Samuel Pepys' Walk through the City of London

Distance = 3 miles (5 km)
Estimated duration = 3 – 4 hours
Nearest underground stations: This is planned to start from St Paul's but is a circular route and can be easily reached instead from Bank station, Monument station and London Bridge station.

- Best to go during the week – many buildings, and even most churches, and also most pubs, are closed at weekends. Friday is the optimum day to do this Walk as everything is open
- If there are things that you especially want to see, please check with them in advance because opening times may change
- We'll also visit features that have no connection with Pepys provided they are on the route
- Good idea to buy a £2.50 one-day bus pass or £4.30 travel card if you don't already have one, so that you needn't walk the whole route but can jump on and off any bus going in your direction
- Take a camera and put the pictures on the Pepys Diary website (www.pepysdiary.com) in the picture section
- Binoculars aren't necessary but would be useful if you are visiting The Monument or Tate Modern
- And if you aren't in London at present, perhaps you'd like to attempt a "virtual tour" through the hyperlinks, or alternatively explore London via the various BBC London webcams or these ones, which are much more comprehensive

When to Go

There are various events staged in the City that you might like to consider going along to if you're planning a particular day on which to take this Walk. Here is a list of some of them: contact the websites listed below or the London Tourist Office for more accurate dates. And, of course, there are a lot more events taking place in Westminster and elsewhere in Greater London. For further information log on to www.bbc.co.uk/london as well as www.visitlondon.com which usually has some special offers.

Jan-April	Open-air ice-skating at Broadgate Arena;
30 Jan 2005	Charles I Annual Commemoration. Parade in authentic military costume;
May	Baishaka Mela (Bengali New Year Festival), Brick Lane, www.baishakimela.com; Museums and Galleries Month, www.may2004.org.uk;
7–25 June	Spitalfields Summer Festival, www.spitalfieldsfestival.org.uk;
24 June–11 July	City of London Festival, www.colf.org;
July	Clerkenwell Festival; Italian Festival, St Peter's Italian Church, www.stpeters-italian-church.org.uk;
September	Brick Lane Festival, www.alternativearts.co.uk; City of London Flower Show, The Guildhall, www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/flower; The Mayor's Thames Festival, Blackfriars Bridge, www.thamesfestival.org;
11 Sep	Great River Race from Richmond to Greenwich, www.greatriverrace.co.uk;
18-19 Sep	London Open House Weekend, www.londonopenhouse.org;
13 Nov	The Lord Mayor's Show, www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/lmshow, www.lordmayorsshow.org;
13-19 Dec	Spitalfields Winter Festival, St Leonard's Church, Shoreditch High Street, www.spitalfieldsfestival.org.uk

Introduction

*In No Particular Order You Are About To Find: * two giants * a haunted street * a bar of gold * a full-sized pirate ship * Bridget Jones * a flying dragon * a mad cab driver * the She Wolf of France * old London Bridge * lunchtime music * all 50 U.S. state emblems on a cathedral window * a corpse dangling in a cage * Harry Potter (with John Wayne) * a golden grasshopper * and much, much more including (we hope) Samuel Pepys*

Today when we talk about London we are referring to the 700 square miles (1,800 km^2) of the modern City, but Pepys would have meant the 1 square mile of the "City of London", which was the original city that the Romans founded almost 2,000 years ago. Several hundred thousand people lived in that square mile, the vast majority in wooden buildings and still bounded by the city wall. In Pepys' time building was gradually extending towards the city of Westminster 2-3 miles (3-5 km) up river, but there were still plenty of open green fields and pastures.

Differences between the City and Westminster

- More royal monuments and Union Jacks in Westminster, but lots of Griffins in the City
- More parkland in Westminster, almost no large green areas in the City
- The City feels much more cramped; 21st century architects doing their best to fit buildings into plots of lands whose size and shape were decided 1,000 years earlier; the City is still influenced by the City Walls even though they have been gone for centuries

If you have children with you, you could try to keep them interested by seeing how many Griffins they find on the journey. Griffins are the heraldic beasts that protect the City of London from enemies, and have the head and wings of an eagle and the body of a lion. Set them a target of ten and give them a small prize if they find twenty.

Before You Start

If you are coming on the Underground, there are two exits from St Paul's station: take the exit marked "Exit 2" and look at the nearby wall on which is a small relief from Pepys' time, which I guarantee that none of the passers-by will be able to explain. It's a relief of a small boy sitting on a pannier or breadbasket to commemorate a cornmarket that was once nearby, and is called the Pannier Boy, although apparently it was nicknamed the "Pick-my-Toe". Pannier boys were street-sellers employed by bakers to sell fresh bread to passers-by, which they carried in wickerwork baskets, or panniers, and this boy is depicted taking a rest from walking up down the city streets. The inscription reads:

"When you have the City round
Yet still this is the highest ground.
August the 27th 1688."

I'm unsure if this is accurate or not. St Paul's is built on Ludgate Hill but we are still only about 60 feet (18 metres) above sea level. Maybe someone else can confirm or disprove this.

Now stand by the side of the road and look to your left to see the ruined church of **Christchurch Greyfriars**. London is full of ghosts and ghost stories so let's begin our Walk with one. This church was destroyed by enemy bombing in December 1940 and has been converted into a rose garden. The wooden frames copy the original floorplan and it's a pleasant place to spend a summer lunchtime when they are covered in roses. However, these ruins are haunted. The church was originally founded by Franciscan monks, who wore grey robes, hence their name. The Franciscans were so renowned for their piety that it was said in the Middle Ages that whoever was buried in their grey robes would go straight to heaven, because St Peter would take one look at them and allow them to go through the pearly gates without asking any questions. One of the great benefactors of this particular church was the French princess Isabella who married King Edward II (both of them appear in the film "*Braveheart*"). Beautiful and wicked, Queen Isabella became known as "the She Wolf of France". She and her lover led a rebellion against the king and defeated him, imprisoned him and murdered him by pushing a red-hot poker up inside him so that it burned his body from the inwards out but left no evidence of murder. Isabella and her lover were eventually

defeated: in 1330 her lover was executed and she was banished to Castle Rising for the rest of her life. On her deathbed many years later in 1358 she begged her son, King Edward III, to be buried in the grey robes of a Franciscan friar so that she could escape her sins and go to heaven. This was done but she was also buried with the preserved heart of her murdered husband on her breast, and she still lies interred beneath this church.

It seems that St Peter was not deceived and that her ghost is not at peace because people have reported seeing a woman in grey walking here and continually plucking at something on her chest: Isabella trying and failing to get the heart from off her body. And people have regularly seen her down the centuries: for example, a nurse from St Bartholomew's Hospital saw her in 1999 and a postman (mailman) cycling back from work early one Sunday morning saw her ghost in 2002. That was an especially interesting sighting because he described her accurately but had never heard of the story. I myself work late near here and often take the midnight train from this station, but when I do I change my route to avoid going past these ruins so late at night.

However, is there any connection between this place and Samuel Pepys? Yes there is, and it is a significant one. Henry VIII expelled the Franciscans when he created the Anglican Church and in 1552 his son, Edward VI, converted the buildings behind the church into Christ's Hospital as a refuge and school for orphaned boys and girls. Much later in 1673, as part of his long-term campaign to professionalise the navy Pepys persuaded Charles II to establish here a Royal Mathematical School to teach mathematics and navigation to boys aged from 11 in order to prepare them for a naval career. Pepys was later for many years a governor of Christ's Hospital (also known as Christchurch school or the "Bluecoat School" after its school uniform) and in 1699 was awarded the Freedom of the City of London, not for his achievements for the navy but in recognition of his services to this school. Although no traces survive, Christ's Hospital school is still in existence as one of England's most prestigious independent schools and is now located out of London in Horsham, Surrey.

Beginning the Walk

Cross over via the pedestrian crossing to the corner of St Martin's Le Grand street and Cheapside. Face away from St Paul's Cathedral, which is largely hidden from view by other buildings; it will become more visible as you walk away from it. Walk along St Martin's Le Grand towards the Museum of London, which you will see ahead of you. As you cross Gresham Street you will see the Lutheran church of St Anne and St Agnes, immediately next to the Piccolo Sandwich Bar (much used by London taxi drivers).

St Anne & St Agnes Lutheran Church
(Open Mon-Fri 10 am – 3 pm, Sun 10 am – 8 pm. Free)
www.StAnnesLutheranChurch.org

This is one of 46 churches within the square mile of the City of London, and was built by Sir Christopher Wren in 1680 in the shape of a Greek cross. The church is known for its fine music and holds free lunchtime concerts from 1 pm on Mondays and Fridays, and also sometimes on other days.

Resuming the Walk, walk past the Lord Raglan pub and immediately look for a blue plaque that marks the site of the Aldersgate Gate through the City Walls of London. About 30 paces further on, and on the same side of the street, will be found an informative panel about the Gate that once stood here (and also has a quotation from Samuel Pepys!). This panel also displays a map showing a route that you can follow if you want to trace the course of the largely disappeared Wall.

