

# *Pepys and the Restoration*

¶ IT WAS ONE OF THE GREATEST MIRACLES in our history that in 1660 the Puritan Revolution was overthrown and the monarchy restored without foreign intervention or civil war. It was also a remarkable piece of good luck for our understanding of the miracle that many of the crucial events in the process were observed and recorded in detail by Pepys, whose life at this time seems almost to have run parallel to the nation's history.

He began his diary during the Christmas season of 1659–60 – the very time when the revolutionary cause began finally to collapse – and wrote from his home in Westminster, at the heart of the political world. On 26 December the rule of the army officers under Lambert had been successfully challenged by the return of the Rump (the remnant of the last legitimately elected House of Commons), and on 1 January Monck, who commanded the army in Scotland and had dissociated himself from Lambert, began to move his forces south across the Tweed. On 3 February he arrived in London and with the support of the City demanded (11 February) that the Rump should admit the 'secluded' members – the moderate M.P.s deprived of their seats shortly before Charles I's execution – so that the Parliament could vote its own dissolution and authorise fresh elections. A new Council of State which included Monck and Mountagu, Pepys's patron, was formed, and the Parliament met on 27 April. On 1 May, having received with approval a conciliatory Declaration from the King, issued in Holland (see 3 May), Parliament voted for Charles II's return and the restoration of government by King, Lords and Commons.

Meantime, a squadron of ships had been stationed off the coast ready to sail to Holland to bring back the King. Mountagu was in command, with Pepys as his Secretary (6 March). They sailed for Scheveningen on 13 May, and ten days later began the voyage home, with the King and his entourage on board the Admiral's ship. There on the quarter-deck Pepys listened to the King's stories of his adventures in flight from Cromwell's army after the Battle of Worcester (3 September 1651; see 23 May below). By the

25th the fleet was off Dover and the King, with his brothers the Dukes of York and Gloucester, went ashore. Pepys landed alongside them in a little boat that carried the servants and the King's pet dog.

By temperament and conviction Pepys was a monarchist rather than a revolutionary, and through his association with Mountagu was attached to the group of moderate politicians who had joined with the royalists to bring back the King. His account of events bears witness to the strength of popular feeling against military rule and in favour of a return to traditional government by King and Parliament.

Blessed be God, at the end of the last year I was in very good health. I lived in Axe Yard, having my wife and servant Jane, and no more in family then us three. The condition of the State was thus. *Viz.* the Rump was lately returned to sit again, and Monke is with his army in Scotland. The new Common Council of the City doth speak very high; and hath sent to Monke their sword-bearer, to acquaint him with their desires for a free and full Parliament, which is at present the desires and the hopes and expectation of all. (*January 1660*)

I went up to the Lobby, where I saw the Speaker reading of the letter [*Monck's letter demanding the admission of the 'secluded' members*]; and after it was read, Sir A. Haslerig came out very angry. Hence I went alone to Guildhall to see whether Monke was come yet or no, and met him coming out of the chamber where he had been with the Mayor and Aldermen; but such a shout I never heard in all my life, crying out "God bless your Excellence!" And indeed I saw many people give the soldiers drink and money, and all along in the streets cried, "God bless them!" and extraordinary good words. In Cheapside

there was a great many bonfires, and Bow bells and all the bells in all the churches as we went home were ringing. Hence we went homewards, it being about 10 a-clock. But the common joy that was everywhere to be seen! The number of bonfires – there being fourteen between St Dunstan's and Temple Bar. And at Strand Bridge I could at one view tell 31 fires. In King Streete, seven or eight; and all along burning and roasting and drinking for rumps – there being rumps tied upon sticks and carried up and down. The buchers at the Maypole in the Strand rang a peal with their knives when they were going to sacrifice their rump. On Ludgate Hill there was one turning of the spit, that had a rump tied upon it, and another basting of it. Indeed, it was past imagination, both the greatness and the suddenness of it. At one end of the street, you would think there was a whole lane of fire, and so hot that we were fain to keep still on the further side merely for heat. (*11 February 1660*)

To Westminster by water, only seeing Mr Pinkny at his own house, where he showed me how he hath always kept the Lion and Unicorne in the back of his chimney bright, in expectation of the King's coming again. Great hopes of the King's coming again. (*5 March 1660*)

[My Lord] asked me whether I could without too much inconvenience go to sea as his Secretary, and bade me think of it. He also began to talk of things of state, and told me that he should now want one in that capacity at sea that he might trust in. And therefore he would have me to go. He told me also that he did believe the King would come in, and did discourse with me about it and about the affection of the people and City – at which I

was full glad. Everybody now drink the King's health without any fear, whereas before it was very private that a man dare do it. (*Shrove Tuesday, 6 March 1660*)

[*The remaining entries are written on board ship.*]

