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Explanatory Notes

Money: when Samuel Pepys was writing his Diary, he would have reckoned his money in pounds (£), shillings (s) and pence (d). There was also a guinea, officially worth 30s, but its value could be negotiated depending on availability. Gold coins were often hoarded, with silver shillings more commonly being used for transactions. The value of silver coins was often debased by their being clipped into pieces for small transactions.

Dates: I have followed Latham and Matthews's usage of the old style, starting each year on 1 January (rather than on 15 March as was done in Pepys's time).

References: The Diary of Samuel Pepys, compiled and edited by Latham, R. and Matthews, W., 10 volumes (London, 1970-1983) is used for all citations of Pepys diary entries. The format used is: Date, Pepys, Diary, volume, page.

Quotations: of Pepys's entries in the text use the spelling and punctuation as transcribed by Latham and Matthews.

Names: of people are often spelled differently by Pepys throughout the Diary. In the body of the text, I have followed the form used by Robert Latham in The Diary of Samuel Pepys, volume 10.
INTRODUCTION

Seventeenth-century England saw religious dissension, civil war, the Interregnum and then the reinstatement of the King, war with the Dutch, France and Spain, economic growth and then decline, the increasing influence of mercantile companies, frequent plague epidemics and the Great Fire of London. By a happy coincidence, Samuel Pepys wrote his famous Diary (1660-1669) during this tumultuous decade, after Charles II was restored to the English throne. At this time, nothing was certain, especially life itself, but out of this uncertainty and change arose opportunity for those with the talent and desire to improve their lives. Pepys was one man who took advantage of these opportunities to embark on a stellar career, one that would make him extremely wealthy.

In her excellent biography of Pepys, Claire Tomalin writes that money is one of the obsessive themes of the Diary: ‘how it is made, how borrowed and lent, how saved, how hidden.’ This is a rather provocative statement, one that would be interesting to examine more closely. Was Pepys really obsessed with money and if so, why? Was he different from his contemporaries in this respect, or did other men monitor their financial affairs in much the same way? What did money represent to Pepys, and how did he acquire it and use it? The questions raise some relevant and interesting issues pertaining to Restoration England: the acquisition of money and the behaviour of ambitious men; consumerism, credit and indebtedness; financial and administrative systems and corruption. These issues have not been systematically and collectively addressed in the scholarship of this period. They are worth considering and the intention of this study is to ‘interrogate’ Pepys and his attitude to money through his Diary, making comparisons and contextualising where possible.

Samuel Pepys’s Diary has been a rich source of information for scholars and of interest to anyone who enjoys history. The definitive version of the Diary published by Robert Latham and William Matthews has become the standard edition for historical scholars and writers in many fields: political, social, economic, bureaucratic, and naval; it is the main source of material used for this

thesis. This thesis seeks to determine whether the Diary could be useful in understanding Pepys's attitude to money, how this influenced his behaviour, and whether this understanding could be extended to the broader community of Restoration London.

It is not known why Pepys kept his Diary, or why he started to do so at that particular time. His Diary was used to summarise his concerns, pleasures, regrets and activities related to his money; because his detailed account books appear not to have survived a factual record of his financial behaviour is unfortunately not available for comparison. We cannot know, for example, details of his daily costs of living or how well he met his social obligations. A few loose sheets from 1668 are a fortunate inclusion in the Diary and give us some idea of how informative those account books would have been. They cover a few days when he was on holiday, travelling around central England, and record his day-to-day expenditure, including handing out the usual tips and gratuities to casual workers. Customary small payments like these and other daily costs of living were so unremarkable that they were clearly not worth noting in his Diary, but it would have been interesting to see his early account books before he became wealthy. There will inevitably be gaps in our knowledge of Pepys and his money, and claims to a full understanding can only be tentative.

Mark Dawson suggests that Pepys kept his diary as a means of defining what he wanted to achieve in life. His social ambition 'informs the whole text at the most fundamental level'. Muldrew also found that one of the motivations for keeping a diary was the desire 'to keep a record of one's economic and other social activities undertaken within the community. These could include transactions, discussions, hospitality, gift-giving and receiving . . . debts, money, agreements,

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3 It was written in an archaic form of shorthand that defied accurate transcription for three hundred years. It had been languishing on the shelves of the Pepys Library at Magdalene College, Cambridge, and was rediscovered in the early nineteenth century. The first 'bowdlerised' edition was published in 1825. If those early transcribers had only known that there was also a seventeenth-century textbook on the form of shorthand used by Pepys on the shelves of the same collection, a reliable edition may have appeared in a more accurate version earlier. The book was by Thomas Shelton, 1601-?1650, The art of short-writing according to tachygraphy in which variety of examples to each rule are drawn (1642), (EEBO, Wing/S3071).

To quote Dawson again: ‘the processes of monetary and social accounting went hand in hand.’ This is supported by many entries Pepys made recording his income, expenditure, and savings, accompanied by comments relating to his status or the ‘esteem’ he puts on himself.

Few diaries or autobiographies exist that are exactly contemporaneous with Pepys’s Diary. Of those that have been studied, most are more accurately described as account or day books. Alan Macfarlane found only two seventeenth-century diaries as detailed and wide-ranging as that of Pepys: one was written by a minister of religion, Roger Lowe, the other by a yeoman-minister, Ralph Josselin. Roger Lowe, in Lancashire, shared some of Pepys’s concerns with the state of his finances and the keeping of personal and professional accounts. Ralph Josselin was a man of modest means, living in rural Essex and with the responsibility of having to support a large family. His diary was not as detailed as that of Pepys, focusing on his family and property with little gossip, although he clearly kept abreast of current affairs. Like Pepys, he summarized his financial state frequently, particularly in his early years, less so as he became more comfortable later in life. Some of Josselin’s entries have been used to provide useful counterpoints to attitudes and behaviours recounted by Pepys.

The Earl of Sandwich, Pepys’s patron, kept a journal, a vast miscellany of his public life, in no way private. John Evelyn, a man who was to become a colleague and friend of Pepys, kept a comprehensive diary but it was a much less introspective one. He was already wealthy, and there are few entries where money is mentioned except during 1665-1667 when Evelyn was responsible for the welfare of the sick and wounded during the Second Dutch War. During this time he and Pepys corresponded regularly, and their letters, together with Evelyn’s diary entries, were useful in confirming Pepys’s version of some of the events. Roger Morrice, the son of a prosperous yeoman farmer, kept a comprehensive

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6 Dawson, ‘Histories and Texts’, p. 422.
diary that many historians have found relevant to their scholarship. He was Secretary of State (Northern Department) during the years Pepys was keeping his Diary and they must have had some kind of official contact but Morrice did not start keeping his diary until after he had retired to life in the country in 1668, when Pepys’s Diary was nearing its end. Mark Goldie suggested that the darker world of Morrice can lead us to question the ebullient world evoked by Pepys. The affluent Morrice, however, made no references to his money that would allow us to compare the attitudes and behaviour of the two men.

There was one man who did not keep a diary but some of whose letters and autobiographical writings are extant, along with many of his official papers. Sir Stephen Fox also rose from humble beginnings to become as influential as Pepys and even more wealthy. His career as a financial administrator developed from his position as a courtier and unwavering supporter of Charles II. He was a brilliant administrator who during the 1660s reorganised the financial system of the King’s army, just as Pepys was doing for the navy. They were, of necessity, in regular contact and sometimes discussed their personal financial affairs. Pepys liked and admired him, finding him a congenial host. Christopher Clay’s well researched biography was useful in providing a broader perspective on the administrative and societal systems within which Pepys worked and lived, and for comparisons between two men who both rose from a humble background to simultaneously become wealthy through careers in state administration.

The main weakness in studying any of the above diaries is that none of them were private ones, to which the author confided his intimate thoughts and feelings. Although so much of the Diary reads as a ‘private confessional’, Mark Dawson notes that Pepys constantly places himself within his social milieu. He was not alone in his pursuit of wealth and elevated status in Restoration London and his Diary gives a real insight into some of the ways and means that this could be achieved. A degree of caution should be maintained, though, since Pepys’s was, inevitably, an idiosyncratic and self-interested account. That it was also

incomplete can be seen by perusing his correspondence.\footnote{J. R. Tanner, ed., \textit{Further Correspondence of Samuel Pepys 1662-1679} (London, 1929); Helen Truesdell Heath, ed., \textit{The Letters of Samuel Pepys and his Family Circle} (Oxford, 1955); Guy de la Bédoyère, ed., \textit{Particular Friends: The Correspondence of Samuel Pepys and John Evelyn} (Woodbridge, 1997); Guy de la Bédoyère, ed., \textit{The Letters of Samuel Pepys 1656-170} (Woodbridge, 2006).} Personal diaries share some of the inherent weaknesses that need to be considered when using oral history to study a particular event or era. Pepys was often writing up his Diary retrospectively from notes he jotted down during his busy days, or by using his correspondence as an \textit{aide memoire}. He sometimes corrected a previous entry, proving that even recent memory can be unreliable. Pepys’s words can tell us what he thought, felt, or remembered at the time of writing but may be unreliable witnesses to truth. Statements of fact are always coloured by ‘culture, ideology and subconscious desires.’\footnote{Luisa Passerini, quoted in \textit{The Houses of History: a Critical Reader in Twentieth-century History and Theory}, selected and introduced by Anna Green and Kathleen Troup (New York, 1999), p. 232.} As Mascuch reminds us, ‘\textit{[a]utobiographical texts constitute not persons but personae . . . direct statements, indirect statements, descriptions of actions, rationalizations, preoccupations and silences’ present a complex image.’\footnote{Michael Mascuch, ‘Social Mobility and Middling Self-Identity: The Ethos of British Autobiographers, 1600-1750’, \textit{Social History}, 20, 1 (January 1995), p. 50.}

Consumerism was becoming acceptable following the Restoration as the constraints of Puritanism that had dominated the Interregnum weakened. Julian Hoppit notes that although the benefits of economic growth were becoming more generally recognised, there were still many men who preached against unbridled capitalism.\footnote{Julian Hoppit, \textit{A Land of Liberty? England 1689-1727} (Oxford, 2000), p. 344.} Neither the condemnation nor the encouragement of wealth and consumerism would become widespread until a little later in the century. Nevertheless, the authors of these later publications must have been influenced by their observations and experiences of the 1660s. One of those who promoted the benefits of trade and greater consumption in 1668 was Sir Josiah Child, one of the wealthiest and most influential merchants in England.\footnote{Josiah Child, \textit{Brief Observations concerning Trade and Interest of Money} (1668) Early English Books Online (Wing 2\textsuperscript{nd} ed. / C3852).} The obvious self-interest shown by men like Sir Josiah was castigated by religious moralists. William Barton (1670) thought that the rich ‘followed the business of their own Houses
earnestly and industriously, but of God's very negligently.\textsuperscript{19} Thomas Cartwright (1687) shared his misgivings: 'tis very disputable whether they who are always penuriously brooding over their Fortunes would ever do anything commendable'.\textsuperscript{20} William Petty was one of the few of the Diary contemporaries who published a more considered, quantitative approach to wealth.\textsuperscript{21} He was a statistician and economist, and an innovative and versatile thinker much admired by Pepys. Pepys makes mention of discussions with influential men, of some of the sermons he hears, and the pamphlets he reads; his comments on their opinions add another dimension to explaining motivation and behaviour.

