

## *Introduction*

younger than himself – ‘full of freckles and not handsome in face’ – for long seemed unmarriageable, hard as he tried to find a suitable match. In February 1668, however, she was married off to a country neighbour, John Jackson of Ellington, with a dowry of £600 provided by Pepys. It was their second son John who ultimately became Pepys’s heir.

The diary, once ended, was never resumed. The urge to record did not die in him, but his fear of going blind was even stronger, and he contented himself after 1669 with keeping occasional short journals.<sup>2</sup> His life at the conclusion of the diary had reached only its mid-point, and the major part of his career still lay ahead. In June 1673 he left the Navy Board for the Admiralty, where he became Secretary to the commission which took over most of the Lord High Admiral’s duties when the Duke of York was extruded from office by the Test Act against Papists. In the following year he went to live in his new official lodgings at Derby House, in Cannon Row, by the Thames, south of the Strand. The problems of the Third Dutch War (1672–4) occupied his first few months of office. Afterwards he directed an epoch-making programme of recovery and reform, in the course of which not only were thirty new ships built – an unprecedented number – but also some of the basic elements of a professional naval service laid down. The practice of half-pay and superannuation-pay for sea-officers was extended; the duties of lieutenants defined for the first time, and an establishment introduced for naval chaplains. By 1678 the navy was a sizeable, disciplined force, and the Lord High Admiral’s office (though still small) a government department equipped with a systematic body of records. For all this, Pepys himself – typical of a new school of civil servants who were transforming several parts of the public service at this time – was mainly responsible. He had been elected to Parliament (for Castle Rising, Norfolk, in 1673–8, and later for Harwich) and there he now spoke (a shade too portentously, his opponents thought)<sup>3</sup> for the navy. But he could be forgiven his pride. Not only was he, more than any other person of his day, the architect of a new fighting force, and of the administrative machine supporting it, but he was among the first to see that executive efficiency could never be achieved without an understanding with the parliament which provided the money.