The Aldersgate

"This afternoon, going through London ... I saw the limbs of some of our new traitors set upon Aldersgate, which is a sad sight to see; and a bloody week this and the last have been, there being ten hanged, drawn and quartered." – The Diary, 20 October 1660.

This was one of the more important gates because it gave access to St Bartholomew's Priory as well as to Smithfield meat market, fair and execution grounds (where the Scot William Wallace was one of these executed). This and the other gates have all been torn down but still existed in Pepys' day.

As confirmation, you will see on the other side of the street the church of St Botolph-without-Aldersgate (Open Mon-Fri 10.30 am – 3 pm. Free). In this context "without" means "outside of". St Botolph was a Saxon saint who was a patron saint of travellers, rather like St Christopher. St Botolph churches were built at gateways to English towns and cities so that travellers could pray to him on departure and give thanks on safe arrival. There are three St Botolphs that still survive in London: St Botolph-without-Aldersgate, St Botolph-without-Aldgate and St Botolph-without-Bishopsgate.

The Museum of London is now very close but on the other side of the road junction of Aldersgate and London Wall highway. To reach it, take the elevator at Number 1 London Wall and go across the bridge.

Museum of London
(Open Mon-Sat 10 am – 5.30 pm, Sun 12 – 5.30 pm. Free)
www.museumoflondon.org.uk

Recently refurbished and enlarged, the Museum of London is a fascinating repository of information about London and Londoners from prehistory to the present. There are reconstructions of period rooms, models of London bridges, jewels and other buried treasures, the Lord Mayor's Coach, a rather dull diorama of the Great Fire (but with a recorded commentary by Pepys) and much more: for instance, exhibits from the Temple of Mithras and the "Cheapside Hoard" of jewellery relate to later stops on our Walk. It also stages special events for children (and adults) throughout the year so it's worth checking their website to see if there is anything special happening on the day that you make this Walk. They have an interesting shop and their café is just next door. It's a lovely place to spend a rainy Sunday afternoon.

Turn left when you leave the museum so that you are going along the Bastion High Walk. Have you found any griffins yet? If not then here are two to start you off: on the coat of arms of the City. If you look on your left you will see some fragments of the Wall and further on the tower of the church of St Giles Cripplegate, where Oliver Cromwell was married and the poet John Milton is buried. We are now walking at about the same height as a Roman centurion would have done when he was patrolling along the ramparts of the Wall.

When you reach the junction just after Pizza Express you have a choice – to go left or to go right.

> [**1st Diversion if you have some time to spare:** follow the sign that leads to Gates 1 and 2 and The Postern to take a closer look at the Wall on both sides of the walkway as well as the church of St Giles Cripplegate, and then carry on across the artificial lake to the excellent Barbican Arts Centre.
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> **St Giles Cripplegate**
> (Open Mon–Fri 11 am – 4 pm. Closed weekends. Free)
> www.stgilescripplegate.com
>
> A pamphlet (20p) gives a guided tour of this church, which was built in 1394. Ben Jonson and Daniel Defoe were baptised here; Oliver Cromwell was married here; and John Milton, John Foxe and Sir Martin Frobisher are buried here. Enemy bombing in December 1940 left only the shell of the church in place and it was then rebuilt by Godfrey Allen using architectural plans of the church from 1545. The church is just outside the City Walls and was the site of one of the Plague Pits – mass graves that were dug for the victims of the Great Plague of 1665: there are more than 300 plague victims buried here.

Barbican Arts Centre
(Open daily 10 am – 11 pm. Free)
www.barbican.org.uk

One of the major homes of the arts in London.]

But if you don't have the time to do this, then look to your right to see a mysterious tower standing by itself in the middle of Wood Street. Descend to street level and go towards it on the right of the street: keep a look out for another blue plaque to the Parish Clerks' Company, which will give you a clue as to why the tower is so isolated.

This strange tower is all that remains of the church of St Alban, which was destroyed by enemy action on 29 December 1940. Local people are convinced that someone lives here but no-one has ever been seen entering or leaving it.

[Anything in these square brackets can be skipped over or deleted without affecting the Walk, but I'd like to discuss how World War II affected the architecture in this part of London. At the moment, you may be slightly disappointed at the lack of historical buildings on the Walk so far, and a Canadian friend once described this area as being like a typical mid-Western town in its architecture, with so many buildings dating from the 1950s and later. The main reason for this is the bombing of London in World War II. Late in 1940 London came within reach of Luftwaffe bomber aircraft flying out of captured Belgian, Dutch and French airfields. The first bomb fell in Fore Street nearby on 7 September 1940 and the raids continued for 57 consecutive nights with almost 30,000 bombs dropped on the capital. In this first period more than 6,000 were killed and twice as many injured and from then on there were bombings on a regular basis, culminating in the attack on 10 May 1941 when 550 bombers dropped 100,000 incendiaries and hundreds of explosive bombs in just a few hours. That night the death toll was 1,400, bringing the total killed during the Blitz to about 25,000, with some 230,000 homes and buildings wrecked. The City of London was very badly hit: the worst occasion was in a single raid on 29 December 1940, which has been called "The Second Fire of London", when more than 1,300 fires were started in the City of London, made worse by the fact that it had been timed for when the Thames was at low tide, and the water pumping station was put out of action early on in the raid. St Alban church was destroyed as was most of Cheapside. From May 1941 onwards the bombing diminished as Nazi Germany switched their resources to the invasion of Russia, and by late 1943 many families felt safe enough to bring their children back into the city, just as London became the target for V1 flying bombs and V2 rocket missiles. By the end of the war there wasn't a single building left in the 37 acres of the Barbican.

I do want absolutely to stress that London was by no means unique in this experience, either in comparison to other British towns and cities or to other European towns and cities; and indeed many cities had the tragedy of being attacked by both sides. And in peacetime the London architects and planners faced the same dilemma as was faced elsewhere: do you faithfully recreate what was lost or do you build something completely new and different? The answer is, of course, that you do both.

After the war for instance, many of the churches were restored. Although St Mary-le-Bow, which we shall visit, came through with its very tall steeple unscathed, the rest was destroyed but it now looks better than before because the buildings that once abutted directly on to it were cleared away: in contrast, London Wall which we've just walked along was widened into a more modern highway with largely uninspired modern buildings from the 1950s and 1960s. Anyway, that's the reason why this part of town doesn't appear very historic. Let's get back to the Walk.]

Now, we go left down Love Lane, right into Aldermanbury and left into Guildhall Yard: this should take us less than a minute.

On the route is a bust of Shakespeare that bears a dedication to John Heminge and Henry Condell, friends and partners with him in the Globe Theatre, who relinquished any rights of copyright when they published the authentic version of Shakespeare’s plays in the First Folio edition after his death: if it wasn’t for this unselfish action Shakespeare’s plays would be known today only in garbled form or perhaps not known at all (thanks to Jakub for pointing this out).

For centuries the Guildhall has been the parliament of the City of London (so there are griffins everywhere) and is still used for many state occasions, for example it is here that the prime minister gives his annual keynote speech on foreign policy. It is built on the site of a Roman amphitheatre that seated 10,000 spectators: if you look around you will notice that the courtyard has a circle of dark stones that traces the amphitheatre's original outline.

It's probably best to deal with these buildings in three parts: (1) facing us is the Guildhall; (2) on the left is the entrance to the Guildhall Library, bookshop and Clockmakers' Museum; (3) on the right is the Guildhall Art Gallery outside of which is a bust of Samuel Pepys.

The Guildhall
(Open daily 10 am – 5 pm. Closed Sun Oct – April. Free)
www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/guildhall

"Thence we took coach for the City to Guildhall, where the Hall was full of people expecting [General] Monck and [the] Lord Mayor to come thither, and all very joyfull." – The Diary, 2 February 1660.

The Guildhall is often closed without notice for special events so before visiting you should phone them in advance to confirm that it is open (tel: 020 7606 3030). Access is via the buildings on the left of the courtyard.

The Guildhall is the only secular stone building dating from before 1666 still standing in the City and is the third largest civic hall in England. It has been the setting for famous state trials including that of Lady Jane Grey in 1553. The statues of two giants named Gog and Magog have been here for centuries – their origins are mysterious but they are protectors of the city and so they are paraded around the city every November in the Lord Mayor's Show.

The Guildhall Library
(Open Mon-Sat 9.30 am – 5 pm. Free)
www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/guildhalllibrary

Free e-mail and internet facilities. This is the best place to find out anything about London, including maps and artwork. Throughout the year there are small exhibitions from its archives that are changed regularly.

The Bookshop
(Open Mon-Fri 9.30 am – 4.45 pm. Closed weekends. Free)
Tel: 020 7332 1858

Quite small but worth a look around: contact the bookshop manager for a current publications list.