Pepys's correspondence proved useful in corroborating, or sometimes giving a different slant on, the corresponding Diary entry. The tracts, pamphlets and sermons, such as those quoted above tend to be prescriptive, written by preachers or merchants with vested interests in mind. They are in no way descriptive as Pepys's Diary is. A broader understanding of the 1660s should be gained by looking at society through the prism of one man and his money.

Secondary sources for Samuel Pepys, the man, are plentiful. One of the more useful resources for this thesis proved to be volume ten of the Latham and Matthew's edition of the Diary. The notes and explanations are much more than that and would appear to be under-used as a resource by historians. Excerpts from his Diary have been used to support arguments for describing many aspects of late seventeenth-century life, and his personality and habits have been thoroughly analysed. Pepys's career as a bureaucrat and reformer of the Royal Navy has been extensively documented.\textsuperscript{22} He has been described by various authors as ambitious, a brilliant administrator, a man on the make, vain, miserly, promiscuous and, more recently, excessively corrupt. Most biographical writers acknowledge, but generally gloss over Pepys's questionable morality. J. R. Tanner was interested in naval history, and his 1897 publication studied Pepys the administrator, not the

\textsuperscript{20} Thomas Cartwright, \textit{The Danger of Riches Discovered in a Sermon} (1687), Early English Books Online (Wing/C697), p. 10.
\textsuperscript{21} The Economic Writings of Sir William Petty, Together with the Observations Upon the Bills of Mortality, ed. C. H. Henry (Cambridge, 1899).
\textsuperscript{22} J. R. Tanner, 'The Administration of the Navy from the Restoration to the Revolution', \textit{The Economic History Review}, 12, 45 (January, 1897), pp. 17-66.
man, making no judgement on his ethics. In 1926, O. F. Morshead published an edited version of the Diary based on the Wheatley transcription from the 1890s. He acknowledged the scrupulousness required by ‘those who dip with delight into its pages’ but insisted that standards were very different in Pepys’s day. Morshead edited out many entries that recorded questionable payments, and omitted the infamous Prizes scandal altogether. The detailed biography published by Arthur Bryant in three volumes in 1947, was also a decidedly partisan account of Pepys’s life. In 1984, John Noonan published a history of corruption from antiquity to modern times, using Pepys as a case study for one of the chapters. He commented that scholars had shown a biased approach to Pepys’s integrity, but his words of thirty years ago have been ignored and ‘the public exoneration of Pepys continues.’ Historians are still, perhaps, too much in thrall to ‘the delights’ within the pages of his Diary. Mark Knights challenged this selective blindness in a recent article that found Pepys to be utterly corrupt. Even Knights acknowledges, though, that the system in which Pepys operated accepted, and even fostered the ubiquity of bribes and inducements. Dubious practices recounted by Pepys will be one part of this examination of his attitude to the acquisition of money.

There is a surprising paucity of scholarship on the social background of the decade in which Pepys was keeping his Diary, with little focus on the issues specifically addressed in this thesis. London in the 1660s offered unregulated consumerism and commercialisation to its inhabitants, promoting both opportunity and insecurity. Social and financial norms were in a state of flux and Pepys was very much part of that changing society. Hunt’s ‘middling sort’ was being re-defined, and the behaviour of consumers as described in Lorna Weatherill’s widely-researched book does not always reflect the frequent and unexpected changes of the 1660s. John Gunn was to write in 1969 that the period immediately after the Restoration in 1660 had been neglected by students.

of political theory. The same applies to economic and financial historians who tend to concentrate on the period following the financial revolution of 1688, from when records become more available. According to Quentin Skinner, human action rarely features in social or economic history, where processes are considered more useful. Pepys’s Diary recounts behaviour rather than process. To Joyce Appleby, economic ideology was ‘a system of meaning shared by members of a society.’ The decade during which Pepys was writing his Diary, however, was a period of change and uncertainty, and the formation of a shared ideology was hardly being debated. Exploring attitudes to money and its effect on behaviour is a new and useful way of understanding how people adapted to rapid financial, social and political changes.

As E. A. Wrigley suggested, the administrative and cultural changes that occurred after the Restoration provided new opportunities for people of middling status to participate directly in political and cultural life. Gerard Aylmer’s detailed book on the business of government administration showed how Pepys would have been able take advantage of these opportunities to advance his career and gain wealth. Understanding the financial networks in early modern London was aided by Neal’s and Quin’s work. Paul Slack and Keith Thomas presented helpful philosophical frameworks within which Pepys’s attitude to wealth and consumerism could be developed, whilst Muldrew’s comprehensive and thoughtful exposition of obligation and credit helped contextualise Pepys’s behaviour. Descriptions of life in rural and regional England can not readily be imposed on the very different world of the London that Pepys inhabited, but

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would Keith Wrightson’s description of society at that time have felt familiar to a man who rarely spent time away from the city? Were households ‘held together by bonds of co-operation between neighbours and kin and ties of patronage and deference between superiors and inferiors’?  

At the beginning of 1660 Pepys was a young man, 26 years old, and would barely have been included in the ‘middling sort’, being from a trade background, in service, and with an annual income of only £25. He had started to work for Sir Edward Mountagu some five or six years before he started writing his Diary. Mountagu was Pepys’s older cousin, and had become his patron. Pepys paid his Lord’s household expenses, fetched and carried money, sought sponsors for gifts to take overseas on official business, dealt with his paper work and audited his accounts. He had not been involved in politics or any of the inner circles of power, although he was close to men that were, but within six months he found himself in the middle of the momentous events that surrounded the return of Charles II to England in May 1660. The administrative changes that ensued presented Pepys with opportunities for betterment of which he was to take full advantage. In doing so he elevated his position from that of a dependent servant to one of the most powerful bureaucrats in the land and a patron himself. Along the way he became extremely wealthy.

In examining how Pepys’s Diary can shed light on his attitude to money, and what influenced his decisions and actions, this thesis crosses the intellectual boundaries between social, cultural and economic history, something that Natasha Glaisyer suggests is welcome. In fact, it is almost impossible to explore Pepys and his money without doing so. Each chapter pursues two or three related themes. A strict chronological approach proved unwieldy, but is followed where it does not prejudice coherence.

Chapter one examines how Pepys got his money. Pepys ascribed his initial success to good fortune, but thought that only his diligence consolidated it. Whether his Diary as a whole backs up this belief will be explored. It considers the opportunities that were presented to Pepys and how active he was in the

pursuit of wealth. Important also to establish were the measures taken to protect his wealth in times of upheaval and uncertainty. The Diary is the main source of information used for this chapter.

Chapter two investigates how Pepys spent his money, what his priorities were, what influenced his decisions, and how generous he was with family, friends, colleagues, and those in need. A selection of both primary and secondary sources was studied to support or contextualise the Diary entries.

Chapter three explores Pepys’s accounting of the social responsibilities of wealth and the business of money. It also looks at the probity of Pepys’s behaviour, within the mores of the decade in which he wrote. In this chapter more attention is paid to the secondary sources than in earlier chapters, and the Diary is used as an exemplar rather than as the major source of information.
Samuel Pepys spent New Year’s Day 1660 as he did on so many other days, ‘looking over my accounts’. He thought himself ‘esteemed rich, but indeed very poor’ and was surprised to realise later that month that he was worth £40 in savings, in addition to his household effects. Within a few years he was to become extremely wealthy. How did this change in fortune come about? How much part did luck play in his rise, and how much was due to his innate talents and his hard work? To what extent was he able to turn to his advantage the political and social events of the decade?

**Getting the Money**

Some five or six years earlier he had started to work for Sir Edward Mountagu, his older cousin and patron. Pepys paid Mountagu’s household expenses, fetched and carried money, sought sponsors for gifts to take overseas on official business, dealt with his paper work and audited his accounts. He was also earning an annual income of £25 as a clerk in the Receipt Office of the Exchequer under Sir George Downing. Pepys and Elizabeth his wife mostly lived frugally, wearing the same clothes day after day. Sometimes they had to repair to his father’s house or to wealthier friends because they did not have coal for a fire or enough to eat. Debt was something that kept him awake at night and he shared his concerns with Elizabeth. Had they been able to foresee the future, sleep would have come more easily.

In March 1660 Pepys found himself in the middle of the momentous events that surrounded the return of Charles II to England. Pepys’s patron Sir Edward Mountagu had been charged with bringing the King back to England and asked Pepys if he ‘could without too much inconvenience go to sea as his Secretary . . .

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36 1 Jan 1660, Pepys, *Diary*, vol. 1, p. 3.
37 29 Jan 1660, Pepys, *Diary*, vol. 1, p. 32. Pepys always defined his wealth in terms of savings, not his possessions.
38 12 Jan 1660, Pepys, *Diary*, vol. 1, pp. 15-16.
[as] he should now want one in that capacity at sea that he might trust in'. It was a great compliment and Pepys took delight in sharing the news with Elizabeth that night. It was, however, a risk to his financial security that he was unsure at first whether to take. It meant that he would have to take temporary leave from his position at the Exchequer Office. Civil servants were paid by their direct employers, not by the State and Sir George Downing was responsible for paying Pepys out of his own salary; if Pepys were to take leave of absence, he would have to pay for a temporary replacement himself. He talked it over with several people who were invariably positive, including his father who helped allay his son's fears by letting him know that his Uncle Robert, at this time seriously ill, had promised to make him heir of his Brampton estate. Pepys agreed to go to sea.

