

Walcot's Capt. Walcot's Tryal & Execution in 1683

(1)

AN

ANSWER

TO A LATE

PAPER,

INTITLED,

A True Copy of a Paper Written

By Capt. THO. WALCOT

In *Newgate* after his CONDEMNATION, and Delivered to his Son immediatly before his EXECUTION; being also his last Speech at the place of Execution.

By ROBERT WEST

AS I will alwayes be tender of any mans Life, so I would be of his Fame after his Death; but the Duty I owe to my self, and to truth, obliges me to give an Answer to part of this Pamphlet. Though through the King's Mercy, I am not at the apparent point of Death, yet I will declare the truth as sincerely as if I were so: for I hope I am much more convinced of the Horridnesse of my Crime, and have more truly Repented of it than Capt. *walcot* seems by this Paper to have done; for notwithstanding his large Profession of his Faith there, He has not stuck to insert as many false-hoods in this last Paper, as any man that suffered in the *Popish Plot* is charged to have done in his Last Speech.

In *October* last Capt. *walcot* acquainted me, that there was a Design to Assassinate the King and Duke in their return that Month from *Newmarket*; and that if that were not effected, an Insurrection was intended on the Nineteenth of *Nov.* following, which was the first knowledge I had of any Real Plot whatsoever carrying on against the King. He told me indeed though he thought an Assassination Lawful, he look'd upon it as an ungenerous thing, and therefore would not engage Personally in it; but he told me he would be concern'd in the Insurrection, and expected to be a *Coll.* of *Horse*, and would have had me taken a command under Him, which I refused; and he desired me to buy him a Tuck, and lend him my silk Armour, which I agreed to do, to this he gave no Answer at his Tryal, nor gives

any in this Paper: so that he tacitly confesses it true, which I think is a clear Evidence that he first drew me into Plots, and I did not draw him into any.

The Assassination not taking effect in *October*, and the intended Insurrection being diverted, I had several discourses with *Ferguson*, who, as Capt. *walcot* told me, had the chief management of it, concerning an intended Assassination after the several manners I mentioned in my Evidence at Capt. *walcot's* Tryal; at some of which I think Capt. *walcot* was present, and I am sure he was made privy to them all by me (he coming often to my Chamber) and by *Ferguson* with whom he was very intimate. He alwayes approved of it, but to do him right here, as I did at his Tryal, he still refus'd to engage Personally in it, for the same reason of it's being dishonourable. About the Nineteenth or Twentieth of *Nov.* he and *Ferguson* went with the late *E.* of *Shaftsbury* into *Holland*, and return'd to *London* about *Asse-wednesday* last. In their absence some discourses were had concerning an Assassination and an Insurrection, but no resolutions were taken by us till their return. Then *Ferguson* undertook the management of an Assassination, and to procure mony to carry it on, and at one meeting told us he had engaged Capt. *walcot* to Act in it, and that the Capt. would meet us for the Future, which he did several times as oft as his Gout would let him; particularly he met us twice or thrice about a fortnight before the Kings last return from *Newmarket*, and then declared he would be one to fight the *Guards*, but would not set upon



upon the Coach; nor out of any scruple of Conscience, (as he falsely insinuates in his Paper, we alledg'd he did,) but out of a scruple of honour; saying it was base to set upon a naked man, but to fight armed men had danger and some bravery in it. After news of the fire at *Newmarket* he met us twice more to consider whether the attempts might be made notwithstanding the Kings sudden return; at both which times he continued to express his resolution, to be one to fight the Guards. I confess he said it might bring a reproach upon his Children, and therefore desired to have his name conceal'd, and did urge the D. of *Monmouth* might revenge the Kings death for his own Vindication; but that objection was taken off by resolving to kill the Duke of *Monmouth*, if he did offer to punish the Actors, and *Ferguson*, not my self, undertook the Duke should not. All the injury I did *Capt. Walcot* in my Evidence was the omission of an expression of his when he declared he would fight the Guards, which had multitude of particulars I then deliver'd, slip't my memory; viz. that he look'd upon the Action to be so lawful and justifiable that he could die in it with a safe Conscience: so far was he from making any scruple of Conscience to act in it.

