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978-1-108-02152-4 - Samuel Pepys and the World He Lived In

Henry Benjamin Wheatley

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Samuel Pepys and the World He Lived In

Henry Benjamin Wheatley (1838–1917) was an eminent bibliographer, author and editor who served as assistant secretary to the Royal Society of Arts between 1879 and his retirement in 1908. He also had a particular interest in the life of Samuel Pepys (1633–1703), founding the Samuel Pepys Club in 1903 and producing the most reliable edition of Pepys' diary until the Latham edition (1970–83). This volume, first published in 1880, contains a detailed biography of Pepys. Using contemporary sources, Wheatley discusses Pepys' achievements during the period his diary was kept, his progression in the Navy Board and his resignation in 1689. Wheatley also provides fascinating descriptions of Restoration society, manners and customs, exploring the historical context of Samuel Pepys' life through discussions of various incidents taken from his diary. This volume remains a standard reference for the historical context of Pepys' diary and life.

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 Samuel  Pepys

AND THE

WORLD HE LIVED IN.

BY

HENRY B. WHEATLEY, F.S.A.

“His Diary is like a good sirloin, which requires only to be basted with its own drippings.”—*Athenaeum*, 1843, page 551.

Second Edition.



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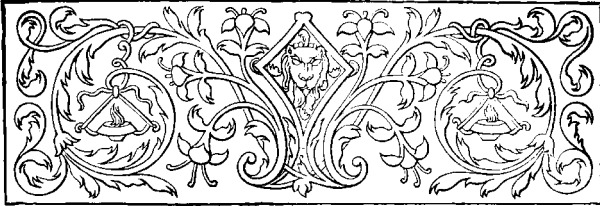
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P R E F A C E .

THIS little book does not need any long Preface, as the title sufficiently explains the object aimed at. Although the various subjects referred to in the "Diary" are annotated in the different editions, there is in none of these any complete analysis of the entire work or of the incidents of Pepys's life.

I have endeavoured in the following pages to draw together some of the most interesting incidents of the "Diary" relating both to Pepys's life and to the manners of his time, and also to illustrate them from other sources. I have used the best edition of the "Diary," by the Rev. Mynors Bright; but in order that this book may form a companion to all editions I have referred

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to the date of the entries rather than to the volume and page. It must therefore be understood that the passages referred to when not met with in the other editions will be found among the hitherto unpublished matter of that of Mr. Bright. It has been my endeavour to illustrate the contents of this entertaining work more completely than has previously been attempted, and several of the circumstances of Pepys's life are here brought prominently forward for the first time. I may add that the whole of the present volume was printed off before the appearance of the excellent article in the July number of the "Edinburgh Review" (1880), as otherwise it might be supposed that certain points had been suggested by that article. I have, however, availed myself of its pages to make a correction of a small matter in the Index.

Mr. T. C. Noble has kindly sent me, since the completion of this book, a copy of Pepys's original marriage certificate from the Registers of St. Margaret's Church, Westminster, and I therefore insert it here to complete the account in Chapter I. "Samuell Peps of this parish Gent & Elizabeth De Sⁿt Michell of Martins in the ffeilds Spinster. Published October 19th, 22nd, 29th [1655] and were married

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by Richard Sherwyn Esq^r one of the Justices of the Peace of the Cittie and Lyberties of Westm^r December 1st. (Signed) Ri. Sherwyn."

The pronunciation of Pepys's name has long been a disputed point, but although the most usual form at the present day is *Peps*, there can be little doubt that in his own time the name was pronounced as if written *Peeps*. The reasons for this opinion are: (1) that the name was sometimes so spelt phonetically by some of his contemporaries, as in the Coffee-house paper quoted in the "Diary" (ed. Mynors Bright, vol. vi. p. 292): "On Tuesday last Mr. Peeps went to Windsor," &c.; (2) that this pronunciation is still the received one at Magdalene College, Cambridge; and (3) that the present bearers of the name so pronounce it.

In conclusion, it is my pleasing duty to express here my best thanks to those friends who have kindly assisted me in my work. Chief among these are Professor Newton, F.R.S., who, as Fellow of Magdalene College, facilitated my inquiries respecting the Pepysian Library, Mr. Patrick, Senior Fellow and President of the College, Mr. Pepys Cockerell, Mr. George Scharf, F.S.A., Mr. Richard B. Prosser, of the Patent Office, who communicated the docu-

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ments relating to Mrs. Pepys's father, and Colonel Pasley, whose List of the Secretaries of the Admiralty, &c., in the Appendix will be found of great value, not merely in illustrating Pepys's life, but as a real addition to our information respecting the history of the Navy.

H. B. W.

5, Minford Gardens, W.,
September, 1880.

P.S. Since the first publication of this book I have received an interesting letter from Mr. Walter Courtenay Pepys, a member of the Cottenham branch of the Pepys family, who, while agreeing with the statement above as to the Diarist's pronunciation, reminds me that his branch have pronounced the name as "Pep-pis" for at least one hundred years. In favour of this pronunciation Mr. Pepys adds that the French branch, which is now settled at La Rochelle, but came from Languedoc and originally from Italy (where the name exists as "Peppi"), now spell the name "Pepy."

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