Almost immediately Pepys was besieged by men seeking preferments and positions. He was amazed and disconcerted by the attention he received: 'these people do now promise me anything; 'one a Rapier, the other a vessel of wine or a gown, and one offered me his silver hatband to [do] him a courtesy.' He does not indicate a rush to satisfy all appellants; instead he prays that God will protect him from the sins of pride and arrogance. Nevertheless he was only too happy to accept money from those men for whom he found or facilitated a position: half a piece for a chaplain's position, a piece of gold each for two favours done, £5 for a captain to be made up to commander.

We do not know how he decided which favours to grant, whether he knew or knew of the men who were successful, or whether they had the appropriate qualities or experience. Religious or political allegiances must have played a role as Pepys writes that Mountagu gave him a list of all the ships approved to set sail, excluding those with links to extremists: 'wherein I do discover that he hath made it his care to put by as much of the Anabaptists as he can.' In defence of the officials who authorised naval appointments, Gerald Aylmer makes the point that commissions were unlikely to have been made without some regard for ability;

39 6 Mar 1660, Pepys, Diary, vol. 1, p. 77.
40 6 Mar 1660, Pepys, Diary, vol. 1, p. 79.
41 22 Mar 1660, Pepys, Diary, vol. 1, p. 94.
43 1 Apr 1660, Pepys, Diary, vol. 1, p. 101.
they were just too important. However the decisions were made, they brought in money to Pepys. By 6 May he was able to write that he had gone to bed happy, with £40 in his purse and all his debts paid.

On 25 May 1660 Charles II once again set foot on English soil at Dover and, as Arthur Bryant described it, ‘a golden shower of royal benevolence now fell on the ships that had brought the King over.’ Mountagu’s clandestine support of King Charles II in exile brought immediate rewards. He was created Knight of the Garter, becoming the Earl of Sandwich, assured of an annual salary of £4000, made Master of the Wardrobe, Clerk of the Privy Seal and Clerk of the Signet. These last two minor posts he passed on to Pepys in case he could not get him a better place, despite having assured him that: ‘We must have a little patience and we will rise together. In the meantime I will do you all the good Jobbs I can’. Being an ambitious man and wary of promises that could not always be kept, Pepys made sure that his worth was recognised independently of his cousin, and was delighted when the Duke of York, soon to become Lord of the Admiralty, ‘called me Pepys by name, and upon my desire did promise me his future favour.’ Pepys knew the value of patronage and the need to make himself known to men in power.

Pepys’s place at the Privy Seal proved unexpectedly profitable. Hundreds of new patents were being issued to royalists for positions taken from supporters of the old regime, with a fee paid directly to the clerk for every one. Pepys recorded with glee that he had earned £40 in just two days and took his money home by coach. Better still, Mountagu was true to his word and procured a position for Pepys as Clerk of the Acts at the newly restored Navy Board. The previous holder of that position, Thomas Barlow, was still alive but willingly ceded the job to Pepys in return for a stipend of £100 per annum. Pepys’s annual salary was set at £350, seven times his previous income. He was also provided with a Navy Office house.

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45 6 May 1660, Pepys, *Diary*, vol. 1, p. 130.
49 2 Aug 1660, Pepys, *Diary*, vol. 1, p. 213.
and could expect other perquisites. Despite Pepys’s excitement at the seven-fold increase in his income, the amount was far less than all but one of his fellow commissioners were paid. Of the Principal Officers, Treasurer Sir George Carteret, was paid £2,000, Comptroller Slyngesbie £500, and Surveyor Batten £490. The other commissioners, Lord Berkeley, Sir William Penn, and Sir William Coventry were all paid £500. Only Peter Pett, based in Chatham, was paid the same amount as Pepys.

Although Pepys was the most junior of the commissioners, his curiosity, intelligence, and determination allowed him to master the administration system then in place; the incompetence, inefficiencies and blatant corruption he found appalled him. In 1662 he ‘fell furiously that summer upon all abuses, big and little.’\(^{51}\) Pepys was not responsible for the issuing of contracts, that was the prerogative of the Navy Board, but as Pepys’s grasp of business increased so did his influence over who was awarded them. Noonan writes that the decisions over who was awarded the contracts were effectively under his control.\(^ {52}\) No-one knew more than he did, and his meticulous research and documentation enabled him to obtain the lowest possible price for all goods and services.

He repeatedly accused Sir William Batten of corruption in his dealings with suppliers and merchants but, as Claire Tomalin asks, ‘are these not the very groups of men with whom Pepys himself is engaged in profitable negotiations?’\(^ {53}\) The two men favoured different merchant/suppliers and it was Pepys who won the day.\(^ {54}\) Sir William Warren, a leading timber merchant and supplier of ships’ masts to the navy, was to make many contributions to Pepys’s future wealth, not all of them through legitimate channels. Pepys gloats over being presented with ‘forty pieces in good gold’ hidden in a pair of gloves for his wife.\(^ {55}\) Pepys’s justification for accepting inducements is that he also insists on quality work and supplies, suggesting that Batten was not so doing.

In acknowledgement of his diligence and efficient administration, Pepys was appointed, on 12 August 1662, one of the Commissioners to Tangier, a North

\(^{52}\) Noonan, *Bribes*, pp. 375-6.
\(^{53}\) Tomalin, *The Unequalled Self*, p. 143.
\(^{55}\) 2 Feb 1664, Pepys, *Diary*, vol. 5, p. 35.
African port newly acquired by England through the marriage treaty between Portugal’s Catherine of Braganza and King Charles II. Once again Pepys was horrified by the waste and complete lack of accounting integrity but it was ‘a very great honour to me, and may be of good concernment’. It gave Pepys further opportunity to negotiate contracts to his personal advantage. When ‘my people’ in Tangier were awarded the victualling contract the merchants agreed to pay him £300 per annum. The merchant-supplier to the Navy in England, Sir Dennis Gauden, had expected to be given the contract and offered Pepys two magnificent flagons to take over the business. Pepys took the gift, but was unsure which of the rivals he would support until one member of the first consortium died; Sir Dennis got the job and a mutually beneficial partnership was formed. Both of his positions as Clerk of the Acts and Treasurer of Tangier brought Pepys money and gifts, legitimate or questionable. He could demonstrate that he had saved the King a lot of money, but he made sure that he was well remunerated for his troubles: ‘[m]y late gettings have been very great to my great content, and am likely to have yet a few more profitable jobbs in a little while; for which Tangier and Sir W. Warren I am wholly obliged to.’

In 1665 Pepys was going over the Tangier accounts with the Treasurer Peter Povey and ‘God help him, never man was so confounded’. According to Pepys, Povey offered to surrender his position to him for half the profit. It did not take Pepys long to realise how lucrative that could be, although it says much about his growing confidence and sense of security that he could also write: ‘[w]hether it takes or no I care not.’ He had already accrued savings of £1800. Even so he was concerned when he was told that there were ‘people at work to overthrow our Victualling business, by which I shall lose £300 a year.’ Within six months, he was worth £4400.

When the Second Dutch War was declared in 1665, the shortage of money available to the Navy caused immense difficulties. Tradesmen and merchants

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57 31 Aug 1665, Pepys, *Diary*, vol. 6, p. 208. Pepys had profitable financial agreements with Sir William Warren in the business of naval supplies at home.
58 17 Mar 1665, Pepys, *Diary*, vol. 6, p. 59.
59 17 Mar 1665, Pepys, *Diary*, vol. 6, p. 59.
60 13 May 1665, Pepys, *Diary*, vol. 6, pp. 101-102; Noonan gives a good account of how Pepys profited from Tangier in *Bribes*, Chapter 13.
refused to supply the Navy because they were never paid. Pepys had some sympathy with the suppliers and wrote to Coventry voicing his concerns.\textsuperscript{61} Different proposals were put forward to improve victualling. It was suggested that a Royal Commission be formed, a suggestion Pepys successfully discouraged. He does not say so, but it would have placed him under more scrutiny than he would have liked. Other merchants were sought to form a consortium with Gauden but refused; there were just too many risks and uncertainties.\textsuperscript{62}

Pepys saw opportunities rather than risks and suggested a new position be created: that of Surveyor-General of the Victualling Business, with representatives in every major port.\textsuperscript{63} The criteria for the job were suited to one man alone and Pepys was duly appointed to the position in October 1665. It brought him an annual income of £300 as well as the customary perquisites. The men to be appointed as port officials would inevitably have to purchase their position, a legitimate perquisite but one that Pepys had almost certainly anticipated when he created the role for himself. Like so many men before and since him, Pepys did well out of war.

One of the sources of income the State relied on to fund a war was the capture of enemy ships and the prizes on board. During one battle against the Dutch, the Earl of Sandwich had captured two Dutch East India merchant ships and the vast treasure on board should have considerably boosted England’s coffers. Long-standing laws of the sea ordained that the officers and seamen on the ship responsible for the capture were entitled to a share of prize-goods taken along with the ship. But there was a stark difference in how the two categories of men gained possession of their share. While the seamen could help themselves to whatever they wanted that was carried between decks, the officers had to wait until the entire cargo was brought back to England to be registered with Customs who would then issue each person’s authorised share. On this occasion, Sandwich was persuaded to distribute the allotted goods to his commanders and flag officers


\textsuperscript{62} Bryant, \textit{Man in the Making}, p. 175.

