenced at ten foot high. Burial must be in appropriate places, and a good quantity of burnt lime must be put into the graves with the bodies. These graves must not be opened within the space of a year or more in case they infect others.

13. In case any city, town or village be Infected with the plague is unable to care for its own poor, a rate will be fixed by the local justices of the peace, and confirmed at the next quarter court sessions, for the neighbouring parishes (according to the laws of James I.) Therefore, the poor will have enough help during these times of the plague.

14. You must make every effort to be sure that these rules are followed and give account for them when asked. You must work with all constables and other officers, to help carry out their duties and if anyone fails to do so, they will face the consequences of the law.

In relation to doctors, surgeons, and such other persons necessary for the preservation and help for the infected, do as directed.

Lastly, take special care, that not only the monthly fasts, but that the public prayers on Wednesdays and Fridays are strictly observed according to his Majesty's Proclamation. And that collections are made, for the relief and the poor in infected places, and God may spare us all from the plague.

Questions about the fire

Catalogue Ref: SP 29/171 f40

Mr Widdowes -


My dear Sir 20th Sept^r 1666.

44

Therfore four last posts, I have not received our head
 line when it was taken of the great City into fire, &
 various reports of it fire, whether accidentally or by
 our nature or foreigner ~~be~~ be our Enhabitants
 & burning, & how our flutes has beened & for a time
 few say how our victims other of Country; but now
 of it City & how we shall now make exchange of one
 Comodity & sell satisfaction to the people, I do fire may
 be a subject of your real letter either from you
 self or if you take your friend of yours to be well
 & favour, for I would not live ^{but} in the dark
 weeks for it words, & whether I parliament will sit at
 Westminister or not this time & whether I day Rats -
 being it your end of it Town will be so fit by the
 of other new D. statutes of dwelling I have then killed
 as comes for the parliament been & families it
 enclosed in this letter, I pray Sir faith be it I am
 Your obliged Serv^t

J. Berber

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Questions about the fire

Catalogue Ref: SP 29/171 f40

Lord Herbert to Joseph Williamson, 10 September. Catalogue ref: SP29/171 f40.

Joseph Williamson (1633-1701) was the Under-Secretary of State 1660-74 and Keeper of the State Papers which he reorganised from 1661-1701. He also started the 'Oxford Gazette' at the time of the Great Plague in 1665, which later became established as the 'London Gazette'.

- Why has Lord Herbert not received his post?
- What questions does Lord Herbert want answered in reply to his letter?
- Why does he think that Parliament will be delayed from sitting due to the fire?

Transcript

Lord Herbert to Williamson, 10th September 1666

These four last posts I have not received our news since when the reduction of the Great City in fire, the various reports of the fire, whether accidentally or by one native or foreigner, being inhabitant or enemy, and how our fleet has succeeded, for as save few say we are victorious others the contrary; how much of the city and how we shall now make exchange of our commodity and full satisfaction to these queries, [In Latin abbreviation: That is, this] may be a subject of your next letter either from yourself or if you talk to our friend of years to do me the favour, for I could not live such another dark week for the world, and whether our parliament will sit at Westminster or not this hour and whether the day holds being the year end of the Term will be so filled by these of the other now destitute of dwellings I fear their will and am x/concerned(?) for the parliament term and failure yet intended is this winter. I pray Sir fails me not.

I am Your obliging servant.

Herbert

Simplified transcript

I have received nothing since the last four posts, since reports of destruction of the great

Questions about the fire

Catalogue Ref: SP 29/171 f40

city by fire. Please let this be the subject of your next letter, for I cannot live such another dark week in the world. I wonder if the fire is caused by accident or natives or foreigners? How much is burnt, has our fleet succeeded and how our trade and exchange of goods can continue? Will Parliament sit at Westminster? Has a day has been fixed as the town will be filled by those made homeless so there will be no room?

Yours humble servant Herbert

Restoring goods stolen during the fire

Catalogue Ref: SP 45/12 p1 f231 & 232



By the King.

A P R O C L A M A T I O N

For restoring Goods imbezzell'd during the late Fire and since.

CHARLES R.



Whereas the general amazement and distraction occasioned by the late dreadful Fire was so great, that many persons were surpris'd and overtaken by the Flames before they could get time or opportunity to remove any part of their Goods, and others who made a shift to remove some of their Goods, did yet do it in that haste and confusion, that they were fain to leave very much behind them, By reason whereof great quantities of Plate, Honey, Jewels, Household-Stuffe, Goods and Merchandize, besides many valuable Materials for Building are daily found out and discovered amongst the Ruins of those several Houses which have been destroyed, to which nevertheless the true Owners are still legally and rightfully entituled, and have in no sort lost their propriety; Nor will the finding of any Goods thus exposed excuse any Person who shall wilfully or feloniously take and carry them away from incurring the penalties of Law, which may in some cases extend even to the loss of life, and in all cases will extend to fine and Imprisonment, besides the Damages which the injured party may recover by Action. And whereas also divers persons have notwithstanding adventured, and do still daily presume to take, seize, and carry away whatsoever they can find or lay hands upon, which may be of any value or consideration, of whom some few may possibly intend to restore the same to the Rightful Owners as soon as they shall be known: And others may possibly have offended in this kind merely through ignorance, not well understanding the nature of their Crimes in Law, nor knowing the dangerous consequences of their offences, nor the severities to which they are become liable. His Majesty therefore to the end that all his

Subjects may know the danger of the Law, and that they may be left without any kind of excuse or pitty if they bring the extremities of Law upon themselves, hath thought fit by this his Royal Proclamation to publish and declare, and doth hereby require and command all persons whatsoever who have seized or possessed any Plate, Jewels, Honey, Household-Stuffe, Goods or Merchandize, or any Materials for building not truly and of right belonging to them, that they do within the space of eight daies after this his Proclamation cause the same to be brought into the Armoury in Finsbury-fields, and there delivered unto such persons as by the Lord Mayor and Court of Aldermen shall be appointed to receive the same, To the end the same may be Inventoried and preserved there for the true and rightful Owners, and restored to them after the Charges of keeping the same, and a competent Reward to the Parties who found them and brought them in shall be first deducted, which Reward shall be assessed by the Lord Mayor and Aldermen, or such other of the Court of Aldermen as by them shall be appointed, and the Names of the Parties who ought to receive the said Reward shall be duely Registered and Entred: And his Majesty doth hereby declare, That all persons in whose possession any Goods or Merchandizes shall be found after the said Eight daies expired, whereof they cannot prove themselves to be the true and Lawful Proprietors, shall be proceeded against in his Name and at his Suit, as persons that have broken the peace, and posset themselves by Rapines and spoyle of other mens Goods, his Majesty being resolved to punish these Crimes and offences with the utmost severities of Law, and even with the paines of Felony where the Case will bear it. And hereof all Judges, Justices of Peace, Mayors, Jurors, Constables, and all others his Majesties Officers and Ministers in all his Courts of Justice and publick Sessions are required to take notice, and to see that strict and effectual prosecution be had accordingly.

Given at our Court at Whitehall the Nineteenth day of September in the Eighteenth year of Our Reign.

God save the King.

L O N D O N,

Printed by John Bill and Christopher Barker, Printers to the Kings most Excellent Majesty, 1666.

Restoring goods stolen during the fire

Catalogue Ref: SP 45/12 p1 f231 & 232

A proclamation 'for restoring Goods embezzled during the Late Fire and since', 1666.

Catalogue ref: SP 45/12 p1 f231 & 232.

- How and why have people lost goods and possessions during the fire according to this document?
- How does Charles II hope to get these goods returned their rightful owners?
- What does this proclamation reveal about the justice system?

Transcript

By the King

A PROCLAMATION

For restoring Goods embezzled during the late Fire and since.

CHARLES R.

Whereas the general amazement and distraction occasioned by the late dreadful Fire was so great that many persons were surprised and overtaken by the Flames before they could get time or opportunity to remove any part of their Goods, and others who made a shift to remove some of their goods, did yet do it in that haste and confusion, that they were fain to leave vey much behind them. By reason whereof great quantities of Plate, Money, Jewels, household stuff, Goods and Merchandise, besides many valuable Materials for Building are daily found out and discovered amongst the Ruins of those several houses which have been destroyed to which nevertheless the true Owners are still legally and rightfully entitled and have in so lost their property. Nor will the finding of any Goods thus exposed excuse any person who shall wilfully or feloniously take and carry them away from incurring the penalties of Law, which may in some cases extend even to the loss of life, and in all cases which extend to fine and Imprisonment, besides the Damages which the injured party may recover by Action. And whereas also divers persons have not withstanding adventured, and do still daily presume to take, seize, and carry away whatever they can find or lay hands upon, which may be of any value or consideration, of whom some few may possibly intend to restore the same to the Rightful Owners as soon as they shall be known; And others may possibly have offended in this kind merely through ignorance not well understanding the

Restoring goods stolen during the fire

Catalogue Ref: SP 45/12 p1 f231 & 232

nature of their crimes in Law, not knowing the dangerous consequences of their offences, nor the liberties to which they are become liable. His Majesty therefore to the end that all His

...

