

**AUTHOR:** Stephen Dugdale

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**Examples:** fhort = short    kindneffe = kindnesse

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THE  
INFORMATION  
OF

Stephen Dugdale,

GENT.

Delivered at the BAR of the  
*HOUSE of COMMONS,*

*Munday the First day of November,*

*In the Year of our Lord 1680.*

*Perused and Signed to be Printed, according to the Order  
of the House of Commons,*

*By me WILLIAM WILLIAMS, Speaker.*



LONDON,

Printed by the Assigns of *John Bill, Thomas Newcomb,*  
*and Henry Hills,* Printers to the Kings  
most Excellent Majesty. 1680.

THE  
INFORMATION

OF  
STEPHEN DUGDALE,

Q. E. T.

Delivered at the BAR of the  
HOUSE of COMMONS,  
Monday the fifth day of November,  
in the Year of our Lord 1880.

Printed and Sold by the Printer, according to the Order  
of the House of Commons,  
By Mr. WILLIAM WILLIAMS, Stationer.



LONDON:  
Printed by the Assigns of John Bell, Thomas Newcomb,  
and James Hill, Printers to the King,  
at the Execution Alley. 1880.

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THE  
INFORMATION

Given at the

BARR

of the Honourable the

House of Commons,

BY

Mr. Stephen Dugdale,

On the 30th day of October, Anno Dom. 1680. viz.

**T**HAT, about two or three and twenty years  
since, I was brought over from the Church  
of England to the Church of Rome, by one  
Mr. Knight a Priest, continuing some years under  
his care, till at length he the said Mr. Knight, through  
infirmity of body, not being able to Officiate his

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Priestly

Priestly Function, he delivered me to the care of one *Francis Evers* a Jesuit, who did not only take care to instruct me in matters relating to a future State, as to a future State, but in all things as far as he could in temporal things. Likewise he the said Mr. *Evers* laid an injunction upon me to visit him every day once, if I was at home: and so by such means we grew to such an intimacy, that scarcely any thing that the one knew, but the other was privy to it. So that sometimes as we were talking of affairs of State, and the Revolutions of Governments, we came to discourse of our own. And he the said *Evers*. often hath told me, that it would not be long before we might expect good times, for the Duke of *York* having declared himself to be a *Roman Catholick*, had given a good assurance to the Pope; besides he was a Prince of that resolution and worth, that if ever he made any engagement, he would never revoke it, particularly in so high a Concern as this, where his Soul lies at stake. So that never more Hopes than now of dispersing the dark Clouds of Heresie. He hath not only engaged himself solemnly to us for the Establishing of Religion, but that he would restore Us to all our Church Lands, and other Privileges taken from the Church formerly. And this I had not from Mr. *Evers* alone, but from several private Gentlemen, besides Priests. For my great intimacy with Mr. *Evers* did get me great acquaintance with most of the Gentry of our Religion. So by that means I came with several of them to their private Meetings, where it had been debated, what the Duke of *York*'s pleasure was, that as he had given them an Assurance of his Part, they should not be negligent to do theirs. And that they should be in all readiness with all  
necef-

necessaries when the King should dye, to assist the Duke against the Protestants. For they must expect some opposition from the Protestant Party: but good Care before-hand might prevent a great deal of Mischief, and that it was thought fit that every Landlord amongst his Tenants and Servants have some twenty, some thirty, some forty Catholics, and the Priest to instruct them, That they should be ready at an hours warning, and this was the course resolved upon. And that the said *Evers* told me, that there had been great care taken for an honest Gentleman to be Confessor to the Duke of York, and they had found one, a friend to the said *Evers*, who was a worthy honest Gentleman, one Mr. *Mounford*, otherwise called *Beddingfeild*. He was presented to the Duke sometime before the *Dutch Wars*, and was with the Duke, being his Ghostly Father, in the *Dutch Wars* on Shipboard. Mr. *Evers* hath shewed me Letters from him dated from on Shipboard, commending the Duke, how good and zealous he was in the *Roman Catholick Religion*: he thought him to be the hopefullest and zealousst Prince in the whole Universe. I saw in one of those Letters from on Shipboard to Mr. *Evers*, that he the said *Beddingfeild* had given the Duke the blessed Host twice, in order for the Engaging himself with the Enemy. That in the year 1677. Mr. *Evers* and I being in discourse, Mr. *Evers* told me, There were great fears and jealousies, that the King would outlive the Duke of York, and then all our hopes were at an end. But to prevent that, he told me, that Cardinal *Hiquard* had sent a Letter, that they had Excommunicated the King as an Heretick, that he was deposed from being King, and that any One that killed him might merit by