\textsuperscript{63} J. R. Tanner, ed., \textit{Further Correspondence of Samuel Pepys, 1660-1679} (London, 1929), pp. 54-7.
before the issue of the King’s warrant: ‘it being easier to keep money when got of
the King than to get it when it is too late’. 64

Pepys, who had looked with wonder at the treasure, bought a considerable
quantity of cloves and nutmegs from a couple of seamen, paying a fair rate
because ‘it would never have been allowed by my conscience to have wronged the
poor wretches’. 65 This was legitimate practice, but then he invested in some goods
from the flag officers, effectively becoming a receiver of stolen goods. Both the
Duke of York, as Lord High Admiral, and the East India Company were wary of
being cheated out of their share of the profits if the goods were sold on the open
market, and Pepys, ‘observing portents’, as F. R. Harris put it, hastily arranged for
the disposal of his goods, making a profit of £500. 66

It had all turned out so well that Pepys lamented not making more of the
opportunity. 67 His innately cautious nature, however, would not allow him to
speculate large amounts of money. He did put some of his savings to work,
lending to Charles II at the rate of 10% per annum. He strikes tallies for £17,500
at the Exchequer, hardly believing ‘that I, from a mean clerk there, should come to
strike tallies myself for that sum’. 68 Pepys also lodged considerable amounts of
money with the goldsmith bankers of Lombard Street who were regular lenders to
the King. They gave rather lower interest rates, but at least he could be sure of
getting paid. Sir Stephen Fox, Treasurer of the Army, was making his
considerable fortune by lending money to the King and the Army and Pepys was
interested in the measures he had put in place to ensure that ‘he hath no trouble’ in
getting his money. 69 Fox had come from a similar background to Pepys, and his
career was following a similar trajectory. They were both competent financial
administrators but Fox had direct control over the Army’s funds, while Pepys had
to go, cap in hand, to Treasury to obtain funds for the Navy and it was not always
forthcoming. In 1668, Pepys was yet again writing to the paymaster of the Navy
requesting that the salary due to him for the previous three quarters be paid. 70

64 23 Sep 1665, Pepys, Diary, vol. 6, p. 238.
65 24 Sep 1665, Pepys, Diary, vol. 6, p. 240.
66 Harris, Sandwich, p. 27.
67 1 Jun 1666, Pepys, Diary, vol. 7, p. 140.
68 12 May 1665, Pepys, Diary, vol. 6, p. 100.
69 16 Jan 1667, Pepys, Diary, vol. 8, p. 16.
Fox invested in land as a secure source of wealth, as most men did throughout England in the seventeenth-century. Pepys, on the other hand, was more typical of many rich men in London who were able to maintain their wealth and status without acquiring large estates. Pepys knew the merchants well, especially those of the East India Company who dominated the city's financial and political affairs, but he preferred to acquire an income from facilitating their activities rather than speculating himself. For a short period of time he was part-owner of a privateer given them by the king, but was seemingly glad to sell off his share. Pepys preferred to invest in tangible assets: gold, silver and jewellery. His regular accountings of his wealth were always expressed in terms of his hoarded savings rather than his house and possessions.

**Keeping the Money**

Keeping his wealth secure caused Pepys almost as much anxiety as acquiring it. Once he was woken by a noise during the night and, fearing for his money, began 'to sweat worse and worse, till I melted almost to water.' John Evelyn may have kept a more reserved diary than Pepys, but being robbed of 'plate, money, and goods worth £60' moved him to write one of the very few entries in his diary concerning his personal finances. Even more terrifying was the Great Fire in September 1666. When it seemed to be threatening his house, Pepys ran around frantically moving his money, iron chests, tallies, plate and 'best things' to safety. Paperwork was buried in the garden, along with his wine and a Parmesan cheese. He took gold, worth $2350, down to Woolwich dockyards, locked it up and left his wife Elizabeth and Will Hewer to guard it. Even when the emergency was over, Pepys was afraid for his money and possessions, hurrying to recover everything and return it to safe storage, 'vexed to have all the world see it.' In spite of his panic he lost hardly anything and almost immediately was able to pay

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71 Wrigley, 'London's Importance', p. 51.
72 12 Jul. 1664, Pepys, *Diary*, vol. 5, p. 201.
74 10 Sep 1666, Pepys, *Diary*, vol. 7, p. 283.
off all his debts, calculating that he was worth $6200, 'more than ever I yet was'.

By the middle of 1667 it was clear that peace would be made with the Dutch and Pepys began to plan for the future: 'my head full of thoughts how to keep if I can some part of my wages as Surveyor of the Victualling, which I see must now come to be taken away.' He moved to ensure a future private income, coming to an agreement with Sir Dennis Gauden that the mutually beneficial deals he had with the Victualler of the Navy would continue. By now his wealth gave him the joy of being independent. Even if he should be put out of office, he was relaxed enough to imagine a future where he had the freedom to spend time with men whose company he enjoyed, 'thinking myself now in the best place that ever man was in'.

Pepys was not put out of office; he went on to become a renowned naval administrator and an increasingly wealthy man. He made the most of every opportunity to make money in all of the positions he attained, but it is not easy to determine how much of his wealth was gained from his base salary, from legitimate perquisites, from doubtful but generally accepted practices, or from outright corruption. According to Pepys, both good luck and diligence played a part. To this we may add a flexible conscience.

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75 31 Oct 1666, Pepys, *Diary*, vol. 7, pp. 348-349.
76 7 Jun 1667, Pepys, *Diary*, vol. 8, p. 253. Peace was signed at Breda on the 31 July 1667.
77 2 Sep 1667, Pepys, *Diary*, vol. 8, p. 419.
Pepys’s increasing wealth gave him almost unlimited opportunities. The intention in this chapter is to determine his priorities when spending his money. It examines the constraints and desires influencing his expenditure and explores how they were reconciled. Relevant questions to be answered were whether Pepys showed generosity or selfishness, profligacy or caution, and whether his behaviour changed as his wealth increased.

**Spending the Money**

In the months following Pepys’s installation as Clerk of the Acts, he went on a spending spree that he could never have imagined possible. The tailor’s son was eager to have coats and suits made in luxurious fabrics for himself, and outfits for Elizabeth in the latest fashion. He must have handled these beautiful cloths growing up and perhaps dreamed of wearing them one day. For a society wedding Pepys bought a silk suit, ‘the first that ever I had worn in my life’, and was also delighted to report that ‘among all the beauties there my wife was thought the greatest’.\(^7^8\) He did not yet know what salary he would be paid as Clerk of the Acts, or how profitable the position would be and his enjoyment of their new clothes was somewhat tempered by a nagging fear that he would not be able to pay for them. Within days, however, his place was confirmed and he began to feel more comfortable.

As was expected of him in his new position, Pepys now employed more staff: Will Hayter, a clerk, and Will Hewer who was part clerk, part manservant. His new house provided by the Navy Office was considerably bigger than their ‘poor little house in Axe Yard’, and so he also engaged a boy to help out at home, and a maid for Elizabeth. Pepys’s initial imperative was to feed and clothe everyone in his household. As his financial situation improved so did their diets. Lorna Weatherill found that food was the most important single item in household

\(^{78}\) 10 Jul 1660, Pepys, *Diary*, vol. 1, p. 196.
accounts, and as households became better off, spending on more and better food gained a high priority.\textsuperscript{79} Even when it was just he and Elizabeth at home Pepys enjoyed being able to eat well: ‘[i]t pleased me much to see my condition come to allow ourselfs a dish like that.’\textsuperscript{80} In 1662 Pepys estimated that he was spending a little over 30s a week on housekeeping ‘besides wine, fire, candle, sope and many other things’.\textsuperscript{81} Much of the time Pepys ate out, socialising with friends or doing business in an alehouse or one of the coffeehouses recently opened in London.

Apart from these essential costs of living, there were other expenses that could not be avoided. Pepys’s immediate neighbours were much wealthier than he was and, whilst he looked forward to joining their higher social ranks, he knew it would be expensive. Westhauser makes the point that well-managed sociability would have been key to improving Pepys’s economic position.\textsuperscript{82} If Pepys wanted to demonstrate his growing importance, he would have to entertain on a more lavish scale than before and a well-furnished house was essential. He immediately embarked on renovations. There were carpenters and painters to be found, and furniture, furnishings and pictures to be bought. John Pepys’s advice was sought and Samuel writes how much pleasure this gave his father who was ‘mightily pleased with my ordering of the house.’\textsuperscript{83} At last the house was ready for visitors and on 24 January 1661 they gave a dinner for some of his colleagues and neighbours: Sir William Batten and family, Sir William Penn, Stephen Fox and Captain Cuttance. It cost more than £5, but was money well spent.

As Pepys’s social circle grew, along with his wealth and confidence, entertaining colleagues and friends at his home became an increasingly common event. Throughout his Diary are accounts of dinner parties, who gave them, what they ate and the guests who attended. John Evelyn also regularly reports on feasts, some of which cost several hundred pounds. Guests at the Pepys’ table included his and Elizabeth’s extended families, their friends, his clerks as well as his colleagues, neighbours, and casual acquaintances. These dinners gave him the opportunity to display his possessions. Expenditure rather than income

\textsuperscript{79} Weatherill,\textit{ Consumer Behaviour,} p. 135.
\textsuperscript{80} 3 Nov. 1661, Pepys,\textit{ Diary,} vol. 2, p. 207.
\textsuperscript{81} 6 Jul 1662, Pepys,\textit{ Diary,} vol. 3, p. 132.
\textsuperscript{83} 26 Oct 1660, Pepys,\textit{ Diary,} vol. 1, p. 274.
demonstrated status, and there was a hierarchy of patterns of consumption. Clothes, food, domestic furnishings and decoration all had social overtones. At a dinner in 1667 Pepys’s friends and colleagues were made to realise that ‘all I have and do so much outdo, for neatness and plenty, anything done by any of them.’

Pepys needed to establish his position as a respected civil servant who moved in high circles and he spent much of his money with this in mind. At the same time it was wonderfully exciting to be able to buy whatever took his fancy. Pepys became carried away by his new-found wealth. London was at this time a cornucopia of delights to savour. John Houghton, an apothecary shopkeeper, tells of the enormous range of goods brought to England by merchants from all over the world: ‘Paper, Wine, Linnen, Castle-Sope, Brandy, Olives, Capers, Prunes, Kid-skins, Taffeties and such like . . . set us all agog.’ Luxury goods did not only come from abroad; the variety of items being manufactured in England was also increasing as consumer demand rose: silks and lace, hats and fans, paper and glass, wine and cider. Houghton was a great advocate of the benefits of free trade and consumerism: ‘Remember that you are a rational creature, don’t make your own and other’s lives uncomfortable by refusing to enjoy those Blessings Providence hath heaped upon you . . .’ How was Pepys, a man who loved all things new, to resist? As he was to write some time later: ‘But though I am against too much spending, yet I do think it best to enjoy some degree of pleasure now that we have health, money, and opportunity.’