Subjects may know the danger of the Law, and that they be left without any kind of excuse or pity if they bring the extremities of Law upon themselves, hath by this his Royal Proclamation to publish and declare, and both hereby require and commend all persons whatever who have seized or possessed any Plate, Jewels, Money, Household stuff, Goods or Merchandise, or any Materials for building not truly and of right belonging to them, That they do within the space or eight days after this his Proclamation cause the same to be brought into the Armory in Finsbury-Fields, and there delivered unto such persons as by the Lord Mayor and Court Aldermen shall be appointed to receive them. To the end the same may be Inventoried and preserved there for the true and rightful Owners and restored to them after the Charges of keeping the same. And a competent Reward to the Parties who found them and brought them in shall be first deducted, which Reward shall be assessed by the Lord Mayor and Aldermen, or such other of the Court of Aldermen as by them shall be appointed. And the Names of the Parties who ought to receive the said Reward shall be duly Registered and Entered: And His Majesty doth hereby declare That all persons in whose possession any Goods or Merchandises shall be found after the said Eight days expired, whereof they cannot prove themselves to be the true and Lawful proprietors, shall be proceeded against in his Name and at his Suit, as persons that have broken the Peace, and possess themselves by Rapines and spoil of other men's Goods, his Majesty being resolved to punish these Crimes and offences with the utmost severities of Law, and even with the paines of felony where the case will bear it. And hereof all Judges, Justices of Peace, Mayors, Jurors, Constables and all others his Majesties Officers and Ministers in all his Courts of Justice and Public Sessions are required to take notice, and to see that strict and effectual prosecution be had accordingly.

Given at our Court at Whitehall the Nineteenth day of September in the Eighteenth year of Our Reign

God Save the King

LONDON

Printed by John Bill and Christopher Barker, Printers to the Kings Most Excellent Majesty,
1666

Restoring goods stolen during the fire

Catalogue Ref: SP 45/12 p1 f231 & 232

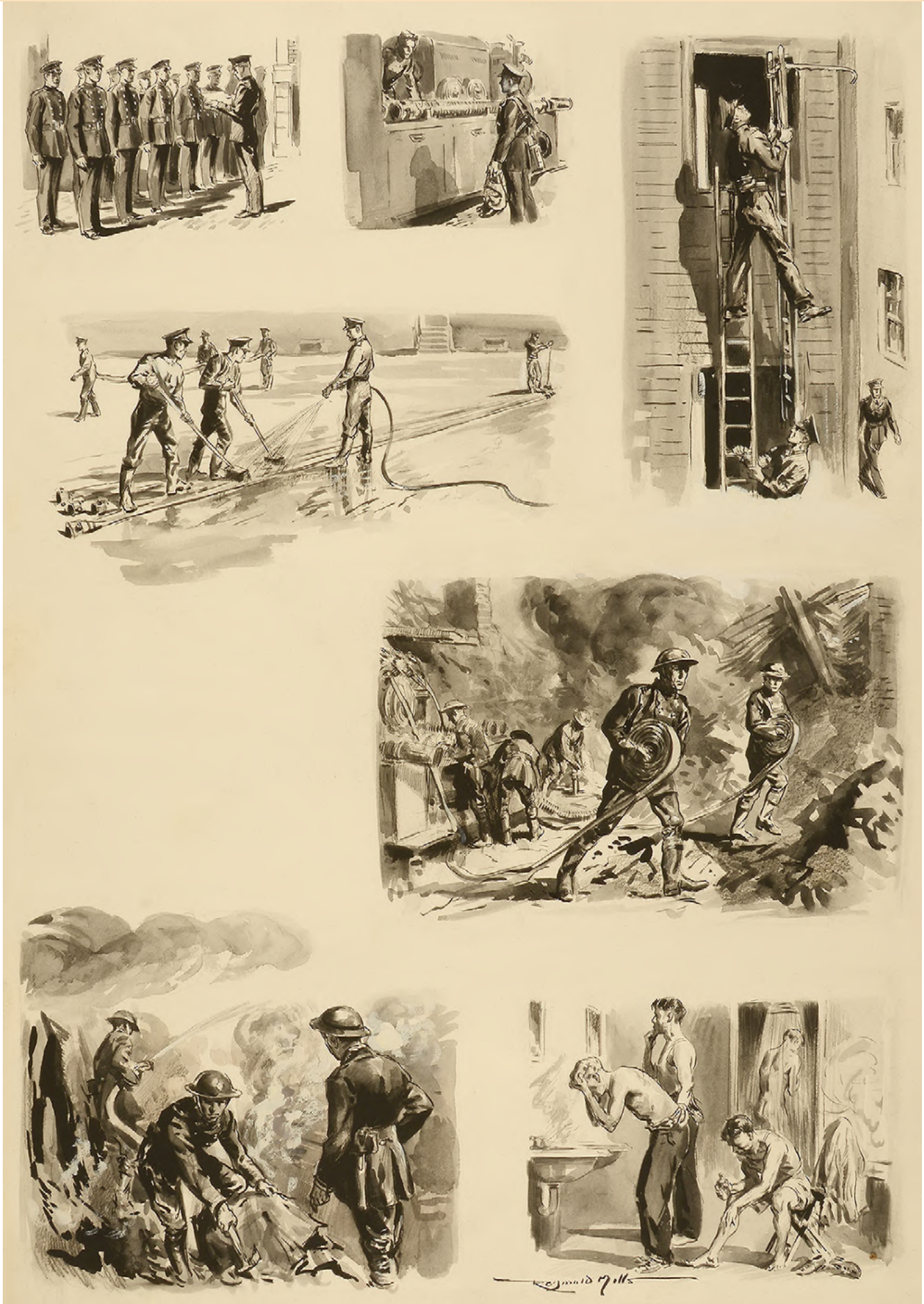
Simplified transcript

When the fire broke out, many people were in such a rush to escape for their own safety that they forgot to take their personal belongings, such as money, jewels, and other household items. Amongst the ruins of the fire, many of these goods are being found, which rightfully belong to those who initially owned them. Any person who is finding these goods and taking them away, when they are not rightfully theirs, will be punished.

If anyone has seized goods which are not rightfully theirs, they have 8 days after this proclamation to take the goods to the Armory in Finsbury Fields and be delivered to the Lord Mayor and other local authorities, where they can be returned to their rightful owners. If this is done, a reward to the people who found the goods and brought them to the authorities will be given. If people do not return goods which are not rightfully theirs within the 8 days, they shall be punished by the law, and punished severely.

Second World War fire service

Catalogue Ref: INF 3/1271



Second World War fire service

Catalogue Ref: INF 3/1271

Seven pictures illustrating the fire service in the Second World War. Catalogue ref: INF 3/1271

Reginald Mills (1896-1950) was a British painter and an illustrator of children's books. He joined the Auxiliary Fire Service during the Second World War. He also produced a collection of paintings based on the Blitz.

- Find out about the role of the Auxiliary Fire Service during the Second World War.
- What changes in firefighting methods during the Second World War are suggested by these pictures following (a) the Victorian period and (b) London in 1666?

Visual description

A series of seven pictures illustrating the fire service in the Second World War.

Starting from the top left:

1. Ten uniformed firemen wearing peaked caps stand in front of a commanding officer holding a piece of paper.
2. A woman with a scarf tied around her head leans out of a fire engine fitted with two coiled hoses on the side and talks to a fireman who carries a bag containing a pair of boots.
3. A fireman stands at the top of a ladder leaning against the window of a tall building and holds onto a shorter second ladder attached to the wall next to the window. A second fireman secures the main ladder below. A man is walking past in the adjacent street.
4. Seven men are shown using fire hoses.
5. Two men with coiled fire hoses move towards a damaged building covered in smoke. Three men behind them are operating a mechanical water pump attached to fire hoses which other men hold.
6. A fireman wearing a helmet is holding a hose pointing into billowing smoke. Two other firemen in helmets attend the scene.
7. Four men wash or shower in a washroom after their shift.