it. That he maintained a Damnable Heretical Doctrine; and so consequently was an Enemy of Christ. At this time I had all the Letters directed to me for the carrying on this Plot, which were for Mr. *Evers*, some of which I opened and read, which all tended to lay hold of this Opportunity; for if they missed this Point, they must never look to have the like again for the Establishing of their Religion. And about the Month of *July* or *August* 1677. soon after I was by Mr. *Evers* admitted into the secret of the Design for the Romish Government, there came one *Carrington* to *Tixall*, whom the Jesuits thereabouts imployed as a Messenger of Trust in their Business. He brought a Letter to Mr. *Evers* from Mr. *Vavasor*, who was then at *Wolverhampton* or *Boscobell*, and meeting me in the Hall, desired me to give it to Mr. *Evers*, which I presently did. The Letter from Mr. *Vavasor* did inclose in it several others, as one from *John Grove* in *London*, who in a part of the sheet of Paper writ some News in short; but underneath his signing Mr. *William Harcourt* began a long Account, how he lately had received the two enclosed Letters, one of them from *St. Omers*, which was signed by *Monfort*, *Warner*, and *Peters*, as I remember, and four more whose names I remember not at all. And this Letter did refer to another Letter from *Paris*; to the three Parties first named, and the same was signed from *Paris* by two names, whereof I think *Clifford* was one. This Letter did contain the Opinion and Advice of those at *Paris*, upon a Letter which it seems had been first writ from *England* to *St. Omers*, and from *St. Omers* transmitted to them. The scope of which Advice was this, That by all means  
care

care should be taken not to let any Arms appear, or any appear in Arms till after the Death of the KING, because they had fully considered, that when any sudden Death should befall the KING, it might be easily laid to the Presbyterians, who had killed the late KING, and were still Enemies to the KING and Government. Therefore they advised, that all ways should be taken to give out and possess the People before-hand, that the Presbyterians were the only Enemies, so that when the KING should be killed, those of the Church of *ENGLAND* would presently be incensed, and take up Arms to Revenge it, and rather crave the Aid of the Catholics, than be afraid of them: And therefore it was fit they should be in a Readiness to make the first Alarm, and give out, that all was done by the Presbyterians, and then by a little Assistance from abroad the Work would easily be compassed. This was the substance of the Letter from *Paris*: and they did further desire to have the same sent into *England*, with the Opinion of those of *St. Omers* upon it; and those of *St. Omers* did in their Letter much praise the Advice from *Paris*, adding nothing else of their own unto it, besides Commendation, but passed unto other of smaller concerns, as, that one Mr. *Evers* should call to one *Gerard* of *Lancashire*, and *Gerald* of *Hilderson* for fifty pound due for teaching of their Children or Relations there, and such like things.

Master *Harcourt* further added, that this Letter from *Saint Omers* being directed unto him, he had Communicated it, as also that from *Paris*, unto Master *Bedingfield*, and Master *Ireland*, and likewise to the Lord *Arundell*, Lord *Bellasis*, Lord *Stafford*, and six or seven more whom I have forgot, by all whom it was highly commended as good Advice, and that

all should endeavour upon any Differences in Parliament, or any other Disorders, still to give out, That it was those Blood-sucking, King-killing Presbyterians, that were the Authors of it.