Not all occasions were used to show off. Good food, conversation, merriment, music, and pretty, agreeable women were the joys of his life. A whole day could be lost to entertainment. On one summer’s day in 1664, one of his closest friends and colleagues, Mr. Creed, and the three daughters of Sandwich (with their mother’s permission), met at his home at noon for venison pasty ‘very well baked,
and a good dish of roasted chickens, pease, lobsters, strawberries'. They were all getting on so well that they continued on, with an outing to Greenwich Hill and then the Cherry Garden before taking a boat back along the Thames to London Bridge, singing all the way. It was after midnight before the ‘three young ladies’ were safely returned to their mother. Pepys had thoroughly enjoyed their frolic. It must have been quite an expensive outing but Pepys makes no mention of the cost in his diary; he had had a good time with no thought given to his social and financial credit.

Music was possibly Pepys’s greatest passion and one which he indulged with no regrets or guilt. As well as buying a variety of instruments, he paid for music lessons for himself and was particularly keen that Elizabeth should learn to sing well. Books and pamphlets were a major purchase and his famous collection was expensively bound and displayed. Theatrical life began to flourish again with the removal of restrictions imposed by the Puritans of the previous regime. Pepys was entranced and visited the theatre as often as he could. At times he would vow to limit how often he went to the theatre in an effort to curb his spending but the self-imposed restrictions never lasted long and his wealthier years allowed him to attend performances as often as he wished. His infamous weakness for a pretty woman often led to more frequent or more expensive purchases than he had intended; that ‘strange slavery that I stand in to beauty’. Pepys was sometimes troubled by how much he was spending, especially early in his career: ‘myself lately under great expense of money upon myself in clothes and other things’, but the next day he lists even more purchases.

Pepys spent his money on goods and services that enhanced his prestige or gave him pleasure. Gambling did not satisfy either of these desires; indeed he could not understand how anyone could waste their money in such a way. He would play at cards with his friends and have an occasional wager on such things as the relative heights of the cliffs of Dover and Sandwich’s carriage, but serious gaming was anathema to him. He rarely criticised his patron in his Diary, but was drawn to do

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89 Venison was not sold by London butchers, and could only be obtained if you knew well the owner of a deer park. A very rich recipe for venison pasty, taken from a cookery book in the Pepys’s Library, is described by Robert Latham, in The Diary of Samuel Pepys, ed. Latham and Matthews, vol. 10, p. 147.

90 6 Sep 1664, Pepys, Diary, vol. 5, p. 264.


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so when he realised the extent to which Sandwich was gambling his money away: ‘I see how time and example may alter a man, he being now acquainted with all sorts of pleasure and vanities’. Pepys was even more disturbed by watching men bet at a cock-fight: ‘the poorest ‘prentices, bakers, brewers, butchers, draymen ... that look as if they had not bread to put in their mouths ... will lose £10 or £20 at a meeting’. Even in 1668, when he was comfortably off, he watches in bemusement the ‘profane, mad entertainment they give themselfs’ at a gaming club.

By 1667 Pepys’s financial situation was such that he could buy whatever he liked. At the end of the following year he was finally to realise the dream he had shared with Elizabeth early in his career: should his savings ever reach £2000 he would buy a coach and four horses. Now, driving around in their coach and pair of black horses with the coachman and boy dressed in smart new livery, Pepys was able to say: ‘it being mighty pleasure to go alone with my poor wife in a coach of our own to a play; and makes us appear mighty great I think in the world.’

Sharing the money

Samuel Pepys thoroughly enjoyed spending his money — on himself. He was much less enthusiastic when it came to spending it on other people. Even Elizabeth was a victim of his meanness, unless her expenditure reflected well on her husband. Elizabeth enjoyed shopping as much as her husband. In the year or so following Pepys’ change of fortune after the Restoration, when he was indulging in his own orgy of spending, he was relatively tolerant of Elizabeth’s purchases, but this did not last. In November 1661 Lady Sandwich, his patron’s wife, had to remonstrate with him, telling him it was time to buy his wife some new clothes. Pepys was close to Sandwich’s family and had a lot of respect for his Lady’s opinions but he had to be spoken to on three occasions before taking action and then only did so ‘for her honour and my owne’. Pepys finally took

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92 28 Jan 1663, Pepys, *Diary*, vol. 4, p. 28.
93 21 Dec 1663, Pepys, *Diary*, vol. 4, p. 428.
94 1 Jan 1668, Pepys, *Diary*, vol. 9, p. 4.
95 This is no hyperbole: early in his career his dreams were modest. On 2 March 1662 he lay in bed with Elizabeth one morning planning what they would be able to do should he ever have £2,000 in savings.
96 3 Dec 1668, Pepys, *Diary*, vol. 9, p. 383.
97 9 Nov 1661, Pepys, *Diary*, vol. 2, p. 211.
Elizabeth shopping but not without complaint: ‘my mind very heavy for my expenseful life; . . . for now I am coming to lay out a great deal of money in clothes upon my wife, I must forbear other expenses’. Lady Sandwich continued to encourage him to spend on his wife and he became more generous as his wealth grew. In 1663 he bought her ‘a new petticoat of the new striped stuff . . . much better than she desires or expects’. By 1666, he was happily buying her a pearl necklace costing £80. Having his wife display expensive jewellery not only delighted Elizabeth, it increased his ‘esteem’. Two years later he presented her with a Valentine’s ring set with turquoise and diamonds, admitting that Elizabeth was ‘costing me but little compared with other wives, and I have not many occasions to spend on her.’

Towards the end of 1668 Elizabeth caught her husband in flagrante delicto with her maid, Deb Willet. This act cost Pepys a great amount financially and emotionally. After a tormented few days, Pepys was not only bestowing gifts on his wife but agreeing, reluctantly, to pay her an annual allowance of £30 ‘for all expenses, clothes and everything’. This amount seems to have been sufficient only for trinkets, and says much about her husband’s lack of trust in her ability to manage money. In contrast, Sir Stephen Fox gave his wife responsibility for a great deal of the household expenditure and an allowance of more than £700 a year. Pepys and Fox moved in similar social circles and both men achieved well-paid positions during the years after the Restoration. Keeping Elizabeth financially dependent was perhaps Pepys’s way of ensuring her fidelity. He had shown jealousy of his wife on several occasions and was afraid of losing her. On an earlier occasion Elizabeth bought herself a pair of earrings; he furiously made her return them, but then allowed her to keep them after all, saying that it was not the expense but that she had not sought his permission first.

With no children of his own to support, and being the wealthiest and most competent of his immediate family, it fell to Pepys to take on the responsibility for their welfare. He took these responsibilities seriously, supporting them

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100 18 Feb 1669, Pepys, *Diary*, vol. 9, pp. 78-79.
102 4 Jul 1664, Pepys, *Diary*, vol. 5, p. 196.
financially and managing their affairs. But Mascuch’s opinion that all diarists gave precedence to family sustenance over matters such as personal achievements is not borne out by Pepys. He was far more inclined to document his own interests, pleasures and achievements. In the early years he worried about losing his position or his wealth as he had so many people dependent on him despite having no children. Pepys was often critical of his parents’ and siblings’ lack of intelligence and financial acumen and his filial generosity was balanced by concomitant criticism of his father’s spendthrift ways. A letter to his father after his uncle Robert Pepys had died and bequeathed his estate to Samuel is telling. John had been left the house in Huntingdon to live in for his lifetime and the income from the estate would provide him a living. His son had carried out a thorough investigation of the financial situation of the estate and had estimated the probable income it would provide. He found that it was much less than had been anticipated. Rather than see his parents living in hardship, he offered to contribute another £22 a year which would give them a total of £50. Pepys considered this a reasonable amount provided ‘all ways of thrift bee studyed’. He was somewhat to regret this advice later on after his father, ‘for good husbandry’, had asked for his son’s old shoes: ‘yet methought it was a thing against my mind to have him wear my old things’.

Pepys had two surviving younger brothers and a sister. Thomas had taken over the family’s tailoring business after their father retired in August 1661. John had run what seems to have been a relatively profitable business. Thomas did not have his father’s skills and Samuel paid many of his brother’s debts while he was alive and after his death in March 1664. There were some responsibilities that Pepys refused to take on: Tom had never married but had fathered a child subsequently fostered out. Pepys argued that he had already paid out a considerable amount and ‘would not pay anymore’. He would do his duty to his legitimate dependents but no more. It raises an interesting question of how he would have behaved had

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103 31 Dec 1663, Vol. 4, pp. 438-439. He lists the people for whose welfare he feels financially responsible: members of his immediate and extended family, and that of his wife.
105 Pepys to John Pepys Senior, 16 May 1663, Heath, ed., Family Letters, p. 3.
106 5 Dec 1667, Pepys, Diary, vol. 8, p. 565.
he had any children. Despite his philandering, there is no record that he made any woman pregnant; he seems to have been infertile. My suspicion is that he would have denied all responsibility. As he wrote when his sister became pregnant with her first child: ‘[I have] no great care for my friends to have children, though I love other people’s.’

Pepys consulted with his father to find a suitable husband for his only surviving sister Paulina (Pall). There were negotiations with several men before he could write of her eventual marriage to John Jackson in February 1668: ‘so that work is, I hope, well over.’ Her father could not afford a dowry and Pepys had settled £600 on her, relieved to be eased of her care. In rural Essex the following year, the far less wealthy Ralph Josselin spent £270 on the occasion of his daughter’s marriage to a tanner: £200 for a dowry and £70 for clothes and gifts.

John, the youngest brother, was supported through his studies at Cambridge by Samuel. By 1667, it was clearly time for him to earn an independent living and Pepys decided that he should take holy orders. John’s abilities did not impress his brother and, in 1673, after Pepys had been appointed Secretary of the Admiralty, John left the ministry and succeeded his brother as Clerk of the Acts.