Stop the fire: 'remove combustible matter'

Catalogue Ref: SP 29/171 f9



9

Whereas Wee are given to understand, That notwithstanding all
 y^e care hitherto used for y^e removing & taking away whatsoever
 might foment or revive y^e late dreadful Fire, there are
 yet found remaining in severall parts, great Stacks
 of Faggots, Bauls, & quantities of other combustible
 matter, to y^e great hazard of those parts in case of
 further Accident of Fire, Which Wee entend every
 where & by all means to provide against, Our Will
 & Pleasure is, & Wee doe hereby authorize & require
 you & every of y^e, to cause forthwith Diligent Search to be made
 in y^e respective Parishes, precincts, quarters & Divisions for
 all such Stacks, heapes, Bonds, & quantities of Faggots,
 Bauls, & other combustible matter of all kinds, and to
 warne & require y^e Several Owners to remove & carry away
 y^e same wth some remote parts wth y^e space of forty eight
 hours next after such Warning, and in case of failure or
 refusal by them. Our Will & Pleasure That you doe then give
 order to have y^e same removed & disposed of as you shall thinke
 fitt for y^e security of those parts, Taking care in y^e meane tyme
 that y^e respective Parishes where they are so found, doe keep a good
 & sufficient Watch upon them. Whosoever y^e nor they may faile.
 And for so doing this shall be y^e & their Warrant. Given att
 Our Court at Whitehall v^z 9th Day of Sept. 1666.

To Our trusty & wellbelov'd
 y^e Justices of Peace,
 of y^e County of Middlesex,
 y^e Several Wardes adjoining, & their Deputies, and all other
 our Officers & Ministers whom it may concern, & to every of
 them.

By his M^{ty} Comand.

Stop the fire: 'remove combustible matter'

Catalogue Ref: SP 29/171 f9

Instruction from Charles II at Whitehall to the Justices of the Peace, Aldermen, and local officers, 9 September 1666. Catalogue ref: SP 29/171 f9.

- What has Charles II ordered the authorities to do to prevent further fire?
- How is this order to be enforced?
- What is the value of this document for finding out about the Great Fire?

Transcript

September 9, Whitehall

Whereas we are given to understand that notwithstanding all the care for the removing and taking away whatsoever might foment [cause] or revive the late dreadful fire, there are yet found remaining in several parts, great stacks of faggots, bavins, and quantities of other combustible matter to the great hazard of those parts. In case of further Accident of Fire, which we endeavour everywhere and by all means to provide against, Our Will and Pleasure is and we do hereby authorize and require you and every of you to cause further diligent search to be made in your respective parishes, precincts, quarters and divisions for all such stacks, heaps, stores and quantities of faggots, bavins and other combustible matter of all kinds, and to warn and require several owners to remove and carry away the same into some remoter parts within the space of forty eight hours next after such warning and in case of failure or refusal by them, Our Majesty's Will and Pleasure that you do then give order to have of same removed and disposed of as, you shall think fit for the security of those parts, taking care in the meantime that the respective Parishes where they are so found do keep a good and sufficient watch upon them. Whereof you nor they may fail and for so doing this shall be your and their warrant. Given at Our Court at Whitehall 9th Day of September by His Majesty's Command.

To our truly Beloved Justices of the Peace within the limits of communication, And the respective Aldermen of the several wards adjoining and their deputies and to all other our officers and ministers whom it may concern and every one of them.

Simplified transcript

Stop the fire: 'remove combustible matter'

Catalogue Ref: SP 29/171 f9

The King understands that despite all the care for the removing anything that might cause the fire to start again, there remain in parts of the city great piles of sticks and bundles of wood which are very dangerous. In case of further fire, it is the King's wish you have the authority to search in parishes, precincts, quarters, and divisions for all such stacks, heaps, stores and quantities of faggots [bundles of sticks], and other matter which is a fire hazard and to warn and the owners to remove it and take away to safer places in the next forty-eight hours. If there is failure or refusal to do this, his Majesty gives the authorities permission to get rid of it, to secure the safety in these places, taking care to keep a good watch on the parishes.

Given at Our Court at Whitehall 9th Day of September by His Majesty's Command. To Justices of the Peace, Aldermen and their deputies and other officers and ministers whom it may concern.

The fire was a 'heavy judgement'

Catalogue Ref: SP 29/170 f.154

Letter from Sir Geoffrey Shakersley, Chester Castle, to Joseph Williamson, 8 September 1666. Catalogue ref: SP 29/170 f.154.

Joseph Williamson (1633-1701) was the Under-Secretary of State (1660-74) and Keeper of the State Papers which he reorganised from (1661-1701.) He also started the 'Oxford Gazette' at the time of the Great Plague in 1665, which later became established as the 'London Gazette'.

- How have people reacted to the fire of London according to the writer?
- How does the writer hope the country will recover from the event?
- What is the historical value of this personal letter addressed to Joseph Williamson?

Transcript

The great astonishment and amazement now are put into by the fearful alarm of the most sound & heavy judgement fallen upon the City of London, is not to be expressed, I as from all relations now yet have, nothing concluded but a total devastation & destruction of our metropolis which God in mercy prevent. I know no full relation can be given of such sudden, so great, so sad a story, but the most truest I felt amongst you have thereof, as also from his Majesties naval forces at sea. I pray be pleased to give unto

Your affectionate and Humble servant

Chester Castle

8 September 66

Sir Geoffrey Shakersley

Simplified Transcript


Everyone is greatly amazed and astonished by the heavy judgement fallen upon the City of London. I cannot fully express people's amazement and astonishment in writing. The fire has resulted in the total devastation & destruction of the metropolis. which God in mercy pardon. I know no full retelling can be given of such a sad story, but I felt you would have the truest story, and will the king's naval forces at sea(?).

Your affectionate and humble servant

Thomas Dagger wants to buy a ship

Catalogue Ref: ADM 106/317 f1

Rt Honble
Understanding the ~~Barwith~~ ^{Barwith} hoy lying
in West Dock at Deptford is to be sold, I humbly
crave to buy her of her ~~owner~~ ^{owner}, in which and
I humbly crave to be called in to know you
prior
am
Yrs. I humbly humble
for.
Thomas Dagger of
Billingsgate ~~London~~
3. Jan. 75
mead G.



Thomas Dagger wants to buy a ship

Catalogue Ref: ADM 106/317 f1

Thomas Dagger, a Billingsgate baker, wishes to buy a ship, 1675. Catalogue ref: ADM 106/317 f1

Thomas Dagger, an apprentice baker at the time, is thought to have first raised the alarm about the fire at Thomas Farriner's property in Pudding Lane, where the Great Fire of London started. Eleven years later he is hoping to buy a ship. It is difficult to know why he wants to buy this ship but maybe he wanted to use it for transporting foodstuffs for his business or maybe he had a contract with the Navy or possibly he thought it was a good opportunity!

A hoy is a small single masted ship, or a heavy barge often used to carry cargo or passengers to a larger ship in the Thames Estuary. Deptford dockyard was the leading dockyard from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century.

A wet dock meant that the water is shut in and kept at a given level to facilitate the loading and unloading of ships.

- According to the document, what is Thomas Dagger's profession?
- Why do you think he wants to buy a ship?
- Why do you think this document comes from the Admiralty records (shown by the ADM code in the catalogue reference)?

Transcript

Right Honourable,

Understanding the Harwich hoy lying in Wett Dock at Deptford is to be sold, I humbly crave to buy her for the bounty, to which end I humbly crave to called into know your price.

I am your Lords humble servant,

Thomas Dagger Esq.

Billingsgate Baker

3 June 1675

Thomas Dagger wants to buy a ship

Catalogue Ref: ADM 106/317 f1

Simplified transcript

Dear Sir

I understand that the single mast ship (from Harwich) in Deptford docks is for sale. I would love to buy the ship and I would like to know the price.

I am your grateful servant,

Thomas Dagger of

Billingsgate Baker

3 January 1675

Troops used to put out 'a raging fire'

Catalogue Ref: SP 29/170 f.126

126
144

After Our hearty comendations His Ma^{ty} having
 on the 4th of this instant warned you to draw the
 Militia Troops together so severall Rendezvous
 in order to the greater service of these Citties now
 lying under the calamitous hand of God. by a raging
 Fire w^{ch} in his great mercy hee hath pleased much
 to abate & finding all hands wearied in working —
 towards it It is his Ma^{ty} Pleasure & command that
 immediately upon sight hereof you order the marching
 hither of two hundred Foot Souldiers with victuals
 for twice 24 hours & carts attending them laden
 with Pick axes, ~~hammers~~^{axes}, Crowes of Iron, hooks,
 Ropes, Buckets, or Pales with what other Tools &
 Instruments you shall judge fit for the extinguishing
 the further spreading of the Fire the same to
 rendezvous at Knightland near Bishopgate there to
 receive further Order; And it is His Ma^{ty} furth^r
 Pleasure that without delay you cause to assemble
 the Justices of the Peace with you the Deputy —
 Lieutenants quickning them in the execution of these
 Orders ^{or also of those formerly sent by his Ma^{ty}} ~~with all~~ ^{with all} ~~Provisions~~ ^{Provisions} possible especially Bread &
 Cheese, least the want of ~~it~~ ^{these} produce a Calamity equall
 to that Wee labour under already. From Whitehall
 this 6th of September 1666 / 5

Troops used to put out 'a raging fire'

Catalogue Ref: SP 29/170 f.126

Letter from Lord Arlington at Whitehall to the Lieutenant of Hertfordshire. 6 September 1666. Catalogue ref: SP 29/170 f.126

- How many soldiers has Charles II ordered to march from Herefordshire to London?
- How do you think the tools and other items asked for will be used to put out the fire?
- How does this source explain the cause of the fire?
- Why has the king asked for food to be sent with the equipment?