The Clockmakers' Company Museum
(Open Mon-Fri 9.30 am – 4.45 pm. Closed weekends. Free)

Exactly what it says it is. This is the biggest clock museum in the world with several hundred clocks, watches and other related items (not all on display at the same time). Try to be there in the morning when they all start chiming.

The Guildhall Art Gallery
(Open Mon-Sat 10 am – 4.30 pm, Sun 12 noon – 4 pm, closed public holidays. Admission charge but free after 3.30 pm and all day on Fri.)
www.guildhall-art-gallery.org.uk

Start in the basement to see the remains of the Roman Amphitheatre. Many important Victorian paintings including Pre-Raphaelites.

Bust of Samuel Pepys
This sculpture is in a row outside the Art Gallery with busts of Shakespeare, Cromwell and Sir Christopher Wren (I am sure Pepys would never have believed that he would ever be considered their equal). It was sculpted by Tim Crawley and unveiled by Queen Elizabeth in 1999.

Next to it is a charming sculpture of London's best-known Lord Mayor, Dick Whittington, and his cat (and a rat), listening to the sound of Bow church bells and deciding whether to return

to London to make his fortune. There is still an English pantomime (children's story) about his life which is put on in many theatres each Christmas. I like the fact that the sculptor has positioned the statue so he is indeed actually looking towards St Mary-le-Bow.

Now walk directly away from the Guildhall, past the church of St Lawrence Jewry (Open Mon-Thurs 8 am – 1 pm; organ recitals most Tuesday lunchtimes) and into Gresham Street (which appears in the Diary as do most of the next few streets), turn left and go down the first road on the other side (Ironmonger Lane), so that you are going past the Tower of St Olave (not Pepys' church, another one) and then immediately turn left along St Olave's Court and into the street called Old Jewry.

Old Jewry

"and at the Mitre in Cheapside there alighted and drank, and then met her at her uncle's in the Old Jewry." – The Diary, 25 November 1661.

A plaque on the wall immediately across the street says that this was the site of the old medieval synagogue before the expulsion of the Jews from England in 1272. They were returning in Pepys' time but settled outside the city walls about 2 miles (3 km) to the east in Whitechapel and Bethnal Green (not far from where the Huguenots were). In 1701 the Bevis Marks Synagogue (Open Mon-Wed and Fri 11 am – 1 pm, Sun 10.30 am – 12.30 pm. Admission charge) was the first to be built in London after the Jews officially returned to England in 1657 and it is now very close to the Gherkin, which we shall get near to later on.

From here turn right to the road junction between Cheapside to the west and Poultry to the east. In Pepys' lifetime Cheapside was London's most important shopping thoroughfare, especially for jewellery (the Museum of London (*see above)* has on display "the Cheapside Hoard" – a collection of jewellery that one of the shopkeepers buried here and never reclaimed). It is difficult to imagine what this street once looked like: we have to try imagine medieval buildings of wood and plaster with thatched roofs but when you look at the stone buildings of today it is hard to do so (http://www.shakespeares-sonnets.com/cheapsd.htm).

Now turn right and travel along Cheapside until you reach the church of St Mary-le-Bow with its immensely tall steeple. All the city churches have different steeples, and this one is the tallest and most complex, displaying each of the five classical orders of architecture (Ionian, Doric, Corinthian, Tuscan and Composite), a granite obelisk and a flying dragon as its weathervane.

St Mary-le-Bow
(Open Mon-Thurs 7.30 am - 6pm, Fri 7.30 am - 4 pm. Closed weekends and public holidays. Free) Lunchtime concerts most Thursdays from 1.05 pm.
www.stmarylebow.co.uk

"In Cheapside there was a great many bonfires, and Bow bells and all the bells in all the churches as we went home were a-ringing." – The Diary, 11 February 1660.

The Reverend George Bush holds regular services here beginning with Morning Prayer in the 11th-century Crypt Chapel and closing with the Evening Prayer in the main church, and all are welcome. There is a vegetarian café downstairs that is open at lunchtime.

If you are born within the sound of Bow Bells then you are a true Londoner (a "Cockney"). Apprentices used to have to work until 9 pm and would only be allowed to stop when the 9 o'clock curfew bell was sounded and all the City Gates were locked, so there were bitter complaints whenever the bellringer was late.

Now go out into the churchyard, past the statue of John Smith of Jamestown in Virginia, and into Bow Lane. This pretty thoroughfare makes a pleasant contrast to Cheapside and the overlapping signs give it a medieval-style look. Walk downwards to our next stop.

Williamson's Tavern
Groveland Court just off Bow Lane
(Open Mon – Fri 11.30 am – 11 pm. Closed weekends.)

The owners claim this to be exact geographic centre of the City, though it seems a little too far west to me. It undoubtedly stands, however, on the site of the house of Sir John Fastolff (renamed Falstaff by Shakespeare in his plays). It was the site of the Lord Mayor's house from 1670 to 1753 after which it became Williamson's Tavern. The tavern was rebuilt in 1934, hence the Art Deco features. Some Roman tiles were found during the rebuilding and they now surround the fireplace.

Continue down Bow Lane to the next junction and the pub called Ye Olde Watling. According to its sign it was established in 1666, so one would naturally assume that this was after the Great Fire, but in fact it was first built three months earlier. Presumably the owners had got all the fixtures and fittings just to their liking when it was burned down, but it was rebuilt and became a popular haunt for the workers rebuilding the cathedral. Here there is a good view of St Paul's Cathedral from the east, but instead walk away from it down Watling Street towards the statue of a cordwainer (perhaps some sort of specialised cobbler or shoemaker). Watling Street is quite narrow but in the 1660s was one of the main thoroughfares of the town, and on the first morning of the Great Fire Samuel Pepys records hurrying back down Watling Street with an urgent message from the king to the lord mayor (*"me to [St] Paul's, and there walked along Watling Street, as well as I could, every creature coming away laden with goods to save, and here and there sicke people carried away in beds. Extraordinary good goods carried in carts and on backs."* – The Diary, 2 September 1666). Pepys was writing very tersely because he had so much to include, so we must imagine for ourselves the hot, east wind blowing directly into his face, carrying the soot, smut and burning embers as he battled his way through the flow of frightened refugees who were all fleeing in the opposite direction, laden down with their furniture and their sick families.

At the road junction, turn left along Queen Victoria Street.

This is a good point to look at some of the modern architecture that is changing the face of London: you'll either love it or hate it.

The greenish building nearby seems to me like something that the Addams Family would live in yet it won an architectural award in 2001. Its cladding is disguised as marble but in fact is metal as you will see if you tap it with your hand. On the horizon is the bulbous shape of the Swiss Re building (owned by a Swiss reinsurance company), which has a variety of nicknames the most common of which is the Gherkin or the Erotic Gherkin: as I write (in 2004) the Gherkin is still under construction but may have a restaurant inside it by the time you make this Walk; if so, the views will be fantastic.

Cross to the other side of Queen Victoria Street where there are the ruined foundations of a Temple of Mithras that the Romans built here 2,000 years ago. Mithraism was a religion that appealed particularly to soldiers and was barred to women. Personally, it's difficult for me to imagine what the temple looked like, but if you have the same problem then you can see a display about it back at the Museum of London.

What is absolutely typical of a British urban environment is the red pillar box that you may have just reached. The Victorian novelist Anthony Trollope actually worked for the Post Office and invented them to speed up the collection of mail, and you can roughly date them because when they are erected they bear the initials of whoever is the then ruling monarch. This particular example has the initials *"VR"* for "Victoria Regina = Queen Victoria" so it is more than 100 years old, having been sited here before her death in 1901.

Queen Victoria Street has now intersected Bucklersbury, as evidenced by Bucklersbury House on the right (*"Thence by coach, with a mad coachman, that drove like mad, and down byeways, through Bucklersbury home, everybody through the street cursing him, being ready to run over them!"* – The Diary, 13 June 1663). The traffic is still pretty dangerous, so do take care.

A little further down and on the same side of the street we can get a glimpse of the church of St Stephen Walbrook (Mon-Thurs 10 am – 4 pm, Fri 10 am – 3 pm. Free). Can you guess who built this church? Yes, you're completely correct, it was, of course, Sir Christopher Wren. At this time he was experimenting with his designs for the new cathedral of St Paul's, and St Stephen is a variation on the same theme: an un-English central dome combined with a traditionally English church plan of a nave with aisles, chancel and crossing transepts. It has reputedly the most beautiful and spectacular interior of all Wren's churches but we are not stopping to find out because we are on our way to discover what is surely the true heart of the City of London.

A few words about the stripey building across the street (Number 1, Poultry). Although inoffensive, I find it altogether bland and a missed opportunity to have something more dramatic here. It was built in the 1990s after Prince Charles criticised an earlier proposed design and persuaded the developers to build this instead. If you haven't eaten yet, the Green Man pub on the ground floor and in the basement is child friendly and their meals and drinks are probably the cheapest in this locality.

