FIRE!

FOR CHILDREN'S CHOIRS NARRATORS & ORCHESTRA

MUSIC BY RICHARD M. BROWN

SCRIPT BY FERN DICKSON & SARAH HARDING

LYRICS BY FERN DICKSON & RICHARD M. BROWN

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"Fire" - Overture & No 1. The Pepys Report



He dis-cov-ers dail-y scan-dals, In the Parl-ia-ment or at Court.

2 Voice

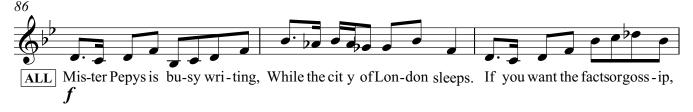


Weight-ymatt-ers, nation-al tri-vi-a, it's all there in the Pepysre-port. It's all there in the Pepysre-port.









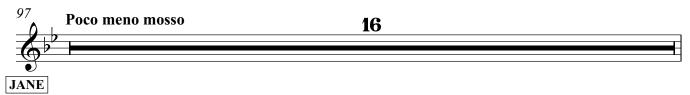






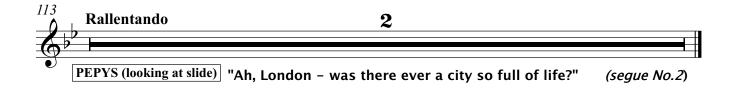
Voice 3

 $\overline{|PEPYS|}$ London, September 1666. King Charles the Second is on the throne, God bless him. The markets, theatres and coffee houses are bursting with Londoners gossiping and making their living however they can.



After they chopped off the old King's head we had years of Parliament stopping us having any fun. Now we've got his son on the throne, London's come back to life. And wherever there's something going on, Mr Pepys is always in the thick of it. He's a good man, Mr Pepys, never stops working, and interested in everything and everybody. He's got an important job, Clerk to the Navy Board, which means he's friendly with the King! But between you and me, he can be a bit....demanding.

PEPYS Jane, don't stand around gossiping! Fetch me my coat, I must go to the office and gather news of the fleet.



No.2 It's The London Life

["Ah, London - was there ever a city so full of life?"]

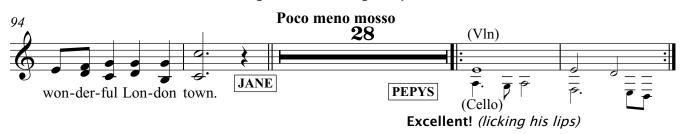






Beef and venison to start with, and then my pies and tarts.

Ah my Parmesan cheese... yes, all the way from Italy. Delicious! Let's not share it with tomorrow's guests - a few good pies will suffice.



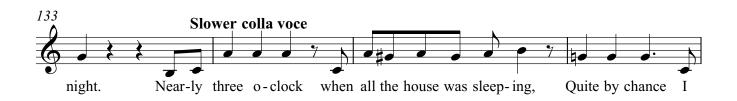
"Goodnight, Mr Pepys"

(to audience) Does he realise how late I'll have to stay up now? I'm often awake at midnight as there's always cakes and bread to bake for the morning.

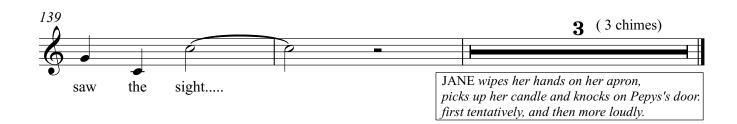
But I won't get much sleep tonight, what with the extra pies and puddings for the feast to prepare. Mind you, it's like that all over London. Over in Pudding Lane, Thomas Farriner, the King's baker has already filled his large oven full of pies ready for the morning. Oh well, Best get started...











Mayor.