Transcript

After Our hearty commendations His Majesty having on the 4th of this instant warned you to draw the Troops together 80 several Rendezvous in order to the greater service of their Citties now lying under the calamitous hand of God by a raging Fire which in his great mercy hee hath pleased much to abate and finding all hands wearied in working towards it. It is his Majesty's Pleasure and command that immediately upon sight here of you order the marching hither of two hundred Foot soldiers with victuals for twice 24 hours & carts attending them laden with pick axes, hammers, axes, crowes of iron [crowbar], hooks, ropes, buckets, or Pales with what other tools and instruments you shall judge fit for the extinguishing the further spreading of the Fire, the same to rendezvous at Kingsland near Bishopsgate there to receive further order. And it is His Majesty's further Pleasure that without delay you cause to assemble the Justices of the Peace with you the Deputy Lieutenants quickening them in the execution of these orders & also to [forward the bringing in] of provisions possible especially Bread and Cheese lest the want of thereof produce a calamity equal to that Wee labour under already. From Whitehall this 6th September 1666

Simplified Transcript

After advice, His Majesty asked you earlier, on 4th September, to call the troops to gather at 80 meeting points to serve their city now facing the disastrous hand of God by a raging fire. In his great mercy, he has pleased us by stopping the fire as many are exhausted in trying to put it out. It is his Majesty's wish and command that you immediately order two hundred soldiers to march here bringing food for two days & carts full of pickaxes, axes, crowbars, hooks, ropes, and buckets with other tools and instruments useful for putting out the fire. The same orders to be given to meet at Kingsland near Bishopsgate for further instructions. And it is also His Majesty's wish, that without delay, the Justices of the Peace are gathered with and the Deputy Lieutenants to speed up the carrying out of these orders and

Troops used to put out 'a raging fire'

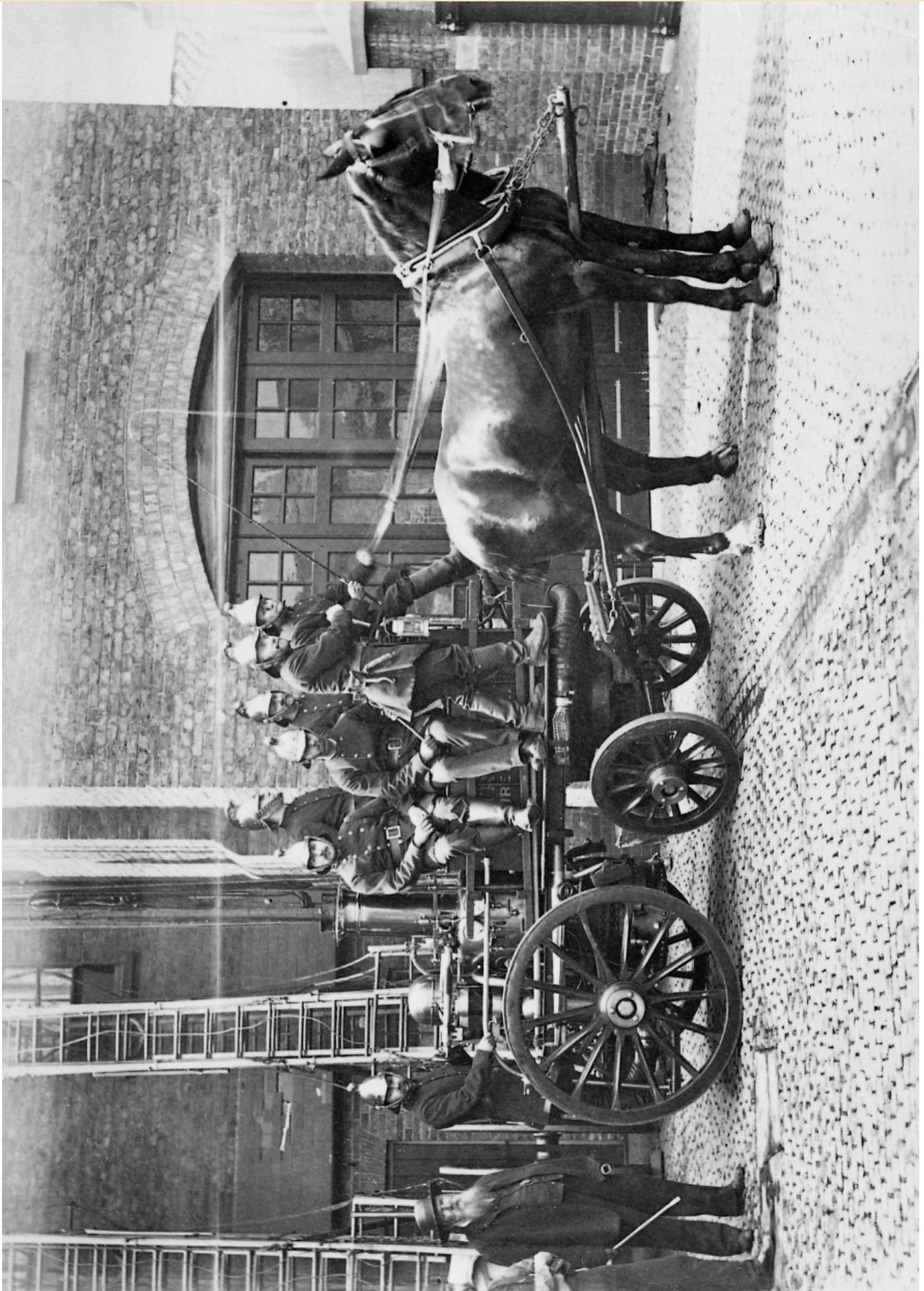
Catalogue Ref: SP 29/170 f.126

encourage the bringing in of provisions, especially bread and cheese in case of hunger, so to avoid another equal disaster to the one we face already.

From Whitehall this 6th September 1666

Victorian fire fighters 1884

Catalogue Ref: COPY 1/369 f253



Victorian fire fighters 1884

Catalogue Ref: COPY 1/369 f253

Photograph of fire engine manned by seven firemen with a pair of horses.

Copyright owner: Charles Spurgeon, 32 Devonshire Road, Greenwich, Kent. Author of work: R. L. Sirius, 26 King Street, Greenwich, Kent. 12 September 1884. Catalogue ref: COPY 1/369 f253.

- What does this photograph reveal about methods used to fight fire in 1884?
- How do these methods differ from any recorded in the seventeenth century documents?

Will of Thomas Farriner 1670

Catalogue Ref: PROB 11/334/567 f.362

In the Name of God Amen: I Thomas Farriner Citizen and Habiter of London being weak in Body but of good Understanding and memory, Praised be God therefore doe make and ordaine this my last Will and Testament as followeth; First, I bequeath my Soule to God that giveth out my Soules to the Command to be busyed in Christian Duty as trusting and assuredly believing as I thought to be redemption that is in Jesus Christ Our Lord to obteyne a blessed Resurrection in that great Day of his Appearing. And remaining that small portion of this Worlds Good to be divided to such as I have in this life I do freely dispose thereof in this manner as followeth; As I give and bequeath to my daughter Annab. Farriner now the wife of Antholias Day of London but by the Summe of One hundred pounds Item I give and bequeath to my daughter Mr. Farriner now the Wife of Thomas Dafford of London half the Summe of One hundred pounds to be paid unto them by my Executor out of my personall estate in four years. Next after my decease that is to say, To my daughter Annab. twenty and five pounds a year yearly next after my decease, untill One hundred and five pounds be fully paid to her, if she live so long; Item I give unto my loving Friend Robert Cooper the Summe of forty Shillings; Item I give to my loving Friend Mr. Daniel Harris of London, the Summe of twenty Shillings; All the rest of my estate as well, as all my personal Goods and chattels, moveables or immoveables of what soever Qualitie or Condition it be, I give and bequeath to my loving Son & Heir Thomas Farriner, whom I doe hereby nominate, constitute and ordaine my sole Executor. Next I doe nominate and appoint my loving Friends Mr. Robert Berry and Mr. Daniel Harris to be Overseers of this my last Will and Testament; In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand &

Solely

Solely this fourth Day of September Anno Domini One thousand six hundred and seventie and in the two and twentieth year of the Reigne of Our

Will of Thomas Farriner 1670

Catalogue Ref: PROB 11/334/567 f.362

Will of Thomas Farriner, baker of London, 23 December 1670. Catalogue ref: PROB 11/334/567 f.362

- Why do you think Thomas Farriner made this will?
- What is the value of this will for finding out about the life of Thomas Farriner?
- Explore the will of Samuel Pepys using our lesson resource.