Continue to Bank Junction where all the roads meet, which is surely the genuine centre of the City. There is a tourist information stand by the equestrian statue of the Duke of Wellington that shows where everything is and particular places to look out for are the Royal Exchange, Mansion House and the Bank of England.

[It's easy to drift into the assumption that because the City was so important as a financial centre in the past that it must have now been overtaken by others and that it is now of largely historical interest only for tourists: nothing could be further from the truth. You are still standing in one of the financial hubs of the world – the City gained an advantage 300 years ago and hasn't yet let it go. A few facts and figures: concentrated around the Bank are the key money markets and more than 500 foreign banks – there are a greater number of American banks in the City than there are in the whole of New York and more Japanese banks here than there are in Tokyo. The City's foreign exchange markets are the largest in the world (more than New York, Tokyo and Paris combined) with more U.S. dollars traded here daily than in the whole of North America. The City also contains the world's largest insurance market, and is the world's biggest metal exchange, with the global price of gold and silver fixed daily in London.]

Go along Threadneedle Street between the Bank and the Exchange and make a left turn down Bartholomew Lane to the Bank of England Museum. Don't be put off by the slightly intimidating entrance – they will be happy to see you.

The Bank of England Museum
Bartholomew Lane
(Open Mon-Fri 10 am – 5 pm. Closed at weekends and public holidays. Free)
www.bankofengland.co.uk

"After supper, James Houblon and another brother took me aside and to talk of some businesses of their owne." – The Diary, 14 November 1666.

It's difficult to see much of the architecture of the Bank of England because for obvious reasons they built a stonking great wall all around it but it's possible to take a closer look in the bank's museum, which is more interesting than you probably imagine and has special children's events (so try and arrange your visit to coincide with one if you're bringing the kids).

The Bank was founded in 1694 and I don't think there can be any doubt that Pepys would have been one of its first investors. One of his greatest friends was James Houblon whom he had met during the period of the Diary, and James and two of his brothers were directors of the Bank. Indeed, Sir John Houblon was the first governor of the Bank of England and his face is on the back of a £50 note (whatever *that* is).

There are interactive exhibits and videos in the museum but the greatest attraction is probably the chance to hold in your hands a genuine gold bar that is currently valued at over £90,000 (140,000 euro / U.S.$160,000). There are also hand-written letters from various famous clients including a letter dated November 16th, 1759 that is jointly signed by George

and Martha Washington and is the earliest surviving document giving evidence of their marriage earlier that year. (It would be interesting to find out what a handwriting expert could deduce from their highly contrasting signatures.)

On leaving the bank go back down Bartholomew Lane and through the side entrance of the Exchange.

The Royal Exchange
Junction of Cornhill and Threadneedle Street
(Open Mon – Fri 10 am – 11 pm. Closed weekends. Free)
The public lavatories (restrooms) are between Prada and Boodle & Dunthorne.
www.theroyalexchange.co.uk

"My wife and I to the Exchange, where we bought a great many things" – The Diary, 12 March 1660.

There have been three Royal Exchanges on this site and all have had the same overall design of small arcades with upper storeys lined with small shops plus a central arcade for trading. It's worth taking time to look at both the beautifully tiled floor and glazed roof and appreciate with how much natural sunlight they have managed to illuminate the place. The Exchange was taken over by insurance companies for much of the last century but has now returned to something much more like it was in Pepys' time. And these are definitely the type of shops that Samuel and Elizabeth Pepys would have appreciated, so if you linger long enough you'll probably see their modern-day equivalents going into them.

The Exchange was created in 1566 by a wealthy London merchant named Thomas Gresham who realised that such a building was needed to compete with the Bourse in Antwerp. It was designed by a Flemish architect and adorned with the Gresham family crest of a grasshopper (which is why there's a big green one on the café bar in the middle of the ground floor). You'll also see an unobtrusive golden grasshopper weathervane high up above the main entrance, between Tod's and Prada: to find it, look directly above the shield with a red cross on a white background, and you'll see it on the roof outside the building.

Without leaving the Exchange go to the main doorway between Tod's and Prada to look back downward along the route that we have come – although Pepys wouldn't have seen the same buildings he would have seen the same layout of streets in the same weather conditions. The Walk then continues through the opposite exit between Paul Smith and John Lobb.

Immediately after leaving the building and just by the statue to Reuters news agency, which began here, look back at the top of the Exchange where you can see a statue of Thomas Gresham. If you have seen *Bridget Jones' Diary* then you may recognise this place from the scene at the end of the film when Renee Zellweger (Bridget Jones) and Colin Firth (Mark Darcy) finally meet in the falling snow.

Cross Cornhill and locate Ball Court across the road and on the left: there's a gold-green sign for Simpson's Tavern above its entrance. Go down this narrow passage, which is reputed to be haunted. We're about to make the acquaintance of another famous Londoner because this is a part of town where Samuel Pepys and Charles Dickens go arm in arm. Directly in front of you is the charming bow-windowed frontage of Simpson's Tavern.

Simpson's Tavern
Ball Court
(Open Mon-Fri 12 – 4pm. Closed weekends)

The building was erected in the late 1600s as two houses and then converted into a tavern in 1757 and then a restaurant in the early 1800s. The staff are friendly but the bar area is quite small because essentially this is still a traditional, genuine English chop house although they do also have a wine bar in the cellar. The dark oak dining rooms have old tables that are arranged in stalls, as was the style in the 19th century, and there are still special racks to park your top hat should you be wearing one. Dickens' great-grandson Cedric Charles Dickens still regularly comes here.

If Simpson's is Dickensian our next port of call is definitely Pepysian. Continue onwards down Ball Court and then turn left. Just a few steps away is what Pepys in his Diary called "*The Coffee House*" but which is now known as...

The Jamaica Wine House
St Michael's Alley
(Open Mon-Fri 11.30 am – 11 pm. Closed weekends)

"He and I in the evening to the Coffee House in Cornhill, the first time that ever I was there, and I found much pleasure in it, through the diversity of company and discourse." – The Diary, 10 December 1660.

All these alleys have a medieval feel to them, and were old even in the time of Samuel Pepys who knew them well. There is a plaque on the wall by the doorway that reads: *"Here stood the first London Coffee House at the sign of Pasqua Rosee's Head 1652"*. Pasqua Rosee was a Lebanese who opened London's very first coffee house, and consequently it is as "*The Coffee House in Cornhill*" that it is normally mentioned in the Diary. The coffee house attracted merchants from the Exchange, and became the especial haunt of merchants, captains and traders who had business in the Caribbean, so it soon became known as "The Jamaica". In 1750 a journalist described it as *"having been used for 60 years past as the place at which letters should be left for Jamaica"*. It was renamed "The Jamaica Wine House" in 1869.

The Jamaica Wine House has a ground floor and a cellar bar, and is still totally unspoilt inside, being divided by mahogany partitions into little rooms, and some consider it to be very masculine in design with little decoration. Be aware though that this is crammed full at lunchtimes so it is better to call in here in the afternoons when all the office workers have rushed back to their desks. However, whatever time of the day you go, it's worth fighting your way to the oak bar to order a cup of coffee just as Pepys did here before you.

We now go downhill through the little tunnel and past the George and Vulture restaurant and wine bar, and into George Yard.

The George and Vulture
St Michael's Alley
(Open Mon-Fri 12 – 2.30 pm. Closed weekends)

"Mr Pickwick and Sam took up their present abode in very good, old-fashioned, and comfortable quarters: to wit, the George and Vulture Tavern and Hotel, George Yard, Lombard Street." "The Pickwick Papers", Charles Dickens.

If you look back at it from the courtyard you will see *"Est 1600"* and right at the very top and just beneath the roof *"Olde Pickwickian Hostelrie"*, and both are absolutely accurate. This was once a coaching inn from which you could order horses or go by coach to the county of Essex in eastern England. Certainly Pepys and his contemporaries would have used it for this purpose but its main historical connections are with Charles Dickens rather than Samuel Pepys. Dickens gave a dinner here in 1834 for 34 of his friends and the inn still has the bill. It was at the George and Vulture that Pickwick was giving a dinner for the Pickwick Club when his landlady served a subpoena on him for breach of promise, and there is now a Pickwick Club that regularly meets here: there are precisely 131 members based on the number of named characters in Dickens' novels and each person adopts the name of one of the characters in the novels, and is addressed by that name in the club.

Carry on downhill until you reach **Lombard Street**. After the expulsion of the Jews in 1272, financial activities were taken over by Italians, most of them coming from Lombardy and settling here. Looking upwards in both directions brings into view several overhanging signs and gives us a small idea of how London streets would have appeared in Pepys' lifetime. If you have children with you why not ask them to find a golden grasshopper high up and lots of griffins lower down.