No 3. The Fire Spreads

8 PEPYS What the devil is it Jane? JANE There's a fire Sir! Look out of the window. Over there, by Billingsgate. PEPYS Nothing to worry about Jane, it's far enough off. Back to your baking now. I'm going back to bed. Poco piu mosso Andante J = 808 5 Poco piu mosso -Agitato J = 12014 **JANE** Fi-re fi-re fi-re Fi all the ci-ty's burn-ing. re. 18 Must wake Mist-er Pepys! I' - 11 my run and tell mas - ter, 'Cos the *20* flames are spread-ing fast-er, It could es-ca-late in-to a big di - sas-ter. Fi - re_ Fi - re____ all the streets are burn-ing. Wake up Mist-er Pepys! All the Fi-re fi - re fi-re 28 hous-es are on fi-re. And the flames are gett-ing high-er. They-'re reach-ing up to old St Mag-nus' 31 **PEPYS** spi-re. Shall I run and tell the con-sta-bles? Yes, and we should no -ti -fy the 35

PEPYS Ah, Thomas Bludworth, the Lord Mayor - a most unfortunate appointment.

I doubt that he'll care.



Tho' if the fire's not near his pro-per-ty

JANE

Sir, everyone's panicking, no-one knows what to do.

They see their houses disappearing in flames before their eyes.

They're just trying to save their goods and furniture. there's all sorts piling up in the streets.

PEPYS How did the fire start?

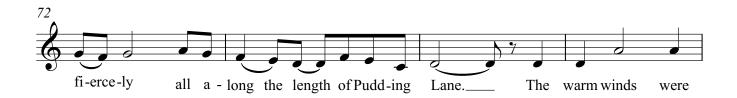
JANE

In Thomas Farriner's bread oven in Pudding Lane, where he was baking tomorrow's bread. The whole family were trapped upstairs and had to escape through a window into their neighbour's house.

But sir, one of the maids was too afraid to jump, and she perished in the fire.

300 houses have already been destroyed and there's great leaping flames
all the way down Fish Street towards London Bridge.











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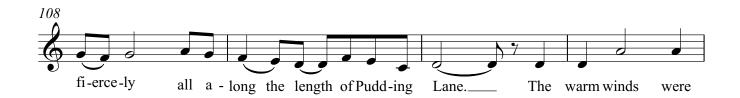
PEPYS Didn't anyone take charge?

JANE No sir, everyone was trying to put it out with buckets of water but it kept on blazing. they couldn't get the water up from the river fast enough.

PEPYS Then we must pull down houses so that the fire has no fuel to feed on.

JANE But Sir Thomas Bludworth refused to give the order to pull down houses. Instead he said "Pish! That's no fire. A woman could put it out" and then he left them to it.
- a most weak and cowardly Mayor in my opinion Sir.

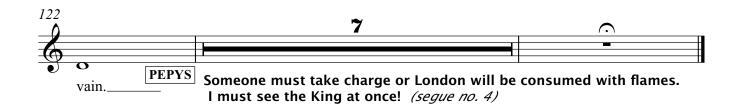












No 4. Run to the River

JANE (looking at slide of chaos on the river)

There he found <u>chaos</u>; people overloading boats with all their worldly goods and the water full of furniture and belongings.















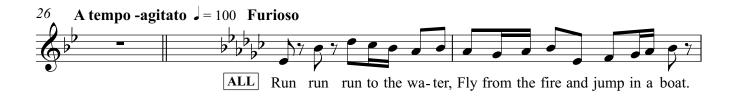


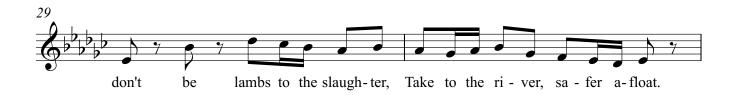




Stirred by the wind that was dri-ving the blaze. An-y-thing com-bus-ti-ble soon caught fire, and the

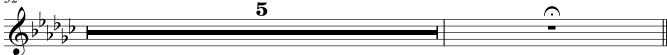








 $\frac{\text{JANE}}{\text{JANE}} \begin{tabular}{ll} \textbf{The east wind is blowing ever so strong now, fanning the flames.} \\ \text{showers of sparks are flying across the streets, spreading the fire every which way.} \\ \text{Mr Pepys must hurry to the King - His Majesty will know what to do.} \\ \end{tabular}$