That Master *Evers* did shew them the said three Letters sent from Master *Harcourt*, and then soon after, the same day, sent them by the same Messenger *Carrington*, under a cover to Mistress *Heveningham* at *Aston*, to be shewn to her Husband, and to Sir *James Symonds* their Son-in-law, and to come back that night with the same Letters, as he did; for that I did see *Evers* shew them to the present Lord *Aston* in the Parlour after Supper, his Lordship having been abroad before, and he believes them to be the same Letters he had seen in the morning: for the Messenger was then come back, and two of the Letters lay by on the Table, and the third they were reading by the fire. And I do verily believe they were the same Hands, and the same Letters, and the Messenger was there detained all Night, and made much of by Me, according to Order; and in the Morning Master *Evers* sent him back with an Answer to Master *Vavasor*, but Master *Evers* kept still the Letters from Master *Harcourt*. And I did afterwards hear Master *Evers* and Master *Gavan* discourse together touching the said Letters, and in Commendation of the said Advice, and they named several Friends in their discourse that were engaged at *Paris*, whom I remember not. And Master *Evers* did tell me, that the Letters from Saint *Omers* were brought by a particular Gentleman into *England*, and from *London* to Master *Vavasor* by some Friend, which I do the rather believe, for that took notice, there was no Post-mark upon the said Letter to Master *Vavasor*.

That

That about *February* 1677 there came a Letter to Mr. *Evers*, to acquaint him, from a Friend of his in *Paris*, that he had received a Letter from *Rome*, which did require the said Mr. *Evers*, together with the said *Cotton's* Company in *London*, with Mr. *Gavans*, Mr. *Peters*, and Mr. *Vavasor*; And accordingly Mr. *Evers* did come to *London*, and Mr. *Peters*, but whether the other two were there I know not. And when Mr. *Evers* came home, he told me, Mr. *Ireland* and Mr. *Symonds* would be in the Country the latter end of *June*, for considering the best way and means for carrying on the great Work, as it was called. And in *July* 1678. I received a Letter from Mr. *Evers*, which came from Sir *John Warners*, to acquaint him that all the Arms were ready that were bespoke, and wanted now nothing but their Orders how they should be disposed of.

In *August* following a Meeting was appointed at the Lord *Aston's* House at *Tixall*, where was present the Lord *Aston* himself, and my Lord *Stafford*, Sir *James Symonds*, Mr. *Dracott*, Mr. *Heveningham*, Mr. *Symonds*, Mr. *Ireland*, Mr. *Vavasor*, Mr. *Gavan*, Mr. *Peter*, Mr. *Fitter*, Mr. *Fitzherbert*, and Mr. *Manley*, with several others; which Meeting was for carrying on the Plot, the Death of the KING, with several other things relating thereto. At that time it was Agreed, That the said Lord *Aston* and Sir *James Symonds* should go beyond the Seas in the beginning *October*, to dispose of the Arms that were provided, but the Plot breaking out, their journey was stopt.

In *September* following my Lord *Stafford* sent for me several times into his lodging Chamber at *Tixall*, where we had several private Conferences, amongst which he told me, That Mr. *Evers* had  
com-

commended me to him, that I was true and trusty to any thing that I undertook, and that now was the time : That they stood in need of such Men as I was : And that if I would I might make my self happy ; And if I would be one that would undertake to Kill the KING, he would give me Five Hundred Pounds for a present supply ; which I faithfully promised I would do : And he told me I should go up to *London* with him in *October*, and sometimes I should be at *Standon*, and sometimes in *London* ; And should receive Instructions from Mr. *Harcourt*, Mr. *Ireland*, and himself. And going to Mr. *Evers* and acquainting him of it, he told me he knew of it before. I must renew my Oath of Secrecy, which I did do : And the Fourteenth of *October* I received a Letter from Mr. *Harcourt* for Mr. *Evers* ; the Contents of which was, This night Sir *Edmundbury Godfrey* is dispatcht. Sir, said I to Mr. *Evers*, do you think that this will not destroy all our Designs ? Sir said I, if it do not destroy it I will be hang'd. Not so, said *Evers*, be not so passionate, not so, for he was a man that did use to punish Lewd and Debaucht people ; And it will rather be cast on them, than any of us.