Now turn left down Lombard Street and walk eastward to the junction with Gracechurch Street. Turn right and walk downwards to The Monument.

[**2nd Diversion if you have some time to spare:** go left rather than right and before you reach the next set of traffic lights you will arrive at Leadenhall Street market. It's about one minute away. It was here on 21 January 1664 that Pepys paid to see the execution of a man named Turner for murder.

As you walk towards Leadenhall you will see on the other side of the street the Swan Tavern (Open Mon-Fri 11 am – 9 pm. Closed weekends.) It's not especially old since this building dates only from the 1880s, but it does belong to one of London's two major breweries, i.e. Fuller's. I am confident that you will recognise the heraldic beast above the pub name. The ground floor is very cramped but there is more space upstairs.

Immediately afterwards you will reach the next stop on our Walk, which is just along the road. (Incidentally, although the very first shop is "Nicholson and Griffin - hairdressers" that particular griffin doesn't count in your search: but the griffins adorning the four pink bollards at the entrance certainly do.)

Leadenhall Market
www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/leadenhall

Leadenhall Market is a lovely place to go window shopping. It was built in the 19th century and is very picturesque: I especially like the details on the tops of the large columns. Leadenhall Market has been used as a location in a lot of films of which the most recent are the Harry Potter series where it is transformed into Diagon Alley (the place where wizards go to shop).

In the middle of the market is the Lamb Tavern

The Lamb
Leadenhall Market
(Open Mon-Fri 11 am – 9 pm. Closed weekends)

City gents rub shoulders with market workers here at the Lamb, which is owned by London's other major brewery, Young's brewers. You will recognise it at once if you've previously obtained a DVD or video of the 1970s film *Brannigan* starring John Wayne, because it is the place where he starts a huge fistfight.

Built in 1780 and rebuilt in 1881, this four-storey pub has been owned by the same family for over half a century – you can get lunchtime food in the top level if you have the energy to climb all the stairs; apparently it sells more roast beef than any other establishment in the City. Check out the impressive 19th-century tiled painting by the side door. It's also another pub that is mentioned in *The Pickwick Papers*.

Now leave the market to go towards the modern metallic building just beside it. This is the Lloyds Building.

The Lloyds Building
www.lloyds.com

In appearance this is more like a piece of machinery or part of an oil refinery than an office building and so it's slightly disconcerting to realise that it's home to such a conservative profession as insurance. Some traditions continue though, and it is still guarded by porters in archaic waiters' livery in recognition of the fact that Lloyds of London originally began as a coffee house in Pepys' lifetime.

The building is by Richard Rogers who also designed the Pompidou Centre in Paris. All of its maintenance functions, including the air ducts, heating elements, water pipes, and elevators, are on the outside of the building to create as much internal floor space as possible for the offices. Unfortunately the building is not open to the public; however there is a souvenir shop at the front entrance.

The Gherkin looms much larger now, and if you walk towards it and stop at the church you'll have the best view of the Lloyds Building. We are now on St Mary Axe which is linked to the tale of Attila the Hun, Princess Ursula and the 11,000 English virgins, but as we simply don't have the space to tell it we'll leave that improbable band and retrace our steps back down Lime Street and into Philpot Lane.

Number 13 Philpot Lane (Jamie's restaurant) is a much modernised 17th-century building yet if you take an extremely close look you will discover that on the front there is a carving of two brown mice eating a piece of cheese. They are difficult to spot, and were put there by the original builders, who were plagued by mice throughout the construction work. Today this is the starting/finishing point of one of the hundreds of routes that apprentice taxi drivers must memorise before they can qualify to become a licensed "black cab" taxi driver.

Carry on and cross over the road and into Pudding Lane – where the Great Fire began – and up to the base of the Monument.]

The Monument
(Open daily 9.30 am - 5 pm. Admission charge: £2 for adults, £1 for children, under-5s are free.)
www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/monument

Take binoculars if possible: everyone who climbs to the top is awarded a free certificate in recognition of their achievement.

"*Two people came to see the Monument. They were a gentleman and a lady; and the gentleman said, "How much a-piece?" The Man in the Monument replied, "A Tanner". [= 6 pennies] The gentleman put a shilling [= 12 pennies] into his hand, and the Man in the Monument opened a dark little door. When the gentleman and the lady had passed out of view, he shut it again, and came slowly back to his chair. He sat down and laughed. "They don't know what a many steps there is!" he said. "It's worth twice the money to stop here"."*
– "Martin Chuzzlewit", Charles Dickens.

So you've been warned, but whose advice are you going to take – Dickens' or mine? Or as a compromise, why not send your children and friends to the top and wave to them from the bottom. The top is fully enclosed and it is impossible for them to fall out!

The Monument was built to commemorate the Great Fire and was completed in 1677, so Pepys would have certainly climbed it. At a height of 202 feet (62 metres) it is still the tallest isolated stone column in the world. It is topped by a flaming copper urn to symbolise the Great Fire – originally it had been intended to put a statue of Charles II on top of the column but the king personally vetoed that idea on the grounds that he didn't want anyone to get the impression that he was in any way responsible for starting the fire! The Monument has 311 steps and the tight spiral turns will definitely test your ankle muscles but it is undoubtedly worth it for the sake of the view: one would expect that the tall office buildings surrounding the Monument would totally hem it in but in fact there is a good view in most directions.

[The Great Fire of London began on 2 September 1666 after a hot, dry summer. By its end four days later it had burned down 13,200 houses, 87 churches and 52 livery halls in an area of 430 acres. Although only a handful of people died, the 100,000 who had been crammed into City's square mile were now homeless and living in temporary refugee camps to the north and south of the City. To gauge the Fire's extent just remember that everywhere that we have been so far was encompassed by it.

Pepys distinguished himself by his actions in promptly bringing the news to the king and by co-opting men to protect St Olave's church as well as, of course, giving us the best description that we have of it in his Diary.

Afterwards there were immediate plans to rebuild the City in a more elegant pattern with wide avenues radiating from the major buildings, and if that had occurred then today London would be as beautiful as Paris, but there was never a real possibility of this happening. The City leaders needed to get their businesses running again as soon as possible before economic activity moved permanently away to Westminster and elsewhere, and there were those thousands of people who needed to get under more permanent cover before the winter came (and the winter that year was to be a very cold one). More importantly the king and his court did not have the political power to do it – someone such as Peter the Great, tsar of Russia, would simply have ordered the improvements but Charles II was not in that position; the people's property rights were sacrosanct and "an Englishman's home (or the smouldering embers thereof) was still his castle". In a way I'm quite proud of that, and while no doubt the people would have been happy to *sell* their plots of land to Charles he didn't have the money to buy them, so the streets were largely rebuilt on the original streetplan. Indeed, only two new streets were created (King Street and Queen Street) and in his Diary Pepys fiercely criticises a property owner for delaying King Street's construction while he sought more money in compensation. As a result, we have architects straining their abilities to erect 21st-century buildings on sites whose size and shape were laid out hundreds of years earlier.

However, although the streets remained, the old medieval city had almost completely gone. Safety laws were passed (against the fierce opposition of the business interests, who considered them a crippling restraint of trade) and new brick or stone buildings and wider streets replaced the old wood-and-plaster houses with thatched roofs nestling against each other. London became a vast building site and the houses were replaced surprisingly quickly: within six years almost 9,000 buildings had been constructed.]

If you look downwards from the Monument you will see a church just across the busy highway that is now Lower Thames Street. This is our next destination.

St Magnus the Martyr
(Open Tues-Fri 12.30 – 2 pm, Sun 11 am – 2 pm. Free)
www.cityoflondonchurches.com/stmagnus.htm

"*it began this morning in Pudding Lane, and that it hath burned down St Magnes Church and most part of Fish Street already*" – The Diary, 2 September 1666.

But of course it was rebuilt. St Magnus has been called simultaneously the lowest and the highest church in London. Lowest because it is almost on the river, and highest because it is sumptuously decorated in the high-Anglican church fashion and strongly resembles a Roman Catholic church in Italy. A blue plaque on the wall by the gate reads*: "This Churchyard formed part of the roadway approach to Old London Bridge 1176-1831"*, and in the yard there is also some masonry from the London Bridge that replaced it and was later shipped to Arizona. Also in the churchyard is some petrified timber from a Roman quay that was part of London's first harbour from almost 2,000 years ago, which is the reason that London is located where it is.

But for me the high point is the model of old London Bridge that is just inside the church. It is absolutely terrific – much bigger and much, much better than the one in the Museum of London. It is not just the details of the bridge itself that are so fantastic, the modelmaker has also packed it with more than a thousand tiny people carrying on their daily lives – buying and selling, throwing slops into the river, sailing under the bridge etc – and the modelmaker has put himself somewhere on the bridge as a modern English policeman to direct all of the traffic. It must have been a true labour of love for David Aggett who created it.