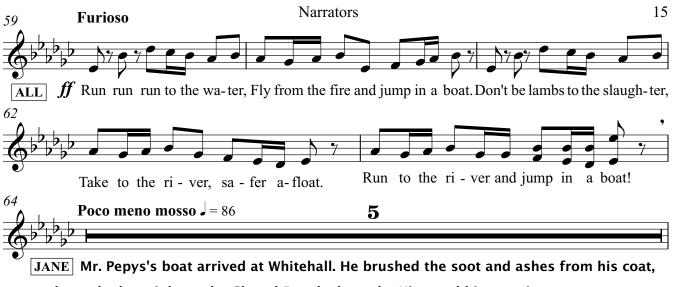
No 5. London's Burning/Run to the River(reprise)

JANE Mister Pepys must hurry to the King - His Majesty will know what to do.

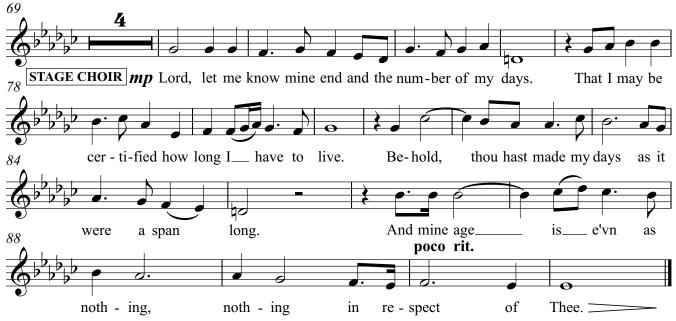


Narrators Narrators





and marched straight to the Chapel Royal where the King and his courtiers were at prayers.



But they weren't praying for the homeless Londoners -JANE they had no idea that a fire was raging around London Bridge. It's only a mile away but the Palace at Whitehall is a world away from the lives of ordinary souls like me. When the courtiers heard my master's account of the fire they were dismayed, and rushed Mr. Pepys into the presence of the king and his brother the Duke of York...

PEPYS I told his Majesty and the Duke what I had seen; I said 'Your Majesty, unless you command houses to be pulled down, nothing can stop the fire."

JANE The King said "Mr Pepys, I do agree!"

He commanded me to go to my Lord Mayor and order him to spare no houses PEPYS but to pull down every one before the fire. the Duke of York bid me tell the Lord Mayor that he would send his soldiers to help.

 $\overline{
m JANE}$ So my master hurried back to the city to find Thomas Bludworth the Lord Mayor and give him the King's orders.

 $\overline{ ext{PEPYS}}$ I found the Lord Mayor on Cannon Street, surrounded by people with the entire contents of their houses piled into carts.

When I gave him the King's orders, Bludworth cried like a fainting woman:

"Lord, what can I do? I am spent! People will not obey me!

I have been pulling down houses but I've been up all night and now I must lie down!"

 $\overline{
m_{JANE}}$ If only the Lord Mayor had given the order to pull down the houses in Pudding Lane last night, the fire would never have taken hold like this. Mr. Pepys left the Lord Mayor in disgust, trusting that he would now do as the King commanded, and came home for the feast I had spent all night preparing.

No 5a. Mr. Pepys' House

PEPYS The fire seemed far enough away from my house on Seething Lane, so we sat down to an extraordinary good feast. Two meat courses of beef and venison, then pies, tarts and fruit - Delicious, Jane.

JANE (aside) Even in a crisis, life goes on - thanks to the likes of me! (music starts) I was run off my feet!

PEPYS After supper we made some music. Mr Drumbleby has made me a new French recorder which has a particularly sweet sound.

JANE Of course he couldn't resist playing a tune. It was so charming I stopped washing up, and for a moment we all forgot the fire.







PEPYS For a while we were as merry as we could be.

But after supper the mood turned melancholy once again, and I went back out onto the streets to see what was to be done about the fire.