Transcript

....

In the name of God Amen

I Thomas Farriner, Cittizen and Baker of London being weake in Body but of good Understanding and memorie, Praised be God therefore Doe make and ordaine this my last Will and Testament as followeth; First, I bequeath my Soule to God that gave it, and my Bodie to the Ground to bee buried in Christian Buryall, trusting and assuredly beleiving through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ Our Lord to obtayne a blessed Resurrection in that great Day of his Appearing; And conc[er]ning that small portion of this Worlds Goods wherewith God hath blessed mee in this life I doe freely dispose thereof in this manner as followeth; Inprimis, I give and bequeath to my daughter Hannah Farriner (now the wife of Nicholas Day of London , baker) the Summe of One hundred pounds. Item I give and bequeath to my daughter Mary Farriner now the Wife of Thomas Halford of London baker the Summe of One hundred pounds, to be payd unto them by my Executor out of my personall estate in foure yeares next after my decease, that is to say, To my daughter Hannah twenty and five pounds a yeare yearly next after my disease untill One hundred pounds bee fully payd to her, (if shee live soe long;) And to my Daughter Mary twentie and five pounds a yeare yearly next after my decease, untill one hundred Pounds bee fully payd to her, if shee live soe long; Item I give to my loving Freind Robert Berry of London Cooper the Summe of fortie Shillings; Item I give to my loving Friend Mr Daniel Harris of London Cooper the Summe of twentie Shillings; All the rest of my estate as well reall as personall Goods and chatells movable or unmovable of whatsoever Qualitie or Condition it bee, I give and bequeath to my loving Sonne Thomas Farriner, whome I doe hereby nominate constitute and ordaine my sole Executor; Alsoe I do nominate and appoynt my loving Freinds Mr. Robert Berry and Mr: Daniel Harris to bee Overseers of this my last Will and Testament; In witnesse whereof I have hereunto set my hand & Seale this fourth Day of December Anno Domini One thousand six hundred and seaventie....

Will of Thomas Farriner 1670

Catalogue Ref: PROB 11/334/567 f.362

Simplified transcript

In the name of God Amen

I, Thomas Farriner, dweller and baker of London being weak in body but of good understanding and memory, make and intend this to be my last will and testament. First, I leave my soul to God that gave it, and my body for a Christian burial. As for the small number of possessions that God has blessed me with, I freely give the following: I give to my daughter Hannah Farriner (now the wife of Nicholas Day of London, baker) the sum of one hundred pounds. I give and bequeath to my daughter Mary Farriner now the wife of Thomas Halford of London, baker, the sum of one hundred pounds, to be paid unto them by my Executor out of my personal estate over four years after my death. To my daughter Hannah, twenty and five pounds a year after my death until one hundred pounds has been paid out to her, (if she lives long enough). And to my daughter Mary twenty and five pounds a year after my death, until one hundred pounds has been paid to her if she lives that long. I give to my loving friend Robert Berry of London, cooper (maker of oak barrels) the sum of 40 shillings. I give to my loving friend Mr Daniel Harris of London, cooper, the sum of 20 shillings. All the rest of my property, as well as personal goods and movable or unmovable objects whatever the condition, I leave to my loving son, Thomas Farriner, whom I name as my sole Executor. I also appoint my loving friends Mr. Robert Berry and Mr: Daniel Harris to be overseers of this, my last Will and Testament and witness everything I have written & sealed this fourth day of December 1670.

'A true relation' of the 'sad and deplorable Fire'

Catalogue Ref: SP 29/170 f150

A True

RELATION,

Of that sad and deplorable Fire, that hapned and brake out in *London*, the second of *September*, 1666. as it came from *Whitehall*, the 8th. of the same moneth, and there published by Authority.

ON the second instant at one of the clock in the Morning, there hapned to break out a sad and lamentable Fire, in *Pudding-lane* near *New Fishstreet*, which falling out at that hour of the night, and in a quarter of the *Town* so close built with wooden pitched houses, spread it self so far before day, and with such distractions to the Inhabitants and Neighbours, that care was not taken for the timely preventing the further diffusion of it by pulling down houses, as ought to have been; so that this lamentable Fire in a short time became too big to be mastered by any Engine or working near it. It fell out most unhappily too, That a violent Easterly wind fanned it, and kept it burning all that day, and the night following, spreading it self up to *Grace-Church street*, and downwards from *Cannon street* to the water-side as far as the *Three Cranes in the Pinny*. The People in all parts about it distracted with the vastness of it, and their particular care to carry away their Goods, many attempts were made to prevent the spreading of it, by pulling down Houses, and making great Intervals; but all in vain, the Fire feising upon the Timber and Rubbish, and so continuing it self, even through those spaces, and raging in a bright Flame all Monday and Tuesday, notwithstanding his Majesties own, and his Royal Highness's indefatigable and personall pains to apply all possible remedies to prevent it, calling upon, and helping the people with their Guards; and a great number of Nobility and Gentry unweariedly assisting therein, for which they were requited with a thousand blessings from the poor distressed people. By the favour of God the Wind slackned a little on Tuesday night, and the Flame meeting with Brick buildings at the Temple, by little and little it was observed to lose it's force on that side, so that on Wednesday morning, we began to hope well, and his Royal Highness never despairing or slackning his personall care, wrought so well that day, assisted in some parts by the Lords of the Council before and behind it, that a stop was put to it at the Temple Church, near Holborn bridge, Pie-corner, Alders-gate, Cripple-gate, near the lower end of Colemanstreet, at the end of Basing-hall-street by the Postern, at the upper end of Bishopsgate-street, and Leaden-hall-street, at the Standard in Cornhill, at the Church in Fan-church-street, near Chishworkes-hall in Minnyng lane, at the middle of Mark-lane, and at the Tower dock. On Thursday by the blessing of God it was wholly beat down and extinguished; but so as that Evening it unhappily burst out again afresh at the Temple, by the falling of some sparks (as is supposed) upon a pile of Wooden buildings, But his Royal Highness who watched there that whole night in Person, by the great labours and diligence used, and especially Powder to blow up the Houses about it, before day most happily mastered it. Divers Strangers, Dutch and French, were, during the Fire, apprehended, upon suspicion that they contributed mischievously to it, who are all Imprisoned, and Informations prepared to make a severe inquisition thereupon by my Lord Chief Justice Keeling, assisted by some of the Lords of the Privy Council, and some principal Members of the City; notwithstanding which suspitions, the manner of the burning all along in a Train, and so blown forwards in all it's way by strong winds, makes us conclude, the whole was the effect of an unhappy chance, or to speak better, the heavy hand of God upon us for our sins, shewing us the terror of his Judgment in thus raising the fire; and immediately after, his miraculous, and never enough to be acknowledged Mercy, in putting a stop to it when we were in the last despair, and that all attempts for the quenching it, however industriously pursued, seemed insufficient. His Majesty then sat hourly in Council, and ever since hath continued making rounds about the City in all parts of it where the danger and mischief was greatest, till this morning that he hath sent his Gracethe Duke of Albemarle, whom he hath called for to assist him in this great occasion, to put his happy and successfull hand to the finishing this memorable deliverance. About the Tower the reasonable orders given for plucking down Houses to secure the Magazines of Powder, was more especially successful, that part being up the Wind, notwithstanding which it came almost to the very Gates of it, so as by this early provision, the severall stores of War lodged in the Tower were entirely saved: And we have further this infinite cause particularly to give God thanks that the Fire did not happen in any of those places where his Majesties Naval stores are kept, so as tho it hath pleased God to visit us with his own hand, he hath not, by dis-furnishing us with the means of carrying on the War, subjected us to our enemies. It must be observed, that this Fire happened in a part of the Town, where tho the Commodities were not very rich, yet they were so bulky that they could not well be removed, so that the Inhabitants of that part where it first began have sustained very great loss, but by the best inquiry we can make, the other parts of the Town, where the Commodities were of greater value, took the Alarm so early, that they saved most of their Goods of value, which possibly may have diminished the loss; though some think, that if the whole industry of the Inhabitants had been applied to the stopping of the fire, and not to the saving of their particular Goods, the success might have been much better, not onely to the Publick, but to many of them in their own particulars. Through this sad Accident, it is easie to be imagined how many Persons were necessitated to remove themselves and Goods into the open fields, where they were forced to continue some time, which could not but work compassion in the beholders; but his Majesties care was most signall in this occasion, who, besides his personall pains, was frequent in consulting all ways for relieving those distressed persons, which produced so good effect, as well by his Majesties Proclamations, and the Orders issued to the Neighbour Justices of the Peace, to encourage the sending in provisions to the Markets, which are publicly known, as by other directions, that when his Majesty, fearing lest other Orders might not have been sufficient, had commanded the Victualer of his Navy, to send Bread into Moor-fields, for the relief of the poor, which for more speedy supply he sent in Bisket out of the Sea stores; it was found, that the Markets had been already so well supplied, that the people, being unaccustomed to that kind of Bread, declined it, and so it was returned in great part to his Majesties Stores again, without use made of it.

