**Samuel Pepys was an eyewitness to the Great Fire. His diary is a reliable source of information about what happened. Let’s find out what he wrote!**

[**Extract from Samuel Pepys’ Diary**](http://www.pepysdiary.com/encyclopedia/3333/)

Sunday 2 September 1666

Jane called us up about three in the morning, to tell us of a great fire they saw in the City. So I rose and slipped on my nightgown, and went to her window, …I thought it far enough off; and so went to bed again and to sleep…By and by Jane comes and tells me that she hears that above 300 houses have been burned down to-night by the fire we saw, and that it is now burning down all Fish-street, by London Bridge. So I made myself ready presently, and walked to the Tower, … and there I did see the houses at that end of the bridge all on fire, and an infinite great fire on this and the other side the end of the bridge; …So down, with my heart full of trouble, to the Lieutenant of the Tower, who tells me that it begun this morning in the King’s baker’s house in Pudding-lane, and that it hath burned St. Magnus’s Church and most part of Fish-street already. So I down to the water-side, and there got a boat and through bridge, and there saw a lamentable fire. …Everybody endeavouring to remove their goods, and flinging into the river or bringing them into lighters that layoff; poor people staying in their houses as long as till the very fire touched them, and then running into boats, or clambering from one pair of stairs by the water-side to another. And among other things, the poor pigeons, I perceive, were loth to leave their houses, but hovered about the windows and balconys till they were, some of them burned, their wings, and fell down.

So I was called for, and did tell the King and Duke of Yorke what I saw, and that unless his Majesty did command houses to be pulled down nothing could stop the fire. They seemed much troubled, and the King commanded me to go to my Lord Mayor from him, and command him to spare no houses, but to pull down before the fire every way.