By the end of the Diary, Pepys’s family responsibilities were few: both his mother and Thomas had died, John was independent, and Pall was married and had taken on the care of their father. As his own responsibilities decreased, he seems to have done more for Elizabeth’s family. Her brother Balthazar (Balty) had first approached Pepys for assistance in 1660. He was an unreliable young man and Pepys had serious reservations. These were unjustified and by 1666 Balty had been appointed Muster-Master of a squadron where he acquitted himself well. A year later Pepys had arranged for Balty to be appointed Deputy Treasurer of the Fleet under the Duke of York with an income of £1500 a year, with the proviso that Balty give any profits he made to Elizabeth so that she could care for their parents. Pepys had done little things to help them over the years, including paying her ‘good-natured’ father to rule up account books for the office as he had

109 12 May 1669, Pepys, Diary, vol. 9, p. 553.
110 2 Mar 1668, Pepys, Diary, vol. 9, p. 100.
once asked Elizabeth to do, and passing on to her mother her daughter’s old clothes. He was fond of them and ‘glad to have friendship with them’.

Pepys’s loyalty to his family extended to that of the Earl of Sandwich, his patron. Sandwich was perpetually in debt partly because the state always owed him money but also because of his profligate ways. Members of many aristocratic families were comfortable with indebtedness. Muldrew found that in 1641, 121 members of the peerage between them owed £1,500,000. People had become wary of extending credit to Sandwich. Pepys lent him money and went part-guarantor for a loan, but in 1663 the relationship between them soured for a while and Pepys became anxious: ‘I do not like his being angry and in debt both together to me’. Their friendship was restored and Pepys continued to lend to him, knowing that it was unlikely to be repaid. By 1668, he was in the happy position of being able to face the loss of his money with some equanimity, but he was also conscious of owing a debt of gratitude and honour to the man who had been his patron and Pepys repaid it with some grace.

To members of his household Pepys was a demanding master, but he was also willing to reward people for exceptional service: 6d to their maid for an unexpectedly good dinner; 12d for returning home to find his house spotless ‘from top to bottom’.

When Pepys travelled he would make donations and payments for small services rendered along the way. He records giving money to people, often children, who amused him in some way. An excursion to Windsor Castle in 1666 cost him a ‘great deal of money [given] to this and that man and woman’. Two years later he mentions some of the people to whom he gave money on another tour: ‘menders of the highway’, ‘one that helped the horses’, ‘poor woman in the street’, ‘sexton of the church’. These accounts suggest that similar small payments were regular and frequent, so much part of life that they were not worth recording in his Diary.

113 28 Dec 1668, Pepys, Diary, vol. 9, p. 403.
114 Muldrew, Economy of Obligation, p. 97.
115 9 Feb 1664, Pepys, Diary, vol. 4, p. 42.
116 5 Feb 1663, Pepys, Diary, vol. 4, p. 34; 4 April 1663, Pepys, Diary, vol. 4, p. 95.
118 Jun 1668, Pepys, Diary, Vol. 9, pp. 224, 230, 238.
He felt genuine sympathy for the seamen and their families who were destitute and starving in the streets during and after the Second Dutch War. John Evelyn, Commissioner of Sick and Wounded, wrote many letters reiterating the extent of the problem but Pepys needed no reminder: every day he was confronted at home, at his office and on the streets by the reality of the situation. He recorded giving 2s 6d to a starving seaman, who ‘lay in our yard a-dying’, 1s to a distraught widow, and others. He was distressed on one occasion to find that 300 men had been impressed from Bridewell without the statutory payments being made for their food and lodging. The amount due came to £15 and he covered the cost himself. To the end of his Diary Pepys was endeavouring to obtain more money from the King and Parliament to adequately fund the Navy and her men.

With the end of the disruption caused by the Civil War and the weakening of Puritan influence, trade and consumption dramatically increased and people began to see the possibilities for betterment. As ‘the middling sort’ became more wealthy, so did demand grow. During the 1660s a great variety of novel and exotic foods, household and personal goods were being brought to London in great quantities, thanks to the formation and expansion of merchant companies and trading routes. As Tim Harris wrote: ‘people were allowed to have fun again.’

Pepys relished the opportunity to acquire whatever gave him pleasure, established his status, or piqued his interest. He grabbed opportunities with both hands, spending for pleasure but always conscious of his ‘esteem’. His restless energy kept him constantly on the move, seeking out books, prints and paintings, scientific and other curiosities, jewellery, and musical instruments. In the first few years there is an obvious sense of excitement and wonder as Pepys records his purchases; ‘the first that I have ever owned’ was a recurring phrase. The tension between using his money to establish his status, to increase his wealth, or in discretionary spending was particularly strong in the early years. Later he became more comfortable and also more generous, but he was always a good ‘husband’, perhaps even over-cautious in eschewing risk.

In his Diary, Pepys kept an account of his social worth as much as his financial state and this chapter looks at how he assessed both. Social norms and expectations, together with financial and business systems of the day, are explored to help explain what motivated his actions and decisions.

Social Accounting

Living in London, Pepys was at the centre of the whirlwind changes that were occurring in England in the 1660s. He was quick to realise the opportunities opening up to him and to take advantage of them. Aylmer found that holding government office was one of the more successful ways of improving one’s wealth and status.120 Patronage was important in obtaining a position, but there was a ‘backstairs world’ that allowed personal initiative to thrive.121 This was a world to which Pepys was well-suited. His initial amazement at his good fortune quickly developed into ambition.

Keeble makes the point that the restoration of the monarchy happened rapidly, suddenly, and unexpectedly.122 An event of this magnitude inevitably brings social upheaval in its wake. Success partly depended on anticipating change and knowing where power and influence lay. Pepys was always well aware of what was happening in the world around him. He spent time gossiping in the coffee shops and alehouses, but was also privy to information at a higher level with access to important official documents and to influential men. Knowledge allowed Pepys to allay the anxiety, insecurity and apprehension that Keeble suggested were experienced as much as celebration after the Restoration.123 His Diary was a way of assessing and analysing information.

120 Aylmer, Crown’s Servants, p. 239.
121 Ibid, p. 20.
123 Ibid, p. 50.
One of the places Pepys gained information was at the Royal Exchange, built in the late sixteenth century as a place for merchants to gather. There were shops and commercial offices and it became a venue for political protest or lobbying and an outlet for the hawking of pamphlets and tracts.\(^{124}\) Pepys was a frequent visitor, conducting business, keeping up with the gossip, and spending money. He could drop Elizabeth off there to do some shopping or meet up with friends while he went about his business. The Exchange was also a place where reputations were made and lost, and with them financial success. As Muldrew wrote, 'credit was the key to wealth'.\(^{125}\) Pepys’s creditworthiness was never in question, and the source of his wealth would not have been of concern to these merchants, some of whom would have been partly responsible for it.

Pepys understood that his reputation was closely aligned to his wealth and he was uncomfortable with debt. His continual re-assessment of his financial situation emphasised his savings and the fact that he owed nothing. Ralph Josselin’s diary demonstrates a similar concern: he would summarise his expenditure, income, stock, debts owing and owed, and cash savings. For some men debt was less of a problem, their success was tied to patronage at the highest level of society. The Earl of Sandwich had a reputation as being a credit-risk and had difficulty raising money, but he was protected by the King.

With an unpredictable income, budgeting as we know it was impossible. Ralph Josselin attempted to develop a structured plan when his finances seemed in some disarray at the end of 1666. Firstly he would clear his debts and: ‘henceforward to lay by the 10\(^{th}\) shilling that comes in clearly of money . . . and to divide it thus: 12s of every 20 for good uses to friends, and the 8s to dispose to ease me in my own particulars for visitations, books, etc.’\(^{126}\) In contrast, when Pepys was distressed at his inordinate expenses, he simply vowed to spend less until his savings had reached a more comfortable level.

Circulating coinage was not universal as it is today, instead complex credit networks had developed. Food, clothing, household items, all went on to account and were paid off as money became available or the debt was called in. Day-to-

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day transactions involving small amounts of money were only partly settled in cash, and exchange of goods, payment in kind, and chains of reciprocal credit were common. Pepys frequently tells how he called in to different merchants while walking to or from business activities to settle his debts by coins, but he would also exchange an unwanted gift or book for some other item, or pawn one of his possessions until he had the ready money.

In a local community, where people were well known to one another, memory and witness maintained a degree of reliability in the complex web of indebtedness ensuing from these small, frequent transactions. Sometimes people had to borrow from one person to pay another and the credit trail could become complicated. Indebtedness had great social as well as financial ramification. Social trust was communicated by the exchange of goods and services and was often built on emotional interpersonal relationships. 127

**Gift-giving**

The exchange of gifts was a normal part of seventeenth-century life. Gifts flowed endlessly in a two way exchange between gentry families, patrons and clients, officials and merchants. As Keith Thomas found, goods 'were the essential vocabulary and small change of social intercourse.' 128 Social trust was communicated by the exchange of goods and services and was often built on emotional interpersonal relationships. 129 There were social overtones to giving and receiving, with certain expectations of the value of the gift that should be presented. Pepys tried to minimise his contribution as often as he could, whilst maintaining 'esteem'. A few months after his appointment to the Navy Board, he attended the wedding of two of Sir William Batten's servants. It was expected that guests would give money to the couple; Pepys gave 10s, knowing that others gave more but making them believe that his contribution had been greater than it was. 130 At the end of the year he heard that Commissioner Pett had presented a silver plate to Sir William Coventry as a New Year's gift, which he had refused and Pepys decided to ingratiate himself in the same way, hoping that his gift

130 15 Nov 1660, Pepys, *Diary*, vol. 1, p. 293.
would also be returned.\textsuperscript{131} He was delighted to record a few days later that Coventry had indeed returned the plate with a kind letter; both Pepys’s social and monetary credits were intact. Eight years later Pepys was to find himself in a similar position to Coventry. Will Hewer, his chief clerk, presented a diamond locket to Pepys’s wife as a token of his gratitude to them both. Pepys thought that it would not have been honourable to accept it, and asked Elizabeth to make him take it back. By this time Hewer had also become very wealthy. Mountagu’s assurance to Pepys in 1660 that ‘we must have a little patience and we will rise together’ could equally well have applied to Pepys and his clerk.\textsuperscript{132}