Another time I being in company with Mr. *Evers*, I pressed of him, to know the reason why they should Kill Sir *Edmundbury Godfrey* ? He told me, That the Duke of *YORK* had sent a Message to *Coleman*, after he was taken, that he should not Confess any thing : He returned the Duke an Answer back, That it had been his misfortune, to declare all that he knew of the Matter to Sir *Edmundbury Godfrey* ; and he heard the said Sir *Edmundbury Godfrey* would come in a Witness against him, in regard he had been so diligent in taking Examinations : The Duke returned him Answer back again,

again, That bid him be sure he did not Confess, and he should not need to fear Sir *Edmundbury Godfrey*, and that there should be care taken, or to that purpose. I saw a Letter from Mr. *Whitebread*, directed to Mr. *Evers*, but inclosed in *Groves* Letter to my self, wherein was, That there was great hopes now, that things will go on well, if there be diligent care taken in the Management of it, which can never be, if it be communicated to every idle Fellow. Therefore be sure you do not trust any, but whom you have made tryal of: for if it should be discovered, we both ruine our Design, and all concerned in it. For those persons which are for the People, no matter whether Gentlemen or not, so they be cunning, desperate and trusty, which choice made here I fear not: for there hath been especial care taken that no opportunity might be lost; and what persons you think fit, let me have your Answer next Week. Send to *Boscobel*, and there will be a Messenger to bring them to me. I need not say much more to you, in regard you are fully acquainted with the business, and how it is to be carried on by Mr. *Ireland*. I hope you put the Gentlemen in mind, for the getting what Mony you can. Pray send me word by the next, how my Lady is. I think to be at *St. Omers* next week.

Those Gentlemen that Subscribed for carrying on this design about us in *Staffordshire*, were as followeth, (*viz.*)

D

Sir

Sir James Symonds subscribed	1000 <sup>l</sup>
Mr. Heveningham	2000 <sup>l</sup>
Mr. Dracot	3000 <sup>l</sup>
Mr. Gerrard	500 <sup>l</sup>
Mr. Howard	2000 <sup>l</sup>

And as Master *Evers* told me, my Lord *Aston* paid One thousand pound for carrying on this Design to Master *Bedingfield*: and that what was paid was returned towards the discharging the Accounts of Arms, which were provided beyond the Seas, and every of the aforesaid Gentlemen was to have a share, and Offices appointed. But in all our Meetings it was never agreed, what their parts should be, and the Notedst Gentlemen of all those was ever Sir *James Symonds*, being as they said, a very active person, and one that would be found a well qualified person. But as far as I ever understood, their places were to be appointed here in *London* by some of those Great Ones whom I have formerly mentioned; but there are several persons names, besides those I have named, in that same List; and there are other persons that entred their Names beyond Seas, for this Note was only for Master *Evers* private use. And to that end Master *Evers* and Master *Cotton* were sent to *Saint Omers* about two or three years ago, for the sake of other persons which were very fearfull, and some others paid their money to Master *Bedingfield*, Master *Ireland*, Master *Harcourt*: and Master *Evers* hath been appointed to receive Acquittances for them; which Acquittances I have seen come in Master *Evers* Letters,

Letters, one to Sir *James Symonds* at one time was for three hundred pound, which was noted in the Acquittance for a Charitable Use, but it was for the carrying on of this Wicked Design, or Master *Evers* told me not true. Most of the persons about *Woolverhampton*, Master *Gavan* took care to receive of, and discharge them. I asked Master *Peter* how the rest must be had, for these Gentlemen when they were all together, would be but a few. He Answered me, I need not fear, there was care taken for that, and such a care, that at one hours warning they would be ready. But as he said, they had formerly told, that none, except the Gentlemen, were so much as to tell one another, till the very time, of which I never enquired after that time, but I perceived that a great Number were knowing, by their fear when I was taken.

*Stephen Dugdale.*

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F I N I S.

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Stephen Pughdale.

1712