

Samuel Pepys' London



Axe Yard,
Westminster

Whitehall

Theatre Royal,
Drury Lane

St. Paul's
Churchyard

The Exchange

The Sun Tavern

Coffee Houses

Seething Lane &
Navy Office

River Thames



Samuel Pepys' London – Map Key

Axe Yard, Westminster (1660)

Pepys's home at the start of the diary. From Axe Yard, he stepped directly into the crowded streets of Westminster each morning. These modest lodgings reflect his **early status as an ambitious but not yet established government clerk** and place him physically close to Whitehall and the centers of power.

Coffee Houses (1660s)

New and fashionable spaces for conversation, especially among professional men. Pepys used coffeehouses to **hear news, discuss politics, and gather information**. They contrasted sharply with taverns: quieter, more argumentative, and closely tied to emerging public opinion.

River Thames

London's main highway. Pepys constantly traveled by boat, using the river to move quickly across the city. He witnessed major events from the Thames, including scenes during the **Great Fire of London**, and understood the river as the city's lifeline.

Seething Lane & the Navy Office (1660s)

Pepys's most important workplace — and later his home. As **Clerk of the Acts to the Navy Board**, Pepys lived and worked inside the administrative machinery of the English navy. His diary is filled with references to "going down to the office," revealing how completely his professional and domestic lives overlapped here.

St. Paul's Churchyard (1660s)

A major center of **bookselling, pamphlets, sermons, and public conversation**. Pepys browsed books here, bought music and texts, and absorbed political and religious talk. The area also symbolized London's intellectual life — later destroyed in the Great Fire.

The Exchange (1660s)

The Royal Exchange was Pepys's favorite place to walk through. It functioned as a **hub of information, gossip, commerce, and rumor**, especially in an age with limited newspapers. Pepys went there to hear news, meet contacts, and sense the mood of the city.

The Sun Tavern (1660s)

One of the taverns Pepys frequented for **meals, meetings, music, and sociability**. Taverns were essential social spaces where business and pleasure mixed, often accompanied by drink, song, and informal networking.

Theatre Royal, Drury Lane (1663)

Pepys's favorite theatre after it opened in 1663. He attended performances frequently and wrote detailed reviews of actors, plays, scenery, and audiences. The theatre represents **Restoration pleasure, innovation, and Pepys's love of culture and spectacle**.

Whitehall (1660s)

The heart of royal government after the Restoration. Pepys frequently went to Whitehall for official business, ceremonies, and news. It was where he **observed court life**, tracked political shifts, and saw Charles II in person — often remarking on the contrast between royal splendor and bureaucratic reality.