One obstacle to social acceptance with which Pepys struggled was in understanding the subtleties of displaying one’s wealth. His Diary shows that he was concerned about social approval, feeling his way in a new society and constantly assessing how best to negotiate the complicated link between wealth and ‘esteem’. Living and working closely with his wealthier colleagues, he was immediately drawn into emulating their lifestyle. Lorna Weatherill argues, however, that attributing men’s expanding consumption solely to emulation is too simplistic.\textsuperscript{133} Pepys’s behaviour supports this argument for complexity; he needed to assert his elevated status through consumption patterns that were on a par with his neighbours, but he also thoroughly enjoyed living well and acquiring ever more goods. Still, when Lord Brouncker, a fellow commissioner on the Navy Board, was reported to have questioned the honesty with which Pepys had acquired two silver flagons he had displayed at one of his dinners, Pepys defiantly confided in his Diary: ‘it is fit he should see I am no mean fellow but can live in the world and have something.’\textsuperscript{134} His self-conscious positioning of himself in society is evident too, when he criticises the wedding ring worn by his aunt Wight, married to his father’s half-brother and worth about £12: ‘I do not think it very suitable for one of our quality.’\textsuperscript{135}

The purchase of his coach and horses at the end of 1668, with servants in his personal livery, was the pinnacle of his desires. More clearly than anything else it

\textsuperscript{132} 4 Jun 1660, Pepys, \textit{Diary}, vol. 1, p. 167.
\textsuperscript{133} Weatherill, \textit{Consumer Behaviour}, pp. 194-6.
\textsuperscript{134} 11 Jan 1667, Pepys, \textit{Diary}, vol. 8, p. 12. They had, in fact, been given to Pepys as a bribe.
\textsuperscript{135} 4 Dec 1668, Pepys, \textit{Diary}, vol. 9, p. 384.
epitomised his success and he delighted in being seen out and about in it with Elizabeth. However, his comment that it 'may be observed to my prejudice', suggests a lingering doubt that he genuinely had the 'esteem' of his superiors.\textsuperscript{136} This lack of social confidence is apparent throughout his Diary and he was quick to feel slights. In 1665, he and the other commissioners had been meeting with the King and the Duke of York. Pepys recounts that he had been very much part of the conversations on the day but then 'all to dinner and sat down to the King, saving myself, which though I could not in modesty expect, yet, God forgive my pride.'\textsuperscript{137} Social accounting was far more complex than the monetary kind. According to Clay, Sir Stephen Fox showed the same difficulty: both were intelligent, efficient and diligent, and rose from humble backgrounds to become rich through the profits and perquisites of their careers.

\textbf{Financial Accounting}

Financial documentation and record-keeping were haphazard at best in England in the seventeenth century. Accounting was of poor quality even amongst prominent and successful men. Handbooks and manuals of the time deplored these 'confused', 'blotted and blurred', 'cross'd and raced' account books that could not be trusted even by their own creators who relied 'for the most part to their mortal Memories, or loose papers'.\textsuperscript{138} Despite instruction manuals becoming increasingly available during the seventeenth century, there was no standard accounting system in place such as that used by the big merchants and bankers of Europe. Muldrew notes that double entry bookkeeping was rarely used in England until well into the nineteenth century, although Peter Boys suggests that Pepys may at least have been familiar with it.\textsuperscript{139} Numeracy was a skill not easily mastered and this offers an explanation for the neglect of accurate record-keeping. Pepys had not mastered these skills either during his time at St Pauls School or at Cambridge. In 1662 he started to learn arithmetic, practising his multiplication tables in less busy times, and later teaching it to Elizabeth, who 'takes it very well'.\textsuperscript{140}

\textsuperscript{136} 11 Dec 1669, Pepys, \textit{Diary}, vol. 9, p. 515.
\textsuperscript{137} 26 July 1665, Pepys, \textit{Diary}, vol. 6, pp. 169-170.
\textsuperscript{138} Muldrew, \textit{Economy of Obligation}, p. 61.
\textsuperscript{139} See Peter Boys, 'Samuel Pepys's Personal Accounts', \textit{Accounting, Business and Financial History}, Vol. 5, No. 3 (1995), pp. 308-320, for a good discussion of the subject.
\textsuperscript{140} 21 Oct 1663, Pepys, \textit{Diary}, vol. 4, p. 343.
Pepys kept careful household accounts, requiring Elizabeth to keep accurate records, and becoming angry when he discovered any discrepancies or deceptions. Pepys knew exactly what every possession had cost him and the value of any gifts he received. His usual practice seems to have been to record income and expenditure in a 'bye-book' or even on loose sheets of paper, to be entered into his formal account books at a later date. Sometimes they were never updated: in June 1668, during a tour of southern England, loose sheets of Pepys's daily expenditure were inserted into the Diary. It gives a rare insight into his accounting methods, and emphasises the fact that his Diary is not a complete record. At the end of each year, and frequently at other times as well, Pepys meticulously calculated his current financial state, often ensuring that his debts were settled and rejoicing as his wealth grew. Knowing exactly what he was worth gave Pepys a sense of security.

Household and business accounts were often mixed together. Pepys at times fell victim to this practice. Although he became proficient in accounting, it was still possible to become confused and the complexity of the naval accounts gave him many a headache and late night, but eventually he could always balance these books too. His diligence and superior competency stood him in good stead, and he was the 'go-to man' when it came to defending the accuracy and honesty of the Naval Board, or putting a case to Parliament for more money.

This had been one of the first duties he had to undertake after his appointment as Clerk of the Acts. His figures had been checked by Lord Clarendon, the Lord Chancellor, who advised him on ways of achieving the best possible payment. Pepys was clearly not the first government official to 'cook the books'. A year later, in December 1661, The Duke of York, as Lord High Admiral, again requested the Board to provide him with a 'speedy estimate of all the debts of the Navy'. Four years later the Clerk of the Acts was still trying to obtain money from Treasury. He assured Coventry that he had in no way exaggerated the costs which amounted to almost £24,000 a week, but that the Lord Treasurer, the Earl...
of Clarendon, had dismissed the appeal with ‘signs of amazement and discontent’ and had insisted that there could be no increase in funding for the Navy.\textsuperscript{144}

It was partly a legacy of the parlous financial condition of the state following the Interregnum, but also the continuing struggle for control between the King and Parliament. Aylmer points out that Parliament was well aware of the need to rein in spending but was hampered by Charles II’s profligacy, by entrenched corruption and waste, and by extraordinary naval and military commitments.\textsuperscript{145} Sir William Petty, a late seventeenth-century economist and statistician, wrote that ‘the Charge of the Militia, which commonly is in ordinary as great as any other Branch of the Whole, but extraordinary (that is in time of War or fear of War) is much the greatest.’\textsuperscript{146} By 1665, empty coffers not withstanding, it was becoming apparent that another war with the Dutch was inevitable. It was a war over control of the sea; immense fortunes could be made by the country that held sovereignty over maritime trading routes. The Dutch had better merchant ships and were more successful than the English whose ‘simple jealousy of Dutch success, Dutch wealth, Dutch efficiency’ was a powerful incentive for war.\textsuperscript{147} The English Navy, however, was in a parlous state, a fact of which the Board was only too well aware. Pepys’s reforms had created a more efficient, less wasteful system of building and outfitting ships in the Dockyards, and the shortage of seamen could be helped by pressing men, but there was still the problem of provisioning.

Responsibility for victualling the navy rested with the wealthy merchant, Dennis Gauden. He was contracted to Treasury to supply each man at a daily rate of 6d while the ships were in harbour and 8d when they were at sea. He was also expected to hold some supplies in reserve for unexpected eventualities.\textsuperscript{148} He was free to subcontract his suppliers but it was an unwieldy system that meant if he was not paid then neither were they. Pepys put forward a plan for a more streamlined process that would be more efficient and accountable. There would be

\textsuperscript{144} de la Bédoyère, ed., Pepys to Coventry, 15 Apr 1665, \textit{Letters}, p. 37.
\textsuperscript{146} Henry, ed., \textit{Writings of Petty}, p. 18.
victualling agents at major ports directly answerable to the main office to be situated in London. And Pepys had contrived to be appointed Surveyor in charge of Victualling.

Pepys again presented a review of the present and probable future charge to Treasury of the urgent need to repair and supply the ships of the King’s navy. Sir John Evelyn, Commissioner of Sick and Wounded Seamen and Prisoners of War, kept Pepys constantly aware of the drastic lack of money needed to alleviate their suffering. He wrote to Pepys in absolute frustration, not only because too little money was allocated but because a large portion of what was intended to go to his department had been ‘diverted for other purposes from Oxford’, to where the Royal Court had fled in order to escape the Plague. 149 Pepys worked tirelessly to get pay and conditions remedied, thoroughly disapproving of the system initiated by the Privy Council whereby seamen were given ‘tickets’ or a promise to pay at a future date (unspecified). Not surprisingly, considering the State’s financial situation, these tickets were almost worthless.

In a letter to Sir William Coventry in 1665, Pepys wrote of his distress at the extent of money owed to the seamen and the shipyards: ‘unless better care be taken for the payment of the slopsellers [who provided the seamen’s uniforms], I do not think they can continue.’ 150 Pepys had already advanced £100 for the purchase of a ship, ‘taking Sir George Carteret’s word to be reimbursed in ten days’. 151 A few months later, merchants were either refusing to supply the Navy or asking exorbitant prices for their goods which would allow them to raise money from the goldsmiths who also acted as bankers. It was not surprising that men found other ways of obtaining the money.