And we cannot but observe, to the confusion of all his Majesties Enemies, who endeavoured to perswade the World abroad of great parties and dissension at home against his Majesties Government; That a greater instance of the affections of this City could never be given, then hath been now given in this sad and deplorable Accident, when, if at any time disorder might have been expected from the losses, distractions, and almost desperation of some persons in their private fortunes, thousands of people not having had Habitations to cover them. And yet, in all this time, it hath been so far from any appearance of designs, or attempts against his Majesties Government, that his Majesty and his Royal Brother, out of their care to stop and prevent the fire, frequently exposing their Persons with very small attendants in all parts of the Town, sometimes even to be intermixed with those who laboured in the business; yet nevertheless, there hath not been offered so much as a murmuring word to fall from any; but on the contrary, even those persons whose losses rendered their conditions most desperate, and to be fit objects of others Prayers, beholding those frequent instances of his Majesties care of his people, forgot their own misery, and filled the Streets with their Prayers for his Majesty, whose trouble they seemed to compassionate before their own.

LONDON, Printed by Stephen Bulkeley, for Francis Manbarne, 1666.

'A true relation' of the 'sad and deplorable Fire'

Catalogue Ref: SP 29/170 f150

A broadside (printed sheet) which also appeared in the London Gazette on 10 September 1666. Catalogue ref; SP 29/170 f150

- How does this document try to convey that it is a reliable source of news?
- What reasons are given for the spread of the fire?
- What steps were taken to stop the spread of the fire?
- How did Charles II respond to the fire?
- How is his role portrayed?

Transcript

A True

RELATION

Of that sad and deplorable Fire, that happened and brake out in London, the second of September 1666, as it came from Whitehall, the 8th of the same month, and there published by Authority.

ON the second instant at one of the clock in the Morning, there happened to break out a sad and lamentable Fire in Pudding Lane near New Firth Street, which falling at that hour of the night, and in a quarter of the Town so close built with wooden pitched houses spread itself so far before day, and with such distractions to the Inhabitants and Neighbours, that care was not taken for the timely preventing the further diffusion of it by pulling down houses, as ought to have, so that this lamentable Fire in a short time became too big to be mastered by any Engine or working near it. It fell out most unhappily too, that a violent Easterly wind fomented it, and kept it burning all that day, and the night following, spreading itself up to Grace Church Street, and downwards from Canon Street to the waterside as far as the Three Cranes in the Vintry, [Upper Thames Street tavern]. The People in parts about it distracted with vastness of it, and their particular care to carry away their Goodes, many attempts were made to prevent the spreading of it by pulling down houses, and making great intervals, but all in vain, the Fire seizing upon the Timber and Rubbish, and so continuing itself, even through those spaces, and raging in a bright Fame all Monday and Tuesday, notwithstanding his Majesty's own, and his Royal Highness's indefatigable and personal pains to apply all possible remedies to prevent it, calling upon, and helping the people with their Guards; and a great number of Nobility and Gentry unweariedly assisting therein for which they were required with a thousand blessings from

'A true relation' of the 'sad and deplorable Fire'

Catalogue Ref: SP 29/170 f150

the poor distressed people. By the favour of God the wind slackened a little on Tuesday night, and the Flames meeting the brick buildings at the Temple, by little and little it was observed to lose its force on that side, so that on Wednesday morning we began to hope well and his Royal Highness never despairing or slackening his personal care, wrought so well that day, assisted in some parts by the Lords of Council before and behind it, that a stop was put to it at the Temple Church, near Holborn Bridge, Pie Corner, Aldgate, Cripple gate, near the lower end of Coleman Street, at the end of Basing Hall Street by the Postern, at the upper end of Bishopsgate Street and Loaden-Hall Street, at the Standard in Cornhill, at the Church in Fan Church Street, near Clothworkers Hall in Mincing Lane, at the middle of Mark Lane, and at the Tower dock. On Thursday by the blessing of God it was wholly beat down and extinguished but so as that Evening it happily burst out again afresh at the Temple, by the falling of some sparks (as is supposed) upon a pile of Wooden buildings. But his Royal Highness who watched there that whole night in Person, by the great labours and diligence used, and especially Powder to blow up the Houses about it before day most happily mastered it. Divers Strangers, Dutch and French were during the Fire, apprehended, upon suspicion that they contributed mischievously to it, who are all Imprisoned and Informations prepared to make a severe inquisition thereupon by my Lord Chief Justice Keeling, assisted by some of the Lords of the Privy council, and some principal Members of the City notwithstanding which suspicions, the manner of the burning all along in a Train and so blown forwards in all its way by strong winds, makes us conclude, the whole was the effect of an unhappy chance, or to speak better, the heavy hand of God upon us for our sins, shewing us the terror of his Judgment in thus raising the fire; and immediately after his miraculous and never enough to be acknowledged Mercy in putting a stop to it when we were in the last despair, and that all attempts for the quenching it, however industriously pursued, seemed insufficient. His Majesty then sat hourly in council, and ever since hath continued making rounds about the City in all parts of it where the danger and mischief was greatest, till this morning that he hath sent his Grace the Duke of Albemarle whom he has called for to assist him in this great occasion to put his happy and successful hand to the finishing this memorable deliverance. About the Tower the seasonable orders given for plucking down Houses to secure the Magazines of Powder was more especially successful, that part being up the Wind, notwithstanding which it came almost to the very Gates of it, so as by this early provision, the several stores of War lodged in the Tower were entirely saved; And we have further this infinite cause particularly to give to God thanks that the Fire did not happen in any of those places where his Majesty's Naval stores are kept, so as tho.' it has pleased God to visit us with his own hand, he hath not, by disfurnishing us with the means of carrying on the War, subject us to our enemies. It must be observed that this Fire happened in a part of the Town, where tho.' the Commodities were not very rich, yet

'A true relation' of the 'sad and deplorable Fire'

Catalogue Ref: SP 29/170 f150

they were so bulky that they could not well be removed, so that the inhabitants of that part where it first began have sustained very great loss, but by the best inquiry we can make, the other parts of the Town, where the Commodities were of greater value, took the Alarm so early, that they saved most of their goods of value, which possibly may have diminished the loss; though some think, that if the whole industry of the Inhabitants had been applied to the stopping of the fire, and not to the saving of their particular Goods, the success might have been much better, not only to the Public, but to many of them in their own particulars. Through this sad accident, it is easy to be imagined how many Persons were necessitated to remove themselves and Goods into open fields, where they were forced to continue some time, which could not but work compassion in the beholders, but his Majesty's care was most signal in this occasion, who, besides his personal pains, was frequent in consulting all ways for relieving those distressed persons, which produced so good effect, as well by his Majesty's Proclamations and the Orders issued to the Neighbour Justices of the Peace, to encourage the sending in provisions to the Markets which are publicly know, as by other directions, that when his Majesty, fearing less other Orders might not have been sufficient, had commanded the Victualler of his Navy, to send Bread into Moor-fields for the relief of the poor, which for more speedy supply he sent in Bisket out of the Sea [ships biscuits] stores. It was found that the Markets had been already so well supplied, that the people, being unaccustomed to the kind of Bread, declined it, and so it was returned in great part to his Majesty's Stores again, without use made of it.

And we cannot but observe, to the confutation of all his Majesty's enemies, who endeavoured to persuade the World abroad of great parties and disaffection at home against his Majesty's Government, That a greater instance of the affections of this City could never be given, then hath been now given in this sad and deplorable Accident, when if at any time disorder might have been expected from the losses, distractions and almost desperation of some persons in their private fortunes, thousands of people not having had Habitations to cover them. And yet, in all this time, it hath been so far from any appearance of designs, or attempts against His Majesty's Government that his Majesty and his Royal brother, out of their own care to stop and prevent the fire, frequently exposing their Persons with very small attendants in all parts of the Town, sometimes even to be intermixed with those who laboured in the business, yet nevertheless there hath not been observed, so much as a murmuring word to fall from any, but on the contrary, even those persons whose losses rendered their conditions most desperate and to be fit objects of others Prayers, by those frequent instances of his Majesty's care of his people forgot their own misery, and filled the streets with their Prayers for his Majesty, whose trouble they seemed so compassionate before their own.

