

Preliminary Note

begins to move south at the turn of the year and arrives in London on 3 February – to admit the secluded members on 21 February. Writs for elections are issued on 16 March, and the new parliament (or Convention) meets on 25 April. Members of the House of Lords join it, though not officially summoned, and the two Houses receive on 1 May a conciliatory message from Charles II (the Declaration of Breda). They vote on the same day for government ‘by King, Lords and Commons’. The King is proclaimed on 8 May, and a fleet commanded by Mountagu, with Pepys as his secretary, already on station in the Channel, sails to Holland to bring him home.

Pepys’s account of these crucial months which led to the Restoration is the best to survive. His own wishes appear plainly enough in the diary’s narrative, but at the same time he makes it clear how long the issue hung doubtful.