No.6 London's Burning reprise / So Strange a Sight

PEPYS I walked down to the river. All over the Thames with one's face in the wind you were almost burned with a shower of fire-drops.

From here the whole city looks like a terrifying arch of fire.



A horrid noise the flames made and the cracking of houses at their ruin.

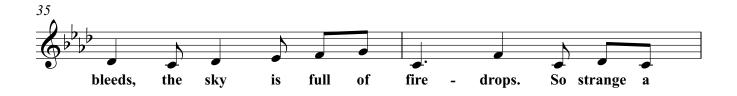


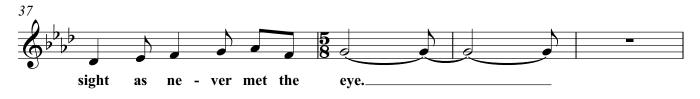


fire! Fire! fire! Pour on wa-ter, pour on wa-ter, pour on wa ter, pour on wa-ter. Lon-don's









Narrators Narrators

















No 7.Dig in the Garden

- PEPYS After a restless night I was up at the break of day to carry my gold and my best things away on a cart to Bethnal Green. I was in such a hurry that I travelled in my night shirt.
- JANE Mr Pepys, thank goodness you're back.
 The sky is so thick and black with smoke
 that you can hardly see the sun.
 People are saying this is God's terrible judgement on the citythat London was full of sin and wickedness and this is our punishment.
 I don't believe them though I think God feels our sadness and sorrow.
- PEPYS Yes Jane, but you can understand why people think God is punishing themit feels like the end of the world. A wall of fire as high as a church is heading west towards Cheapside and St. Paul's...
- JANE
 I heard the goldsmiths of Cheapside moved their treasures away to the Tower at the dead of night-jewellery, goblets, gold plates as big as cartwheels, swords, all glittering with jewels. Plenty of people have been burying their gold underground.

Speaking of treasues, sir, what about that great big Parmesan cheese that we got for the feast? It wasn't touched sir-Can we save it?

- PEPYS Yes Jane, we must! Time is short the wind is blowing from all directions and nowhere is safe.
- JANE What can we do, sir?
- PEPYS Let's dig a deep hole in the garden to bury the Parmesan.

 And make sure there's room for my excellent French wine as well.

 Perhaps it will emerge from the ground even more delicious?
- JANE (aside) Who knows, I might even get a taste this time!

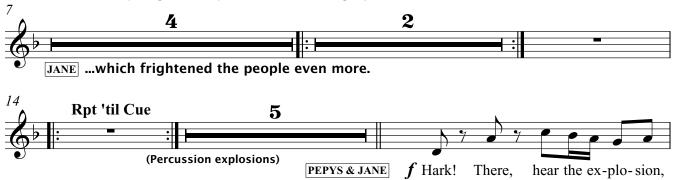




PEPYS After supper I saw how horridly the sky looks, as if the whole heaven was on fire - enough to put us out of our wits.

I walked in the dark down to Tower Street and there saw it all on fire with extraordinary vehemence,

Now, finally begins the practice of blowing up houses...







PEPYS But it stopped the fire just before it reached the Tower of London. The flames had no timber to feed them.

(V.S. narration continues)

No 8. The Aftermath

JANE But to the west the Old Bailey burned....

PEPYS ...and St. Paul's Cathedral.

JANE Nobody thought St. Paul's would burn. The local booksellers had filled the crypt with books. But that provided more fuel for the fire.

PEPYS The roof of the Cathedral was being repaired.

Once the sparks reached the wooden scaffolding there was no hope.

Hungry flames consumed the roof timbers, and the lead melted and poured down Ludgate Hill like a river of blood.

JANE The huge stones that had stood for centuries exploded in the heat with cracks as loud as thunder. St Paul's was no more.

PEPYS The next day the wind dropped at last.

The fire was dying down but all around us London lay in ruins.