**Corruption**

Corruption was hard to define in the later seventeenth-century. When Pepys immersed himself in the task of overhauling the way the Navy did its business, it appears to have been the inefficiency and waste that worried Pepys more than corruption *per se*; he was after all not averse to receiving inducements himself. He

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150 de la Bédoyère, ed., Pepys to Coventry, 8 Apr 1665, *Further Correspondence*, p. 31.
soon realised the discrepancy between the cost of having a ship constructed and outfitted in one of the King's own yards and that of one built in a privately owned one. Pepys understood the need for a rigorous system of manufacture and supply, maximising quality and efficiency while minimising waste and he continually assures himself that an inducement would neither compromise quality nor disadvantage his employers, an assurance that Knights insists was his way of quieting an uneasy conscience.\textsuperscript{152}

The difference between what constituted a legitimate perquisite and what was a corrupt payment was not clearly articulated. Fees were paid to men operating at all levels of government administration for all kinds of official business but the practice of purchasing a position was open to abuse. Pepys's claim that he always used his position to obtain maximum benefit for his King is weakened when positions were not filled on merit, but on a greased palm. Pepys regularly received inducements to find a position for someone, but he would sometimes refuse or return gifts if he was unsure whether to grant a request or not. Fees-for-service or payments in kind were important additional sources of income when wages were insufficient and in arrears.\textsuperscript{153} The system was a haphazard one at best and the confusion would inevitably have led to misuse of funds, even if unintentional.

Pepys's perquisites appear to have gone way beyond confusion. Noonan's book on bribery concentrated on the years 1663-4 with good reason; they are replete with entries recounting his 'gifts'. Noonan wonders why Pepys recorded his illicit deals so frankly. He suggests that he was 'keeping score', getting the same thrill as he did when he recorded his sexual conquests.\textsuperscript{154} He took a perverse pleasure in profiting from a myriad of deals. Walking with one of his co-conspirators, William Warren, in the garden, Pepys wrote: 'mighty merry we were in the discourse of our own tricks.'\textsuperscript{155} From 1667, however, this type of entry becomes far less common. Perhaps Pepys's wealth had reached a level at which he felt less need to boost his income to the same extent, or perhaps it was due to the forensic parliamentary enquiries into the financial records of the Navy (and by extension to

\textsuperscript{152} Knights, 'Corruption', p. 30.
\textsuperscript{153} Aylmer, Crown's Servants, p. 111.
\textsuperscript{154} Noonan, Bribes, p. 377.
those of Pepys). It may simply have been that his eyes were causing him so much trouble that the effort it took to keep a secret Diary was too great.

Pepys understood that reputation and wealth went hand-in-hand. He was able to document his financial wellbeing in some detail but his social estate was not as easy to assess. There was no ruled page for the income and outgoings of ‘esteem’, and comparison with other men was fraught. Pepys’s candid musings allow us to travel with him as he attempts to balance the opportunities and constraints on realising his ambitions.
CONCLUSION

The ‘interrogation’ of Pepys through his Diary allows us to form at least a tentative understanding of what money meant to Pepys, and what impact it had on his behaviour. Pepys was candid about his money, confiding to his Diary his concerns, pleasures, priorities, regrets and, in particular, its accumulation. He dreamt of becoming a wealthy man and in this he succeeded. There were many factors that influenced the behaviour Pepys describes in his desire for acquisition of wealth, security, pleasure and a quiet conscience. These desires are apparent throughout the Diary and often conflict. Each took precedence at different times and Pepys often struggled to balance them. Society itself was struggling with those same conflicts as evidenced by the writings and speeches of preachers, economists, and politicians, some thundering, some more muted.

Pepys’s apparent obsession with money has been shown to be a manifestation of his paramount need to rise out of relative poverty to find security in an insecure world. It was a priority that determined his behaviour in many ways, and goes a long way to explaining the selfishness, corruption, and ruthless manipulation of people and processes. Threats to his wealth and, therefore to his peace of mind, were real: theft, fire, war, sickness, and poor investments all affected Pepys’s family, colleagues, and neighbours and were recounted in his Diary. He was constantly reassuring himself by calculating his wealth, hoarding his savings in gold coins, and investing in silver plate and jewellery for his wife. He was a conservative and risk-averse ‘husband’, keeping careful private accounts.

Whether he was different in that respect from his contemporaries is not easy to tell. Published diaries kept by his contemporaries in London are not private ones in the way that Pepys’s was. Those of Evelyn and Morrice, both of whom were already wealthy, barely mention money except as it related to their business. Ralph Josselin wrote a more laconic account of his financial affairs, seemingly either content or resigned to the relative poverty of his life in rural Essex. Pepys, on the other hand, was bombarded by the confusion, opportunities, and uncertainties of life in London, and was both financially and socially ambitious.

He could always calculate his financial situation with confidence but his social standing was not always so easy to assess. Each reflected and reinforced the other.
Status was established by outward display: domicile, possessions, clothes, hospitality and Pepys made every effort to gain the ‘esteem’ of his superiors. His spending patterns in the early years reflected his understanding that the consumption and display of luxury goods did not just proclaim power: they were power.  

Pepys was able to distinguish himself by his outstanding financial and administrative skills, but it was still crucial that he display and entrench his position by an extravagant lifestyle.

The spectacular rise in consumerism and the vast array of luxury goods, including food items, available for purchase during this time is well-documented. The supply side of the equation is evident, but to view consumption through Pepys’s eyes offers an understanding of demand. The acquisition of money allowed Pepys to greatly improve his lifestyle and buy happiness. He relished the opportunity to acquire whatever gave him pleasure, established his status, or piqued his interest. He renovated and refurbished his house, dined extravagantly and entertained constantly, bought clothes and jewellery, sought out books and artworks. In his Diary he records buying everything from a set of table mats to a coach and pair of horses. At the same time, he had to make choices. In the early years he was always conscious of not getting too deeply into debt and made several attempts to rein in his spending. The weight of social indebtedness also had to be considered.

This anxiety eased as his fortune grew and the last eighteen months of his Diary give an impression of a man more comfortable with his wealth. His change in attitude is shown by two entries where he was cheated of money. In 1662 he was angry at being fleeced of ten shillings by a woman claiming kinship. By 1668 he was so comfortable in his financial situation that he could see the funny side of being conned out of a shilling by a theatre doorman’s ‘legerdemain’ as he puts it. He was still keeping a careful account of his money but enjoying it with a calm pleasure rather than with the heady excitement and trepidation of his early days.

158 24 Feb 1668, Pepys, Diary, vol. 9, p. 90.
Pepys had become wealthy by his ability to exploit the positions to which he was appointed following the Restoration. He was an exceptional administrator, keeping detailed accounts and records that enabled him to prove to Treasury and Parliament whatever he needed to when the Navy Board sought more money, or when it (or Pepys himself) was accused of inefficiencies or corruption. He became enmeshed in the corruption endemic in the system of construction and supply in the Navy. He was no different from many of his contemporaries in this respect. His colleagues at the Navy Board and Tangier were also accused of corruption. While the commissioners undoubtedly profited from dubious deals, so did the merchants and contractors with whom they dealt; Sir William Warren and Sir Dennis Gauden were both wealthy men.

Pepys was a man ruthless in his ambition, with a flexible moral framework. The common perception of Pepys as devious and corrupt may be an accurate one, but it tends to be held in isolation from a consideration of the wider character of the man. Many, if not all, the practices he indulged in were ubiquitous. It is just that other men did not vouchsafe their behaviour to a private diary, at least not to one that has survived. Knights accepted that officeholders were poorly paid and that the acceptance of bribes was key to wealth, but offers conflicting views as to whether private profit also yielded public benefit.¹⁵⁹

Nepotism is another form of corrupt practice, but Pepys did not see it in that light. It was his duty to offer financial support to members of his extended family or to find them a means of earning a living and he took his responsibilities seriously. He also took seriously his obligations to the Earl of Sandwich, particularly as Pepys’s wealth and influence were rising at the same time as those of his patron were in decline. Wrightson’s assertion that households were tied together by bonds of co-operation and ties of patronage held true in Pepys’s life.¹⁶⁰ He was sometimes resentful of the demands made on him, even from those closest to him. Sometimes he met his obligations only out of a need to maintain his reputation. When he found a position for any one of his relations, his main concern was not that their appointment might compromise the best interests of the State, but that their incompetence would reflect badly on him.

¹⁵⁹ Knights, ‘Corruption’, p. 33.
¹⁶⁰ Wrightson, Earthly Necessities, p. 31.
Pepys could be sympathetic to those with real need as shown in his concern for the destitute and starving seamen and their families; he records giving money to a few whose plight particularly upset him but it is difficult to know how far his charity went. His main contribution in this area was in working extremely hard in difficult and frustrating circumstances to alleviate their suffering by obtaining sufficient state money to pay them their dues. Rarely did Pepys demonstrate unambiguous generosity, but the occasional spontaneous gifts and rewards he bestows may have been more frequent than he recorded in his Diary. The few loose sheets fortuitously preserved make it clear that details of small everyday transactions were often not recorded. His missing account books leave major gaps in the record.

Pepys's personal circumstances contributed to his acquisition of wealth, particularly the fact that he had few dependents. His wife died in 1669, a few months after Pepys had ceased keeping his Diary. Elizabeth was only twenty-nine and they had recently returned from a tour of Holland and France. He never married again or had any children, and his immediate family was relatively small and in no real financial discomfort. These factors would have affected Pepys in ways that did not apply to many if not most of his contemporaries. From quite early on while keeping his Diary, it is plain that he did not expect to have children and he therefore had no need to plan for the expenses that other men had to consider. But it also meant that he appears to have had no incentive to invest in an estate or property. The house in which he lived in Westminster was leasehold, and was more than adequate for him and Elizabeth, with their few servants. All the money he spent on renovations and refurbishments were for pleasure or 'esteem', not necessity. The estate he had inherited at Brampton was rented out after his father's death and then fell into disrepair, and he spent the last years of his long life in Will Hewer's rich and finely furnished house.

Pepys recorded and recounted what was important or memorable for some reason. He left an idiosyncratic and incomplete record of his rise to fame and fortune. Knowledge of one individual's attitudes and behaviour as he gained wealth and status during the Restoration cannot readily be applied to society in general, but Pepys's Diary is one of the very few sources we can turn to for some understanding of a decade when everyday life in England was undergoing
immense upheaval. Constant change brought with it both uncertainty and opportunity. The rules and framework people used to construct their beliefs, decisions and actions were collapsing. During the Diary years, a new construct was evolving. Viewing the decade through the prism of Pepys's attitude to his money offers a new perspective on an exceptional life in an exceptional decade.
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