'A true relation' of the 'sad and deplorable Fire'

Catalogue Ref: SP 29/170 f150

YORK, Printed by Stephen Bulkley, for Francis Mawbarne, 1666

Simplified transcript

A true account of that sad and terrible fire, that broke out in London, on 2 September 1666, as published directly from Whitehall on 8 September.

At 2 am, a sad and awful fire broke out in Pudding Lane near New Firth Street, which owing to the time of night, and in a place of closely built houses with wooden roofs, spread so rapidly that the people found it difficult to stop and take the precaution of pulling down houses, as they should have, so that this quickly became too big to control by fire pumps nearby. A violent Easterly wind made it worse, keeping it burning all that day, and the night following, so it spread to Grace Church Street, and downwards from Canon Street to the river as far as the Three Cranes in the Vintry, [Upper Thames Street tavern]. People nearby were distressed by the extent and tried to save their goods. Many efforts were made to prevent the spreading of it by pulling down houses, and leaving spaces between, but this effort was all in vain. The fire continued burning timber and rubbish between spaces and raged with bright flames all Monday and Tuesday. This happened despite his Majesty's determined efforts to prevent it, calling upon, and assisting the people with the royal guards. Many of the nobility also helped tirelessly with great thanks from the poor distressed people. By the grace of God, the wind dropped a little on Tuesday night, and fire reached the brick buildings at the Temple, gradually it was seen to lose its force on that side, so that on Wednesday morning we began to hope. His Royal Highness never despaired and without thought for his personal safety assisted in some parts by the Lords of Council before stopped the fire at the Temple Church, near Holborn Bridge, Pie Corner, Aldgate, Cripple gate, near the lower end of Coleman Street, at the end of Basing Hall Street by the Postern, at the upper end of Bishopsgate Street and Loaden-Hall Street, at the Standard in Cornhill, at the Church in Fan Church Street, near Clothworkers Hall in Mincing Lane, at the middle of Mark Lane, and at the Tower dock. By Thursday and God's blessing the fire was extinguished but that Evening it burst out again afresh at the Temple, by the falling of some sparks (as is supposed) upon a pile of wooden buildings. His Royal Highness watched there that whole night and with the great determination used gunpowder to blow up the houses nearby and controlled its spread. Various foreigners including the Dutch and French were detained during the Fire, because they were suspected to have contributed mischievously to it. They are to be questioned by Lord Chief Justice Keeling, assisted by some of the Lords of the Privy council, and some principal Members of the City. Despite these suspicions, the rapid spread of the fire made worst by strong winds, makes us conclude, the whole was

'A true relation' of the 'sad and deplorable Fire'

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the effect of an unhappy chance, or due to, the heavy hand of God upon us for our sins, shewing us the terror of his Judgment in thus raising the fire; and Mercy in when our efforts to put it out seemed ineffective.

His Majesty then sat hourly in council, continued to visit most dangerous parts of the city. This morning that he sent his Grace the Duke of Albemarle help.

Near the Tower of London, houses were pulled down so that gunpowder stored there would not set be on fire which was especially successful as the wind was blowing in that direction. and several stores held in the Tower were saved.

We thank God that the Fire did not happen in any of those places where his Majesty's Naval stores are kept. It seems that it has pleased God not to prevent us the means the means of carrying on the War.

It must be said that the fire happened in a part of the town, where although the goods bought and sold there were not expensive, they were so bulky that it was hard to move them, so people there have experienced very great loss. Other enquiries show that in parts of the town, where the goods were of greater value, people acted earlier and saved most of their goods of value. Some people think that if everyone had concentrated on stopping the fire, and not saving their goods, the success might have been much better, not only to the public, but to many of them in their own situations. Due to the fire, many people were forced to remove themselves and goods into open fields, where they had to stay. This is so sad to see, and his Majesty's care was clear to all by his personal efforts and frequently consulting for ways for relieving those distressed persons, which produced so good effect, as well by his Majesty's Proclamations the local Justices of the Peace, to encourage the sending in food to the public Markets. Also, his Majesty, fearing might not be enough, commanded the food supplier of his Navy, to send Bread into Moorfields for the relief of the poor, and for speedy supply he sent ships biscuits. It was found that the Markets had been already so well supplied, that the people, being unused to these biscuits refused them and so it was mostly returned his Majesty's Stores.

We can only reject as false, his Majesty's enemies, who have tried to convince the world abroad that there is great disaffection with his Majesty's Government. A greater instance of the affections of this City could never be given, than has now been seen with this sad and deplorable accident. Any other time might have expected disorder from these losses and the almost desperation of some persons in their private fortunes. Thousands of people

'A true relation' of the 'sad and deplorable Fire'

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are homeless. And yet, in all this time it clear that the fire was not planned or an attempt against His Majesty's Government. His Majesty and his Royal brother, tried to stop the fire frequently appearing with few attendants in all parts of the town, and sometimes mixed with those who worked to put out the fire.

There have been no complaints and even the most desperate people, the subjects of other people's prayers forgot their own misery, with frequent examples of his Majesty's care of his people. These people filled the streets with their prayers for his Majesty.

'Destruction by a consuming fire'

Catalogue Ref: SP 29/170 f.121

LONDONS LAMENTATION,

Or its Destruction by a Consuming Fire.

Began September 1. 1666. Being a Relation of its Beginning, and unavoidable Continuance on that most famous and magnificent City, and on part of the Suburbs.

Being an Abstract of several Letters to Citizens of *York*, dated the 3, 4, and 6. of this instant September, 1666.

London, September the 6. 1666.

Dukes-place, London, September the 6. 1666.

SIR, This will inform you of the saddest Destruction that ever did befall to England, that is; The greatest part of the City of London is burnt down to the ground: It first began in *Pudding Lane* near *Thames street*, in a *French-Bakers-house*, the first of September: From Sunday to this instant, the Fire destroyed all from *London-bridge* to *Temple-Barr*, all *Cheapside*, the *Old Exchange*, *Post-house*, *Corn-well*, and all *Tbread-Neele-street*, and as far as *Holbunn-bridge*, and all other By-Alleys and places within that compass, very few escaping.

There hath been a great many *French-men* taken with *Fire-balls* about them the last night: And the *French*, *Dutch* and *Walloons* are the Authors of the ruine of this famous City. There was a *lad* in the *Fields* for Arms, the report was, that the *French* was landed, to that end to help their brethren in this wicked design, but thanks be to God it is not so. We thought *Furnivalls Inne* had been burned before now, but the fire is stopped at *Holbunn Bridge*, and at the *Temple*. Men are labouring hard to quench the fire in *Fetter Lane*: there were five *French* men taken just now going to set fire on *Southampton-Buildings* with *Fire-Balls*: I saw one of them, they are made long, bound hard with paper on the outside. I hear, We have routed the *Dutch*

Vale

Dukes-Place, London, September 4. 1666.

On Sunday morning last there happened a violent fire in *Pudding Lane* in a *French Bakers house*, which hath burnt ever since, and already 7. or 8. thousand houses are consumed, the wind conspiring with the *french mens* *fire-balls*, which is confidently believed, are the Plotters of the Ruine of this famous City. It hath burnt from the *Bridge*, all along the *Water-side*, all *Cornwell*, and the *Exchange*, *Wood-street*, *Milk-street*, *St. Pauls*, *Ludgate*, *Billings-gate*, *Mincing-Lane*, *Mark-Lane*, and *Lyme-street*. four pound a load to a *Carter*, and ten shillings a day to a *Porter*, is small wage

SIR, My last acquainted you with the sad accident of the fire, which now hath burned seven parts of the City, there is only left, *Tower-hill*, *Crotchet-fryers*, part of *Seeling-Lane*, part of *Mark Lane*, part of *lanchurch street*, *Leaden-hall street*, *Dukes-place*, *St. Mary Axe*, *Bishops-gate*, *Broad-street*, and some little pieces more. It hath consumed most part of *fleet-street*, some little of the *Temple*, and all the other side of the way, almost to *St. Dunstons Church*, & *Holburn-bridge*, but praised be God, is at present quenched.

I came directly from *Allgate* to *Holburn* over the places burnt, by direction of the *Steeple* remaining this day.

South-wark, London, September, 6. 1666.