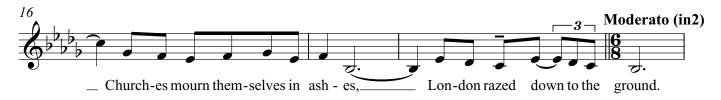
JANE We walked home, our feet stinging as we picked our way among the hot coals. What a sad sight the city was. I saw a poor cat taken out of a hole in a chimney, still alive but with its hair burnt.

PEPYS And I found this piece of glass from Mercer's Chapel, melted and buckled with the heat like parchment. The saddest sight of desolation that I ever saw. (cue music)























No. 9 Three Cheers for Sir Christopher Wren

PEPYS London lies in ruins. But only 8 deaths from the fire were recorded.

JANE If you believe the records.

PEPYS The King provided bread for the homeless.

JANE *If* they could pay for it.

PEPYS Many people looked for someone to blame. Superstitious people said the Fire was sent by God to punish us for our wicked ways.

JANE Some blame the French, some the Dutch.

PEPYS But it was none of those things. It was an accident.

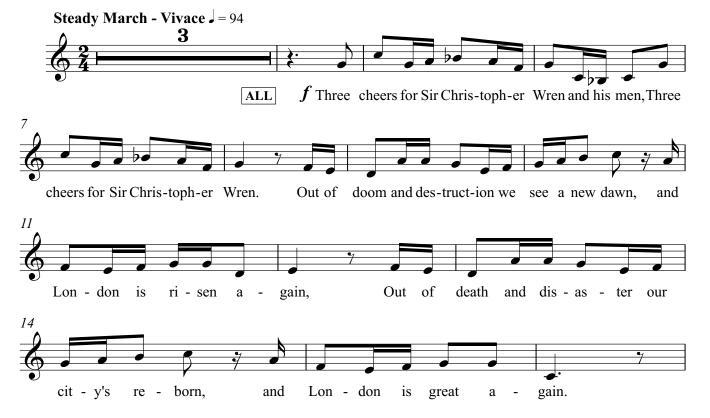
The baker's oven caught fire, and a fierce easterly wind spread the flames.

The fire fed on the wooden houses, the thatch, and the stores of oil, pitch and coal.

JANE More than thirteen thousand houses and 87 churches were destroyed by the fire..

PEPYS We must use our knowledge to stop this happening again, and build a stronger, better London made of brick and stone. Even now my friend the architect Christopher Wren is drawing plans for a new Cathedral to rise from the ashes of St. Paul's. It will be a magnificent construction built to last for centuries to come.

(cue music)





great a -

gain.

cit-y's re-born, and Lon-don is

No 10. Fire - Finale

PEPYS London did indeed rise again, but alas I died in 1703, 8 years before the new Cathedral was finished...(music starts)

JANE (puts on shawl, and looks up at slide of St. Paul's with grandson Sam)

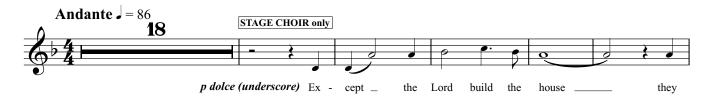
"What do you think of that, young Sam? Sir Christopher Wren has built us the grandest church in all the land – St. Paul's Cathedral, watching over London. If only Mr. Pepys could have seen it."

YOUNG SAM

"The dome looks as if it's touching the sky....Grandma Jane, is it true you saw the Great Fire burning in the night, and woke Mr. Pepys, and he told the King and managed to get the fire put out?"

JANE "Yes Sam, that's how it happened. But it was all such a long time ago now, and poor Mr. Pepys has been dead these last 8 years, God rest his soul. I remember when we watched the fine new houses springing up, he said it would be such a magnificent sight when it was finished. You know, before the Fire everyone lived in wooden houses...

YOUNG SAM "I know... in streets so narrow that you could almost reach out of your front window and shake hands with your neighbour opposite?"

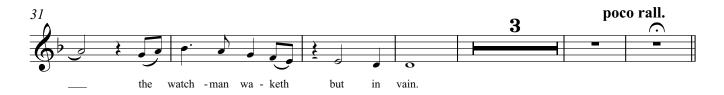


JANE "That's right. But now we have grand, wide streets like Cheapside.