This day dined Sir John Boys and some other gentlemen, formerly great Cavaliers; and among the rest, one Mr Norwood, for whom my Lord gave a convoy to carry him to the Brill; but he is certainly going to the King – for my Lord commanded me that I should not enter his name in my book. My Lord doth show them and that sort of people great civility. All their discourse and others' are of the King's coming, and we begin to speak of it very freely. And heard how in many churches in London and upon many signs there and upon merchants' ships in the river they have set up the King's arms. (*21 April 1660*)

This morning my Lord showed me the King's Declaration and his letter to the two Generalls to be communicated to the fleet. The contents of the letter are his offer of grace to all that will come in within 40 days, only excepting them that the Parliament shall hereafter except. That the sales of lands during these troubles, and all other things, shall be left to the Parliament, by which he will stand. The letter dated at Breda, April<sup>4</sup>/<sub>14</sub> 1660, in the 12th year of his raigne. Upon the receipt of it this morning by an express, my Lord summoned a Council of War, and in the meantime did dictate to me how he would have the vote ordered which he would have pass this Council. Which done, the commanders all came on board, and the Council set in the coach, where I read the letter and

declaration; and while they were discoursing upon it, I seemed to draw up a vote; which being offered, they passed. Not one man seemed to say no to it, though I am confident many in their hearts were against it. After this was done, I went up to the quarter-deck with my Lord and the commanders, and there read both the papers and the vote; which done, and demanding their opinion, the seamen did all of them cry out "God bless King Charles!" with the greatest joy imaginable. (*3 May 1660*)

I wrote this morning many letters, and to all the copies of the vote of the Council of Warr I put my name; that if it should come in print, my name may be at it. I sent a copy of the vote to Doling, inclosed in this letter:

"Sir,

He that can fancy a fleet (like ours) in her pride, with pendants loose, guns roaring, caps flying, and the loud *Vive le Roy's* echoed from one ship's company to another, he and he only can apprehend the joy this enclosed vote was received with, or the blessing he thought himself possessed of that bore it, and is

Your humble servant." (*4 May 1660*)

This afternoon Mr Ed. Pickering told me in what a sad, poor condition for clothes and money the King was, and all his attendants, when he came to him first from my Lord – their clothes not being worth 40s, the best of them. And how overjoyed the King was when Sir J. Greenville brought him some money; so joyful, that he called the Princesse Royall and Duke of Yorke to look

upon it as it lay in the portmanteau before it was taken out. (*16 May 1660*)

We weighed ancre, and with a fresh gale and most happy weather we set sail for England – all the afternoon the King walking here and there, up and down, very active and stirring. Upon the quarter-deck he fell in discourse of his escape from Worcester. Where it made me ready to weep to hear the stories that he told of his difficulties that he had passed through. As his travelling four days and three nights on foot, every step up to the knees in dirt, with nothing but a green coat and a pair of country breeches on and a pair of country shoes, that made him so sore all over his feet that he could scarce stir. Yet he was forced to run away from a miller and other company that took them for rogues. His sitting at table at one place, where the master of the house, that had not seen him in eight years, did know him but kept it private; when at the same table there was one that had been of his own regiment at Worcester, could not know him but made him drink the Kings health and said that the King was at least four fingers higher than he. Another place, he was by some servants of the house made to drink, that they might know him not to be a Roundhead, which they swore he was. In another place, at his inn, the master of the house, as the King was standing with his hands upon the back of a chair by the fireside, he kneeled down and kissed his hand privately, saying that he would not ask him who he was, but bid God bless him whither that he was going. Then the difficulty of getting a boat to get into France, where he was fain to plot with the master thereof to keep his design from the four men and a boy (which was all his ship's company), and so got to Feckam

in France. At Roane he looked so poorly that the people went into the rooms before he went away, to see whether he had not stole something or other. (*23 May 1660*)

By the morning we were come close to the land and everybody made ready to get on shore. The King and the two Dukes did eat their breakfast before they went, and there being set some shipps diet before them, only to show them the manner of the shipps diet, they eat of nothing else but pease and pork and boiled beef. I went, and Mr Mansell and one of the King's footmen, with a dog that the King loved (which shit in the boat, which made us laugh and me think that a King and all that belong to him are but just as others are) went in a boat by ourselfs; and so got on shore when the King did, who was received by Gen. Monke with all imaginable love and respect at his entrance upon the land at Dover. Infinite the croud of people and the gallantry of the horsmen, citizens, and noblemen of all sorts. The Mayor of the town came and gave him his white staffe, the badge of his place, which the King did give him again. The Mayor also presented him from the town a very rich Bible, which he took and said it was the thing that he loved above all things in the world. A canopy was provided for him to stand under, which he did; and talked awhile with Gen. Monke and others; and so into a stately coach there set for him; and so away straight through the towne toward Canterbury without making any stay at Dover. The shouting and joy expressed by all is past imagination. (*25 May 1660*)