

# History: The Great Fire of London

The Great Fire of London swept through the central parts of the English city from Sunday, 2 September to Thursday, 6 September 1666.

Fire hazards had been recognised in the City for a long time. In 1661, Charles II issued a proclamation forbidding overhanging windows and jetties, but this was largely ignored by the local government. Charles's next, sharper message in 1665 warned of the risk of fire from the narrowness of the streets and authorised both imprisonment of recalcitrant builders and demolition of dangerous buildings. It too had little impact. Many important buildings were destroyed in the Fire including St. Paul's Cathedral, the Royal Exchange and the General Letter Office.

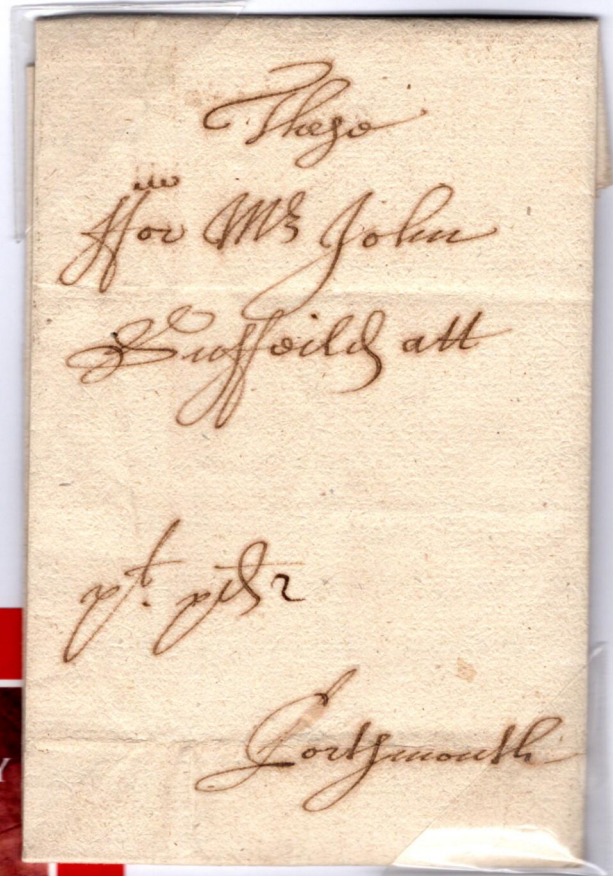


Charles II



Royal Exchange

Only primitive fire fighting equipment was available to fight the fire, all of which were hand-operated.



Charles II era entire letter from London addressed "These / ffor Mr John / Scoffeild att / Portsmouth" and sent postally (Manuscript "pt pd 2") (2d would have been the correct charge at this time). The content is an extract of the will of Winifred Yeamot, daughter of Sir Edmund Plowden (Capt-General of New Albion) who was resident in London at the time of the Great Fire.



Maldives (2016) Miniature sheet showing "The Great Fire Engine"