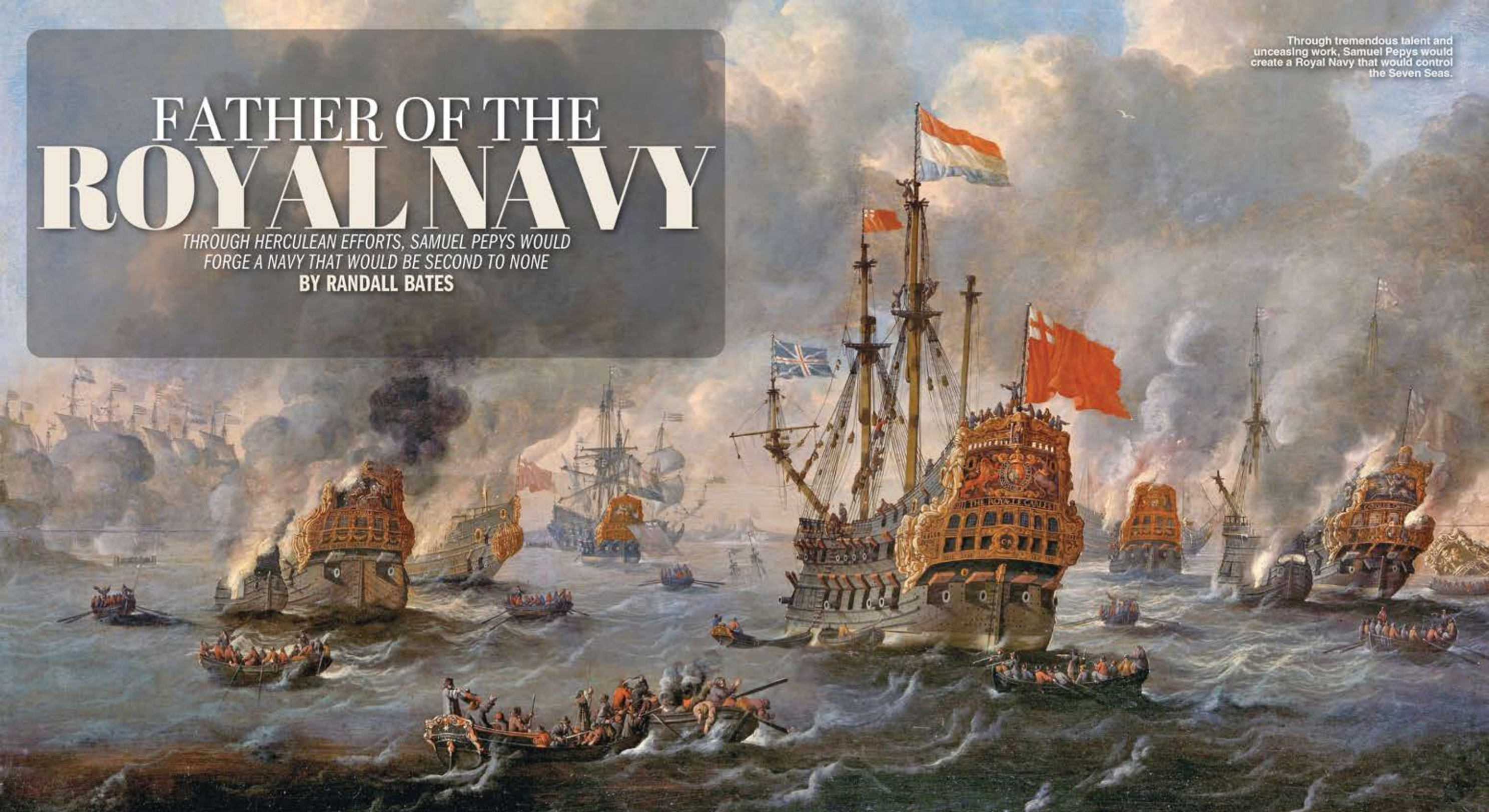


# FATHER OF THE ROYAL NAVY

THROUGH HERCULEAN EFFORTS, SAMUEL PEPYS WOULD FORGE A NAVY THAT WOULD BE SECOND TO NONE

BY RANDALL BATES

Through tremendous talent and unceasing work, Samuel Pepys would create a Royal Navy that would control the Seven Seas.



**S**amuel Pepys (pronounced “peeps”) was born in London, England on 23 February 1633. He made the city his lifelong home, which was fitting considering he would be the main architect of the establishment and proliferation of a navy that would be the main force holding together the massive empire Britain was creating. In 1653, he took his BA from Cambridge University’s

Magdalene College, and in 1660 earned his MA. He then commenced his career as a navy-builder despite starting out wholly ignorant of how to do so. This was not his only hurdle.

On 26 March 1658, he had undergone a risky but unavoidable surgical procedure to remove a kidney stone from his urinary tract. The operation was a success as far as removing the stone was concerned,

but he never fully recovered. For the rest of his life he suffered from severe abdominal pain and bloody urine. He never let it impede his work on behalf of the navy.

He started out in the summer of 1660 by sailing with the fleet that brought His Majesty Charles II back from exile. Being a cousin of Admiral Edward Montague helped him secure an appointment as Clerk of the Acts

of the Navy. Learning quickly on the job, he displayed a penchant for administration, becoming in turn a justice of the peace, commissioner for and treasurer of the colony of Tangiers, and a surveyor of naval victualing. He became known as an official who never left a job undone.

In the summer of 1662, he repeatedly found time to study multiplication tables with a private

tutor. He also taught himself the nuances of shipbuilding and price charts for various naval stores such as tar and whale oil. Using several large ledgers he commenced making meticulous records of all memoranda and contracts, insuring there could be no question concerning the legitimacy of all government spending for naval purposes. His value soon became evident.

From 1665 to 1667, during the Second Dutch War, he found himself virtually the sole administrator in the naval office as most of his colleagues were re-assigned, and those remaining with him proved incompetent. Considering the far-flung nature of this conflict, it was terribly fortunate for Britain that Pepys had implemented a centralized approach to supplying the fleet. Without the steady flow of