SIR, I cannot omit but give an Account of the most sad and deplorable condition of the famous City of London, though my brain is crackt, and my sense and mind overcome in beholding the sad unquenchable flames. Various Reports you may hear, but believe for certain, the *Dutch*, *french* and *Walloons* are the fomentors in this treacherous design. But to be brief, The fire began September the first at night in a *french Bakers* own house in *Pudding lane*, near *Thames street*, and on Sunday burned all *Thames street*, on Monday the *Bridge* was set on fire, and but for great care and prevention, it would have brake into *Southwark*, but by providence, escaped. On Tuesday, *Lumbert-street*, *Cannon-street*, *Cratia street*, and all those parts were in flames. On Wednesday, the *Post-house*, *Corn-hill*, *Exchange*, and all those parts were burning. On Thursday, *Cheapside*, *Doctors Commons*, *Ludgate*, *Newgate*, and all thereabouts were burning. On Thursday night, The *Battlements* of *Pauls* were burning, *Fleet-street*, *Sue lane*, *Hattens gardens*, and part of *Chancery lane* are burning: There is but *Leadenhall street*, *Aldgate* and *Bishops gate* that hath escaped it. Ten Baskets of fire balls and *Granadoes* are taken in the *french mens* Custody. No more, save to serve you. T. N

Imprim. Anno Dom. 1666.

'Destruction by a consuming fire'

Catalogue Ref: SP 29/170 f.121

A broadside (printed sheet) based on several letters written to 'Citizens of York, dated the 3,4, & 6 of this instant September 1666', Catalogue ref: SP 29/170 f.121

- What does this document reveal about how people outside London found out about the fire?
- What causes are suggested for the outbreak of the fire?
- Comment on the language used in the document to describe the fire and its impact. Can you find similar language used in other documents here?

Transcript

LONDON'S LAMENTATION,

Or its Destruction by a Consuming Fire.

Began September 1. 1666. Being a Relation of its Beginning, and unavoidable Continuance on that most famous and magnificent City, and on part of the Suburbs.

Being an Abstract several letters to Citizens of York, dated the 3,4, and 6 of this instant September, 1666.

London, September the 6, 1666.

SIR, this will inform you of the saddest destruction that ever did befall to England. The largest part of the city of London, is burnt down to the ground. It first began in Pudding Lane near Thames Street, in a French-bakers-house, the first of September: From Sunday to this moment, the fire destroyed all from London Bridge to Temple Bar, all Cheapside, the old Exchange, Post House, Cornwell, and all Thread Needle Street, and as far as Holborn Bridge, and all other alleys and places within that area, very few escaping.

There has been a great many Frenchmen taken with Fire-balls about them the last night: And the French, Dutch and Walloons are the Actors of the ruine of this famous City. There was a sad cry in the Fields of Arms, the report was, that the French was landed, to that end to help their brethren in this wicked design, but thanks be to God it is not so. We thought Furnivalls Inne had been burned before now, but the fire is stopped at Holborn Bridge, and at the Temple. Men are labouring hard to quench the fire in Fetter Lane: there are five French men taken just now going to set fire on Southampton Buildings with Fire-Balls: I saw

'Destruction by a consuming fire'

Catalogue Ref: SP 29/170 f.121

Doctor's Commons, Ludgate, Newgate, and all thereabouts were burning. On Thursday night, The Battlements of Paul's were burning, Fleet-Street, Sue Lane, Hatten's Gardens and part of Chancery Lane are burning: There is Leadenhall Street, Aldgate and Bishop's Gate that hath escaped it. Ten baskets of fireballs and granadoes are taken in the French men's Custody. No more, save to serve you. T.N.

Imprim. Anno Dom.1666

Simplified transcript

LONDON'S sorrow

Or its Destruction by a Consuming Fire.

Began September 1. 1666. Being an account of its beginning, and unavoidable spread in that most famous and magnificent City, and in the Suburbs.

Being an Abstract several letters to Citizens of York, dated the 3,4, and 6 of this instant September 1666.

London, September the 6, 1666.

SIR, this will inform you of the saddest destruction that ever happened to England. The largest part of the city of London, is burnt to the ground. It first began in Pudding Lane near Thames Street, in a French-bakers-house, September 1. From Sunday to this time, the fire destroyed all from London Bridge to Temple Bar, all Cheapside, the old Exchange, Post House, Cornwell, and all Thread Needle Street, and as far as Holborn Bridge, and all other alleys and places within that area, very few escaping the fire.

A great number of Frenchmen were found with fireballs last night. The French, Dutch and Walloons [people who live in southern and eastern Belgium and parts of France] are the cause of the ruin of this famous City. There was a sad cry in the Fields of Arms, the report was, that the French was landed to help their brothers in this wicked plan but thank God it was not the case. We thought Furnivalls Inne had been burnt earlier but the fire stopped at Holborn Bridge, and at the Temple. Men are labouring hard to put out the fire in Fetter Lane. There are five French men just now going to set fire on Southampton Buildings with fireballs. I saw one of the fireballs, they are made long, bound hard with paper on the

'Destruction by a consuming fire'

Catalogue Ref: SP 29/170 f.121

outside. I hear we have defeated the Dutch.

Dukes-Place, London, September 4, 1666

On Sunday morning last a violent fire broke out in Pudding Lane in a French Baker's House, which has burnt ever since, and already 7 or 8 thousand houses are ruined. The wind, together with the French men's fireballs are widely believed to plot the ruin of this famous city. It has burnt from the Bridge all along the waterside, all Cornwell, and the Exchange, Wood Street, Milk Street, St. Pauls, Ludgate, Billingsgate, Mincing Lane, Mark Lane and Lyme Street.

Dukes-Place, London, September 6, 1666

Sir, my last [letter] described the sad incident of the fire, which now has burned seven parts of the city. The only parts left are Tower Hill, Crotchet-fryers, part of Seeling-Lane, part of Mark Lane, part of Fenchurch Street, Leaden -Hall Street, Dukes-Place, St. Mary Axe, Bishops-gate, Broad Street, and some little parts more. It has burnt most part of Fleet Street, some little of the Temple and all the other side of the way, almost to St. Dunstan's Church, & Holborn Bridge, but praised be God, is at present put out.


I came directly from Aldgate to Holborn over the places burnt, by direction of the church steeples which remain unharmed.

Southwark, London, September 6, 1666

SIR, I need to give an account of the most sad and deplorable condition of the famous city of London, though my brain is cracked, and my senses and mind overcome in beholding the unstoppable flames. Various reports you may hear, but believe for certain, the Dutch and French are the troublemakers in this terrible event. But to be brief, the fire began September the first at night in a French Bakers own house in Pudding Lane, near Thames Street, and on Sunday burned all Thames Street. On Monday the bridge was set on fire, and due to great care was prevented from spreading into Southwark. On Tuesday, Lambert-Street, Cannon Street, Gratia Street, and all those parts were in flames. On Wednesday, the Post House, Corn Hill Exchange, and all those parts were burning. On Thursday, Cheapside, Doctor's Commons, Ludgate, Newgate, and all nearby were burning. On Thursday night, the battlements of Paul's were burning, Fleet-Street, Sue Lane, Hatten's Gardens and part of Chancery Lane were burning. Leadenhall Street, Aldgate and Bishop's Gate have escaped it.

'Hearts almost broken' in Plymouth

Catalogue Ref: SP 29/171 f5

5
 Hon^d  Plymouth 7th Dec 1666
 5
 This day of Constant war with
 & victory came in here with eight
 m^{ch} ships ^{of your} six borne, Tendon with
 oyle & two for branderons
 viz of dispatch & virgin they
 also brought in & prize 3 green
 landmen, & our farm with wine
 & brandy, & had ever all most
 broken with of sad dispatch of last
 befallen up our humors City of
 London pardon hath given for
 y^r faithful
 Geo^{rge} John Clarke

9

'Hearts almost broken' in Plymouth

Catalogue Ref: SP 29/171 f5

A letter from John Clarke from Plymouth to Joseph Williamson, 9 September 1666.

Catalogue ref: SP 29/171 f5.

In law, the prize was a ship, cargo or other property captured during a conflict at sea. These covered the rights of the captor and the distribution of the goods to the crew of a ship belonging to the state, either a naval warship or a privateer vessel, commissioned by the government.

- Why do you think John Clarke wrote his letter? [Clue: location is Plymouth]
- What does the letter reveal about naval 'prize' ships?
- What is Clarke's attitude towards news of the fire in London?

Transcript

Honoured Sir,

This day the Constant Warwick & Victory came in here with eight merchant ships of ours from Lisbon loaden with oil, two from Scanderoon, viz the Dispatch & Virgin they also brought in 4 prizes, 3 Greenland men & one Dane with wine and brandy. Our hearts are almost broken with the sad disaster that has befallen the once famous city of London. Pardon happenstance.

Your faithful servant.

John Clarke

Simplified Transcript

Honoured Sir,

Today the ships named 'Constant Warwick' and 'Victory' came in here with eight merchant ships from Lisbon carrying oil, two from Scanderoon, [Iskenderun, a city on the Mediterranean coast of Turkey] named the 'Dispatch' and 'Virgin'. They also brought in four prizes, three men from Greenland and one Dane, and wine and brandy. Our hearts are almost broken with the sad disaster that has befallen the once famous city of London. I am your faithful servant.

John Clarke



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