> [**3rd Diversion if you have some time to spare:** this is the closest we get on the Walk to St Olave's Church and Seething Lane. If you wish to pay a visit, then turn right on leaving St Magnus and walk along Lower Thames Street until you see the next church on your side of the road: this is All Hallows by the Tower (from whose tower Pepys watched the Fire, and where a future American president was married). Seething Lane is just opposite, leading to Pepys Garden and St Olave's church. This is a 10-minute walk from St Magnus and probably should only be done when St Olave's is open (Mon-

Fri 10 am – 5 pm, closed weekends). While you're here take a look at what is probably the most spectacular and tallest section of the City Wall to survive: you reach it by going down Pepys Street to Cooper's Row and then past the Grange City Hotel. You can still see the remains of the stairway that the Romans used to climb to the top of the Wall.]

[We keep bumping into churches built by Sir Christopher Wren and even if we don't go into them we can see lots of them from the outside, so what was so innovative about Wren churches when compared with the medieval ones like St Olave's? I have no idea, but this is what I've been told:

- It wasn't their shape: Wren had to build them on the same plots of land as the old ones.
- But they were much taller than previously.
- Each bell tower was different but he used more Classical features than in the earlier churches.
- Wren wanted to fill the churches with light (he believed it was God's first gift to mankind, i.e. "Let there be Light" so he often raised the ceiling to include more windows).
- He got rid of stained glass windows for the same reason, though later generations usually brought them back.
- Often there's simply one big room inside the church – no side chapels as in Catholic churches so all of the congregation could be involved.
- No division between the vicar and the congregation but the pulpit would be ornate and high-up with a massive sounding-board to ensure that everyone would hear the sermon whether they liked it or not and no chance of taking a nap without the preacher seeing you (lucky for Pepys his wasn't a Wren church.

So now you know how to identify one.]

London Bridge
At last we've made it to the River Thames. If you stop halfway along the bridge, you will be able to see the Tower of London on the left of Tower Bridge. Moored on the other bank is HMS Belfast, a World War II cruiser that for me symbolises what the British navy eventually grew into thanks in great part to the hard work of Samuel Pepys in laying down the foundations of what became the most powerful navy in the world.

HMS Belfast
Moored at Morgan's Lane Wharf, Tooley Street
(Open Mar-Oct daily 10 am – 6 pm, Nov-Feb daily 10 am – 5 pm. Admission charge: £7 for adults, £6 for senior citizens and students, under-16s free.)
www.iwm.org.uk/belfast

Britain's last surviving big-gun cruiser, HMS Belfast escorted convoys on the Arctic route to Russia, took part in the sinking of the German battle cruiser Scharnhorst and in the D-Day Landings, and later saw action in the Korean War. Its guns had a range of over 14 miles (22 km) and the ship had a crew of 850 men living, working and fighting on board in very cramped and spartan conditions. There are interactive displays and tours of the ship's seven decks, which descend well below the waterline.

And in contrast, on the other side of the bridge there is our first glimpse of the Golden Hinde (*see below*). The Walk now continues southwards across the bridge. Cross over the road and aim for the light-beige building known as "Two London Bridge" where you can squawk a friendly goodbye to the pair of griffins defending the boundary of and entrance into the City. There is a nondescript set of stairs here that you should now descend.

Nancy's Steps
A sign in the wall at the bottom explains that this flight of stairs and the arch are surviving fragments of the 1831 London Bridge. The stairs are named after Nancy from Charles Dickens' novel "Oliver Twist" in which they feature, as the sign explains. We have left the City of London and are now in Southwark.

[Southwark is now pronounced "suth-uck" because spellings and pronunciations can drift apart over the centuries but "South wark" was once an accurate description of the purpose of this place from Roman times onward. "Wark" is Saxon for a bulwark or defensive stronghold, and its Saxon name of "Suthringageweork" meant "southern fortification". Southwark had even before then in the Roman era been set up to defend London from invasion across the Bridge (with varying degrees of success over the centuries). Even Southwark Cathedral was as important as much as a military building as for its religious role.

The land was marshy and there were fewer buildings than on the northern side of the river. The laws were laxer too. The cities of Westminster and London were tightly regulated but this was less true in Southwark. For example, glass manufacturing was forbidden in the City of London because of the dangers of open fires and furnaces among wooden buildings so the glassmakers set up operations in Southwark. Indeed so did a lot of other dangerous, smelly and noxious industries including tanneries, iron foundries and large breweries.

By the Middle Ages and into Pepys' time Southwark had become London's red-light district. The Church (specifically the bishops of Winchester) owned most of the land and we might assume that that would improve the moral tone, but quite the contrary – instead the Church licensed the brothels and taxed them – the bishop invoked ecclesiastical law to prosecute anyone who tried to evade the taxes or start fights in the brothels and threw them into the bishop's own prison (The Clink: *see below*). Other places of entertainment included taverns such as the Bear (see the Diary, 10 Sept 1660), coaching inns where travellers stayed before entering the City (for at 9 pm the drawbridge on London Bridge was raised and not lowered until the next morning), theatres and (much more popular) bear- and bull-baiting pits and rings for cock fighting. Every September there was also Southwark Fair, which could be very riotous, and Pepys closely guarded his money when he visited it during the years of the Diary.

A penny ballad broadsheet from 1641 described Bartholomew Fair in the following terms but if you substitute Southwark Fair for Bartholomew Fair I think it would still be quite accurate:

"Cutpurses and Cheaters, and
Bawdy House Keepers
Punks, Aye! and Panders and
casheered Commanders ...
Alchemists and Pedlars,
Whores, Bawds and Beggars
In Bartholomew Fair."

But Pepys also went to Southwark on business: the navy had a "post house" there to send despatches quickly to the fleet, or to hire out horses and carriages to naval personnel.

So Southwark in Pepys' time was a tough area where you would be wise to guard your money but full of dubious pleasures awaiting the brave or foolish visitor.]

We are now almost in the shadow of Southwark Cathedral.

Southwark Cathedral
(Open Mon-Fri 8 am – 6 pm, Weekends 9 am – 6 pm. Free although donations appreciated.)
www.dswark.org/cathedral

This is one of the best preserved and largest Norman-Gothic buildings in the whole of London but for me it also has a Tudor feel to it that is understandably absent from St Paul's. The ceiling is magnificent as are the choir and altar screen. The most famous worshipper was probably William Shakespeare, who buried his brother here, and there is a stained glass window depicting many of the characters from his plays. Other points of interest include the tomb of the early English poet John Gower who was a contemporary of Geoffrey Chaucer and the Harvard Chapel dedicated to John Harvard who was baptised here in 1607 and who founded Harvard University. Next to the cathedral is the shop and refectory as well as a display based around the 1638 map that Wenceslaus Holler made from views taken from the top of the cathedral's tower.

[**4th Diversion if you have some time to spare:** go to Borough Market, which is less than a minute's walk from here. By the way, if you are at the market on one of the days that it is open then this isn't a suggestion – it's mandatory, no ifs or buts or maybes – just do it!

Borough Food Market
(Open Fri 12 – 6 pm, Sat 9 am – 4 pm)
www.boroughmarket.org.uk

Visitors to London may know some of the city's largest markets such as Petticoat Lane and Portobello Road but there are literally dozens and dozens of other street markets distributed throughout the capital and especially in

the East End of the city, because Londoners have shopped in street markets for centuries, browsing from stall to stall in search of bargains just as Samuel and Elizabeth Pepys would have done 350 years earlier. Some street markets are general in nature and sell a varied range of goods while others specialise: some are open every day of the week while others are open perhaps for only a couple of days. Borough Market is generally considered to be the best food market in London, featuring a range of international specialist food and wine stalls as well as fresh and organic produce sold directly by the farmers responsible for it. The entire market is still housed in its original Victorian wrought-iron covered market but is now so popular that it is spilling out onto the surrounding streets. If it is a fine day I would definitely recommend that you buy some snacks here to have as a picnic later on by the river.]

Keep your back to London Bridge and Southwark Cathedral and walk towards the Thames. Everything is closely packed together in this area and in less than two minutes you will find a Tudor warship riding at anchor, and just in front of it there is a row of shining black bollards along the side of the road – can you identify the origins of these particular pieces of street furniture?

When the Napoleonic Wars ended in 1815 after 30 years of warfare the government recycled the mass of surplus British and captured French cannon by slicing off the barrels and welding a cannonball into each that was one size too big for the barrel before erecting them as bollards to protect buildings from runaway traffic. They are still surprisingly common in the older parts of London and are always a sure sign that that particular road is no later than the 1820s. Later bollards normally have a similar pattern but you can easily tell the difference.

The ship in front of you is the Golden Hinde. It often flies the skull-and-crossbones and it's true that the Spanish considered its captain, Sir Francis Drake, to be a pirate, but that's unfair on an explorer who was the first Englishman to sail around the world in the ship of which this is a replica.