He owns being at some Meetings where discourses were held concerning asserting our Liberties and Properties, yet mentions not what those discourses were, but would insinuate they were to some other purpose, and calls it his misfortune & unhappiness that he was present at them. Those discourses were only about an Assassination and an Insurrection, and the misfortune was of his own choosing: for (he did not come over from *Ireland* principally for such purposes, I am sure he told me he staid in *England* for them, and 'twas only his Gout hinder'd him from the unhappinels (as he calls it) of being at every Meeting.

'Tis very true I went several times to visit him after his return from *Holland* when he had the Gout, but went alone but twice or thrice, and one of these times he was got abroad. I usually gave him an account of what passed at the Meetings when he was absent, but I did not urge an Assassination at the *Play-house* as he falsely suggests; for after his and *Ferguson's* return from *Holland*, it was agreed to lay aside all Attempts any where but in the return from *Newmarket*, and all the debates were about managing that. What I talk'd to him about the *Play-house*, was before his voyage into *Holland*; and though I believe I did use that expression to him, and afterward to *Rumbold*, [that at the *Play-house* they would die in their Calling] I only repeated it after *Ferguson* who was the first Author of that saying. The Arms he mentioned to be bought by me, were agreed to be bought at a full Meeting; but not till *Easter* and after the Kings return from *Newmarket*; and *Capt. Walcot* was present at that Meeting, and joyn'd in the directions about the nature and sizes of those Arms. The Arms were *Blunderbusses*, *Carbines*, and *Horse-Pistols*, which certainly were very improper, to be used at a *Play-house*, and the King was then going to reside at *Windsor* and *Winchester* for all the Summer, as was reported; and therefore no man in his senses can believe I bought them for that purpose, or could design the effecting it at a *Play-house*, but must

look upon that as a malicious charge upon me, and his pretence to forgive us only, a piece of Hypocritical and customary Cant. There was then some proposal by *Ferguson* to see for an opportunity of an Assassination between *Windsor* and *Hampton-Court*; but all thoughts of that and of the *Play-house* which was then also nam'd, were soon laid aside, and a General Insurrection became the thing only intended. 'Tis true he never saw the Arms because they were never fetch'd from the *Gunsmith* till after the Discovery, but he was very Intimate and familiar with *Rumbold* who was to be the principal Actor in the Assassination, and was at most of the Meetings, and particularly at that when the Arms were agreed to be bought. The men to commit the Assassination were all provided by *Ferguson*, *Rumbold* and *Goodenough*, as *Capt. Walcot* very well knew, and not one to be procured by *Coll. Rumsey* or my self. He thought not fit to urge any thing of this at his Tryal, because he knew he could be so easily answered.

As to the Combination he charges me and *Collonel Rumsey* with to swear his agreement to fight the *Guards*, nothing can be more improbable. We parted at his Lodgings to several places unknown to each other, and after we were in custody were kept close Prisoners without the possibility of sending a Note to, or receiving one from each other or any body else, and we saw not each other till we were called to give Evidence, and I had deliver'd my Evidence to the King (and so I believe *Coll. Rumsey* had his) before *Capt. Walcot* was taken. Neither was there any necessity to contrive such a Charge against him, for his being at any Meetings and Debates which he confesses, was sufficient to make him Guilty of *High Treason*. Had he not been conscious how fully we could charge him, he would not have directed his Son to tamper with *Coll. Rumsey* and me to mince our Evidence against him, as appeared by a Note produced at his Tryal. I am not concerned at the fly denunciation of judgments upon us, which is an usual thing with Men of his persuasion (and it may be he recommended us to the revenge of his Sons or some of his friends) but wish we were no more guilty of prevaricating with God, than I am of Perjury in my Evidence. He hath not thought fit to express in this Paper any sense of his Guilt or Repentance for it; but rather seems to retain his Old Opinion of it's being a lawful thing. He only blames his own Credulity; and advites his friends only against trusting men, not against his crime, and in effect repeats what he said to us at our parting after the discovery, viz. that he believed God would yet deliver the Nation, but he did not like the present Instruments who have undertaken it.

If it shall please the King to spare my Life for my Confession and Repentance, it is a great happiness I can have it for doing no more than my Duty. By his Letter to the *Secretary of State* produced at his Tryal, it appeared he would gladly have sav'd his own so, and desired to have made the D. of *M.* and other Persons of Quality's blood (to use his own Phrase) the Price of his own Life: which is a full Answer to that Popular Objection he makes against our Evidence.

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