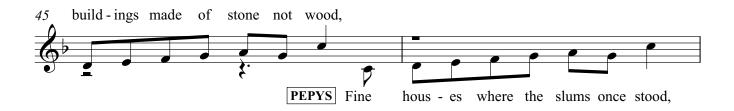
And all those new churches... when you look across the river from Southwark you can see a forest of white spires filling the horizon, and the dome of St Paul's towering above them all. Such changes in my lifetime Sam.... who knows what wonders you will see in our city when you_become a man."

(segue bar 40)

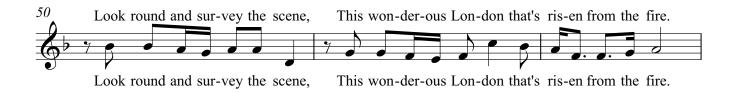


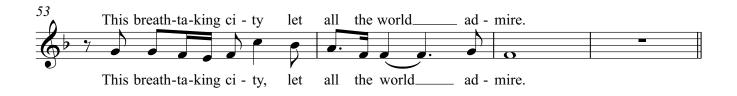


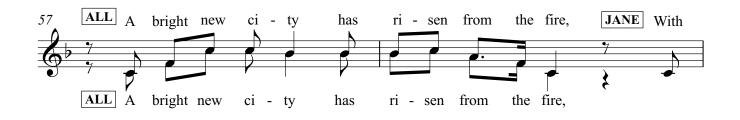


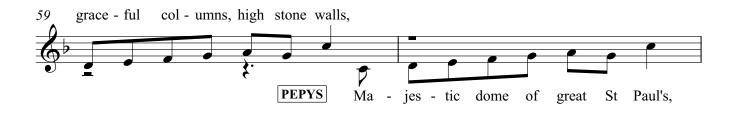






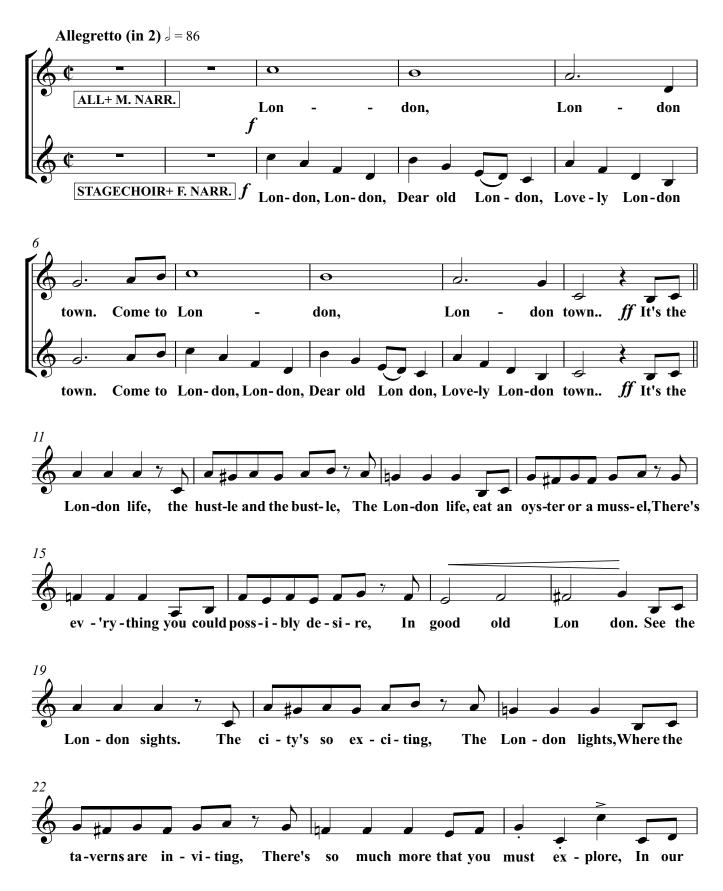








No.11 It's The London Life - final reprise



30 Voices