The Golden Hinde
St Mary Overie Dock, Cathedral Street
(Open daily but times vary. Admission charge adults £3.50, senior citizens and concessions £3, children £2.50)
www.goldenhinde.co.uk

The Golden Hinde is an exact-scale, fully operational replica of Sir Francis Drake's ship, which circumnavigated the globe between 1577 and 1580, yet it's tiny. It's amazing that 80 sailors lived and worked in it during its voyage, because there scarcely seems to be room for them. This particular Golden Hinde has visited numerous countries in the last 24 years and has sailed more than 140,000 miles (225,000 km).

Although the Golden Hinde is a small craft it is comparable in size to many of the ships in the English navy when Pepys was responsible for it only 80 years later. There are exhibits and artefacts on each of the five decks and lots of special events for children. Incidentally, a notice by the stern tells the legend of Mary Overie after whom this dock was named.

From the Golden Hinde, walk on westwards (i.e. upriver towards Westminster) via Pickford's Wharf to the remains of the 12th-century Winchester Palace and its surviving Rose Window. This was the town home of the bishops of Winchester from the 1140s until 1626. The bishops owned most of the land occupied by the Bankside brothels along the south bank of the Thames. They first licensed the brothels in 1161, and by Pepys' time the women working in them had long been known as "Winchester Geese".

If you now look upwards you'll see ahead of you the mummified remains of a corpse swinging gently to and fro in a metal cage. Thankfully it's not genuine but one of the exhibits of the Clink Prison Museum. The Clink was so famous that its name became a term for prisons in general and was the private prison of the bishops of Winchester: perhaps Southwark needed more prisons than most because in Pepys' lifetime as well as the Clink there were also the Compter, the King's Bench, the Marshalsea and the White Lyon.

The Clink Prison Museum
Clink Street
(Open daily in summer 10 am – 9 pm, daily in winter 10 am – 6 pm. Admission charge: £4 for adults, £3 concessions, family ticket (2+2) £9.)
www.clink.co.uk

Here are tableaux of prison life and items for visitors to handle, including instruments of torture.

(Incidentally, the bollards in front of the museum are quite modern but you can see how the traditional style has survived over the years.)

From the Clink Prison go down to the Thames passing **Vinopolis** (Open daily from noon. Admission charge: Adults £11+, under-16s free. www.vinopolis.co.uk). These converted wine vaults occupy more than two acres and feature wines from around the world, and the high admission price is to cover the five generous wine tastings as well as a cocktail for adult visitors (apparently you're supposed to spit the wine out rather than swallow it, but no-one else does!). **Southwark Tourist Information Centre** (Tel 020 7357 9168. Websites: www.southwark.gov.uk and www.bankside.org.uk) is also here in the free public-access part of the building next to the restaurant.

Look directly away from the entrance of Vinopolis towards the Thames in order to find the Anchor tavern from where Pepys watched the Great Fire.

The Anchor
34 Park Street, Bankside
(Open Mon-Sat 11 am – 11 pm, Sun 12 – 10 pm)
www.britannia.com/travel/london/cockney/anchor.html

"When we could endure no more upon the water, we to a little alehouse on the Bankside … and there staid till it was dark almost, and saw the fire grow … it made me weep to see it. The churches, houses and all on fire, and flaming at once; and a horrid noise the flames made, and the cracking of houses at their ruine." – The Diary, 2 September 1666.

This is where Pepys watched the Fire, and the Anchor is still very reminiscent of a 17th-century tavern. Internally it is a three-dimensional maze of rooms, alcoves and stairways, and on a hot day the terrace is a pleasant place to spend some time as also is the rooftop garden.

There were numerous brothels (known as "stews") from here to Cardinal's Cap Alley *(see below)*. In 1547 from this spot and going west there were: Le Castell upon the Hoop, the Gonne, Le Antylopp, the Swanne, Le Bulhede, the Crane, Le Herte, Le Olyphaunt, Horsehoe Inn, the Leonem, the Hartyshorne, the Beere, the Little Rose, Le Rose, the Barge, the Bell, the Cock, Le Unycorne, Le Flower de Lyce, Le Boreshed, Le Cross Keyes, and the Cardinals Hatte.

Walk down and under the next bridge (Southwark Bridge), which has a mural carved in green slate that shows the Frost Fair of 1564 when the Thames froze over. Frost fairs were a regular occurrence in very cold winters, because London Bridge impeded the flow of water through the smaller arches until it became so sluggish that in freezing conditions it could not move, allowing ice to build up.

There is a branch of Pizza Express just ahead of you and on the corner of the building opposite is the **Ferryman's Seat**, which is thought to be the last survival of the wherryman perches that once lined the riverbank. These seats were resting places for the Thames boatmen who waited to ferry theatregoers such as Samuel Pepys home in their passenger boats, or "wherries", with their cries of "*Eastward ho*!" or "*Westward ho*!" I find it almost impossible to squeeze onto this seat but your bottom is probably smaller than mine.

Go down the road to the courtyard on the left.

Bear Gardens
Bear Gardens

"And after dinner with my wife and Mercer to the Beare garden, where I have not been I think of many years and saw some good sport of the bull's tossing of the dogs - one into the very boxes. But it is a very rude and nasty pleasure." – The Diary, 14 August 1666.

This was a venue for bull and bear-baiting, which could make much more money than a theatrical performance. In 1613 the entrepreneur Philip Henslowe converted the Bear Gardens into The Hope, a dual-purpose theatre with animal pits below the removable stage. Pepys also visited the Bear Gardens in 1667 to see bareknuckle prizefights (see the Diary entries for 27 May and 9 September).

Carry on down to the end of Bear Gardens.

> [**5th Diversion if you have some time to spare:** if you look left you will see a grey marble building almost beneath Southwark Bridge: this contains the foundations of **The Rose**, Bankside's oldest playhouse and one of at least four that were in the area (the Globe, the Hope, the Rose and the Swan). It is rarely open at present but you will find details of any tours at www.rosetheatre.org.uk. Continue under the bridge to the bronze panel on the right, which marks the original site of the Globe (this is about one minute from Bear Gardens). The three-dimensional panorama gives a good idea of Southwark at the time and shows at least three playhouses of which the Globe was the biggest, and you can also see other contemporary constructions such as old London Bridge where the heads of executed traitors on pikes are visible.]

Now, however, instead go right and then right again to reach The Globe.

Shakespeare's Globe Theatre and Museum
New Globe Walk
(Museum: Open May-Sept daily 9 am – 5 pm, Oct-April daily 10 am – 5 pm. Admission charge to museum: £8.50 for adults, £7 concessions, £6 for children, under-5s free.)
www.shakespeares-globe.org

Pepys wasn't an unquestioning fan of Shakespeare – in one entry he writes that he understood only about half the words in one of his plays – and in any case would not have been able to visit the Globe, because this was demolished before he was born. He would, however, have recognised the layout of the Globe as it was still typical of theatres in the 1660s and for much later. It uses minimal scenery and artificial lighting, so plays are put on only in spring and summer in the daytime or in the evenings during the height of summer.

Although the admission charge is high, the museum is fascinating. This is, of course, the world's largest exhibition devoted to Shakespeare and the London in which he lived and worked, and there are lots of interactive exhibits and artefacts and costumes to handle, and you can also record and compare your own deliveries of the great speeches with various professional actors before going on a guided tour of the Globe.

The houses on the river next to the Globe are 49-52 Bankside Wharf, with Cardinal's Cap Alley in the middle of them. These are the oldest houses in Bankside and the tall, very narrow one is from about the 1650s. Cardinal's Cap Alley is incredibly narrow and the gate always seems to be locked. It dates back to 1360 and may commemorate Thomas Boyce, who was the first Englishman to be created a cardinal by the pope in 1310.

The houses are overshadowed by our next place of interest – the building with a very tall chimney just in front of you which was formerly Bankside Power Station and is now the Tate Modern art gallery.

[Incidentally, if you require comparatively inexpensive hotel accommodation in London in summer you might consider staying at the London School of Economics' residential centre that is directly behind Tate

Modern in Bankside House, Sumner Street (www.lse.ac.uk/vacations). In fact, most London colleges have residential accommodation available in central locations during the university breaks although it is wise to book ahead as early as you possibly can.]

Tate Modern
Bankside
(Open Sun-Thurs 10 am – 6 pm, Fri-Sat 10 am – 10 pm. Free)
www.tate.org.uk/modern

Pepys collected contemporary art and this is a gallery full of contemporary art so what link could be more justified? OK, if you're not convinced go inside anyway and make your way initially to the Fourth Floor and after that to the Seventh Floor, because they provide excellent views of the city and river. The viewing panel on the Fourth Floor enables us to retrace our route. We began on the other side of St Paul's and passed near the Alban Gate in the Barbican before visiting St Mary-le-Bow and getting close to the Gherkin (Swiss Re). Look very closely about halfway up the City Point building and you will see me waving to you. Wave back. On the left just beyond Blackfriars Bridge is a church with a steeple resembling a wedding cake: this is St Bride's where Samuel Pepys was baptised and is next to Salisbury Court where he was born. St Bride's is on the *Westminster Pepys Walk (available from August 2004)* rather than this one, but if you have the time it is very much worth a visit.

Now ascend to the Seventh Floor to see what a difference to the view the added height makes. Incidentally, although the signs say that this floor is for the restaurant only they are slightly out of date: you can go there just for a tea or coffee, or simply just to have a look at the view, the staff won't mind at all. And on the way out pick up your free copy of *The Guardian* newspaper by the exit. These aren't just for the diners but for everybody; the newspaper is distributing them this year here as part of a publicity drive as is the *Daily Telegraph* at Tate Britain.

On leaving the Tate Modern, walk across the Millennium Bridge. We are now going back into the City so keep alert for griffins.

We are about to cross Queen Victoria Street again, which here is an extremely busy highway. On the other side and to the left are the gilded gates of the **College of Arms** (www.college-of-arms.gov.uk), and although the gates are comparatively recent, the college itself has been on this site since 1555, and this particular building dates from the 1670s. The College of Arms is the official repository of the coats of arms and pedigrees of English, Welsh, Northern Irish and Commonwealth families and their descendants. It also has official copies of the records of Ulster King of Arms, the originals of which remain in Dublin. Everyone in the Diary who was either knighted or took on a new title (e.g. Montague becoming Lord Sandwich, General Monck becoming the Duke of Albemarle) would have come here to obtain their coat of arms, and these are on file at the college. One of the portraits on display is of the then Garter King of Arms Sir Edward Walker (1611-77), who appears several times in the Diary (e.g. *"Called up by John Goods to see the Garter and Heralds' coat, which lay in the coach, brought by Sir Edward Walker, King at Arms, this morning, for my Lord. My Lord hath summoned all the Commanders on board him, to see the ceremony"* – The Diary, 27 May 1660). Parts of the building are open to the public and there are sometimes temporary exhibitions of a genealogical nature (tel: 020 7248 2762. Mon-Fri 10 am – 4 pm. Free).

We are now approaching St Paul's Cathedral from the south so stop by the firefighters' statue and look near the top of it. Do you see the large bird in the triangle at the top? It's a phoenix and if you know your classical literature (or your E. Nesbit or J.K Rowling) you'll know that it symbolises something being reborn and rising from the flames.

The firefighters' statue initially commemorated the 1,002 London firefighters (both men and women) who died in action during World War II, then it was extended to commemorate firefighters from the whole country, and now from the whole world. There have always been strong links between the fire brigades of London and New York, and every September the London fire brigades hold a special service in their own church of St Giles Cripplegate (*see*

above) in the Barbican and then march down to here to leave wreaths for the 343 New York firefighters who died in 9/11.

The **City of London Tourist Information Centre** is the small building just on your left (Open Mon-Sat 11 am – 6 pm. Tel 020 7332 1456.) and from there make your way to the main entrance to St Paul's Cathedral so that we're now looking at it from the west and have seen it from all four cardinal points of the compass.

> [**6th Diversion if you have some time to spare:** this will take about two minutes to reach. From the tourist information centre follow the signpost to the church of St Andrew-by-the-Wardrobe, into Carter Lane and left into Wardrobe Place. You'll find a plaque marking the location of the Wardrobe, where the court's ceremonial robes and most expensive costumes were stored, and in which Pepys' father, a tailor, tried to gain employment. There are also some tall plane trees (a typical tree of London whose bark absorbs the air pollution) and, on the west side, two sets of houses that date either from the late 17th or very early 18th century. It's an attractive place to sit in the summer. You'll see how most of the narrow, once-medieval streets in this area go north-south towards the river rather than east-west towards Westminster because the river was much more economically important than Westminster then. There are several important links to Shakespeare in this area, which you must seek out for yourself (clue: keep your eyes open for one when you return along Carter Lane). Make your way to the cathedral once you're done.
>
> Alternatively, however, if you would like to see the plaque marking Samuel Pepys' birthplace then it is about a 5-minute walk from here: continue down Carter Lane, cross New Bridge Street and head for St Bride's Church, whose spire is in front of you. Pepys was baptised here, and Salisbury Court is just next to it.]

Just right of the cathedral is a statue of Queen Anne who in 1702 was the last monarch to come to the throne in Pepys' lifetime, when he was staying with Will Hewer in Clapham. The queen had 17 children: most were stillborn and only one lived to the age of 11, so that none of them outlived her, and perhaps because of that she was said to be very fond of strong drink. So when this statue was erected there was soon a rhyme about it:

"Brandy Nan, Brandy Nan you're left in the lurch
Your face to the gin shop, your back to the church"

The four female figures on the base represent four of the areas of the world that were then claimed by England: here is Ireland with her harp, Marianne (France), Britannia (Britain) and America. You'll see that the American woman has by her feet a lizard (or perhaps it's a crocodile) and also a severed man's head. I've no idea why the man's head is there, unless she was America's first feminist?

St Paul's Cathedral
(Services throughout the day, free. Otherwise open Mon-Sat 8.30 am – 4 pm, admission charge. Three Guided Tours 11.30 am, 1.30 pm and 2 pm. Café, shop, lavatories (restrooms) in the Crypt, Mon-Sat 9 am – 5 pm, Sun 10.30 am – 5 pm, free.)
www.stpauls.co.uk

This is the biggest stop on the route and it's going to have one of the shortest entries because I can't possibly do justice to it. Let's just say that Pepys saw the old St Paul's burn down and he lived long enough to see the new St Paul's all but completed. There were guided tours around it towards the end of its construction and Pepys would certainly have toured the building, perhaps with the guidance of the architect, Sir Christopher Wren himself, as they had known and worked with each other for more than 40 years by then.

American visitors may, however, like to know that St Paul's contains the American Memorial Chapel which is a tribute to the 28,000 Americans in World War II who sacrificed their lives while based in Britain. A roll of honor lists all of their names and a page is turned each day. Beside it are stained glass windows containing the emblems of all 50 U.S. states. Although the cathedral has numerous memorials to British war heroes there is also a separate one to Billy Fiske who was the first American to die in the war, having enlisted in the RAF in 1939. (It is rumoured that a film is being planned about his life starring Tom Cruise – "Top Gun in Spitfires" perhaps?)

The crypt café (with shop) is on the north of the cathedral on the corner away from the river (Free admission but no entry to the cathedral). From there we walk down St Paul's Alley next to the "Domus" cathedral shop and into Paternoster Square (there are lavatories/restrooms in the corner immediately next to you).

> [**7th Diversion if you have some time to spare:** In the next few years Temple Bar (a former ceremonial gate into the City) will be brought back to London and erected in the space on the left of you. Walk past it and go down Amen Court on the left of the Vidal Sassoon hairdressing salon and into Ave Maria Lane where you will find Stationers' Hall. This is one of the guilds of the city, and a printing industry grew up here to meet the needs of the clergy and the legal profession, who were the most literate parts of the population. You'll find a plaque to an apprentice of William Caxton near here – I've purposely not mentioned his name, which you'll have to find out for yourself, but with a surname like that what else could he have been but a printer-publisher!
>
> On the other side of the Vidal Sassoon salon is Amen Corner which comprises 17th-century housing for the clergy of St Paul's. There is a "link" to Pepys: look closely at the inverted iron funnel next to each house's door. Their purpose was to extinguish the lighted flames carried by the link-men who guided people such as Pepys home through the pitch-black streets. On arrival the link-men put their torches into the funnels to extinguish them.
>
> A final survival from the 17th century is the old wall at the end of Amen Corner which is part of the remains of Newgate Prison, once the most notorious jail in London.
>
> Now return to Paternoster Square.]

There were stationers, paper merchants, publishers and booksellers in this whole area north of the cathedral from before Pepys' time right up to as late as the 1950s, and Pepys often writes about buying books in this area.

From here, walk past the sculpture of a shepherd and his flock by the British sculptor Elisabeth Frink back to St Paul's underground station from where we began our Walk. I do hope that you've found at least some things interesting over the course of the 3 miles (5 km) that it has taken! Please let me know your thoughts about it, and also if you'd like to be sent the *Pepys and Westminster Walk*.

And so to bed.

Acknowledgements
I'd like to thank those contributors to the Pepys Diary website who took a lot of time and trouble to read this article or to test the Walk in person, and most especially to David, Debra, Jakub, Pauline and Susan – if there is still anything wrong with it then, needless to say, it is now entirely their fault.

If you do have any comments, corrections, suggestions or improvements then I'd be very happy to hear from you, so please do send them to me at Glyn_Thomas1234@yahoo.co.uk.

The companion to this Walk is the *Pepys in Westminster Walk* which will be ready in August 2004, so let me know if you wish to look at it.