

THE  
L I F E  
AND  
Authentick Trial  
OF  
Doctor Henfey,  
FOR  
HIGH-TREASON,  
IN  
Giving Intelligence to the French.

Taken on *Monday*, the 12th of June, at  
The Court of King's Bench,

B E F O R E  
Lord Chief Justice Mansfield,  
Mr. Justice Dennison,  
Mr. Justice Foster, and  
Mr. Justice Wilmot.

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## A C C O U N T

O F

The Treasonable Practices

O F

Dr. Florence Hensey.

**F**LORENCE HENSEY, was born in the County of *Kildare*, from whence he came very young to *England*, and soon after went over to *Holland*, and was educated in the University of *Leyden*; where he studied Phisick. He afterwards travelled through *Switzerland*, from thence to *Italy*, from *Genoa* by Sea to *Lisbon*, and traversed *Spain* in his Way to *France* where he lived some Time. He had acquired in the Course of his Travels a competent Knowledge of the *Italian*, *Portuguese*, *Spanish* and *French* Languages.

During his Travels he supported himself in Quality of a Physician, and came over to *England* in order to settle here in that Character, but his Success does not appear to be equal to his Hopes, as he had but few Patients of Consequence; and yet it so happened, that



that his Prescriptions, few as they were, were instrumental in his Detection.

Having continued a Correspondence since his leaving *Leyden*, with a Fellow Student who resided at *Paris*, and had lately got into the Secretary of State's Office for Foreign Affairs; *Hensley* wrote to him, that he should be glad of an Opportunity of doing him any Service, and executing any Commissions he might have in *London*, to which his Correspondent answer'd, "That he was infinitely obliged to him for the Service he offered, and that if he understood him rightly, their Correspondence might be rendered more advantageous to both, by changing their Topics from Literary to Political." The Doctor in a second Letter commended his Friend's Discernment, adding "That if he could obtain for him, a suitable Recompence, he would endeavour to make his Intelligence of the utmost Importance." By the next Post, he received an Answer containing Instructions and Directions, and an Appointment of 500 Livres, (about 25*l.* Sterling) a Quarter. His Instructions were, to send Lists of all his Majesty's Ships, in and out of Commission, Number of Men; when they sailed, the Commanders Names, from what Port, and their Destination; the State of our Land Forces, where quartered or garrisoned. The earliest Account of Enterprizes against *France*. Plans of fortified Places in *England*, *America*, &c. Which Intelligence was to be directed to some Persons at *Cologne*, the *Hague*, and *Bern* in Switzerland, who were to forward his Letters from those Places to *Paris*.

The Doctor was not much satisfied with his Stipend, he however accepted of it, in Hopes by Merit, to obtain a larger Salary. With this view he endeavour'd to insinuate himself into the Favour of some Clerks



of the Public Offices, in order to an early Acquaintance with naval and military Affairs; but this not answering his End, he passed his Time in such Coffee Houses, as were most likely to furnish Intelligence of the Kind he wanted; and under the Sanction of his character as a Physician remained unsuspected. It is confidently asserted, that in a Letter dated the 29th of *July*, he mentioned the Resolution taken to Attack *Rochefort*, with which General *Mordaunt* and Admiral *Hawke*, were at that Time unacquainted.

He never entered into any political Controversies, but when there was an absolute Necessity of his giving his Opinion, he always decided in favour of *England*. This prevented all Suspicion, and made those he conversed with more open, looking on him of a more philosophic turn of Mind, but no Politician.——He continued his Correspondence from the beginning of 1756, without any material Interruption, writing his Intelligence upon the Margin of a News-Paper; these Letters passed unsuspected. At length his Employers complained of the Insignificance of his Intelligence, threatened to discontinue his Appointment, and to deduct a Guinea for every Letter that did not contain some Advice of Importance. This Letter which was transmitted from *Paris* to the *Hague*, contained nothing *seemingly* but a few wide Lines on trifling complimentary Subjects. The Dr's Answer to this was sent by *Holland* to *Paris*; and appeared upon Examination nothing but an Answer to Compliments; but has since been found by the Copies he kept by him, to contain a Representation of the smallness of his Income, &c.

These wide-wrote Letters had their desired Effect by passing unnoticed some Time at the Post Office; at length, the Secretary suspecting there must be something



thing more contained than these Trifles, held one to the Fire; when many Lines wrote with Lemon Juice, between the black ones, plainly appear'd.— This Letter, which was dated from *Twickenham*, after giving an exact Account of the State of our Affairs the Condition of our Fleet and Army, their Disposition, how many Ships guarded, and how many Troops lined the Coast of *England*, concluded with asserting, *That the only means of preventing the Success of the Expedition to Rochefort, would be to make a powerful Diversion upon the Coast of England; that by thus attacking us in our very Vitals, we might be engaged at home, and so prevented from sending a Number of Troops abraad sufficient to give them any real Annoyance.*

The Discovery of this Letter unravelled the whole Mystery, and henceforward all Letters directed as before were stopped, and those that came from abroad were intercepted; and *Hensley* was soon detected, tho' he was directed to under a fictitious Name, and his Letters appointed to be left at a Coffee House. In short, he was waylaid on *Sunday* the 21st of *August* last, coming from the *Spanish* Minister's Chapel in *Soho Square*, by two of the King's Messengers, who followed him to different Places, then seized him in *St. Martin's Lane*, and conducted him to one of the Messenger's Houses in *Fermyn Street*. His Lodgings in *Arundel Street* were searched and 29 rough draughts of Letters, which had been wrote in Lemon-juice between the black Lines, and those he had received wrote in the same Manner. In some of which were Complaints of the Insignificance of his Intelligence, &u and Instructions how to write with greater safety and dispatch, by directing all important Letters to  
his



his Brother who served as Chaplain and under Secretary to the *Sp.--sb* Minister at the *Hague*.

It appears he gave Intelligence of Ad. *Holbourne's* Destination to *America*, a few Days after the Admiral's Instructions were signed, and was very minute as to the Number of Ships, and Troops on Board, with the Day of their Departure, &c.

His Salary was now raised to 500 Livres a Month instead of per Quarter. But this he did not enjoy long; having received but one Month's Salary before he was taken into Custody. He was committed to *Newgate*, *March 9, 1758*, by the Right Hon. the Earl of *Holderness*; having made no material Defence on his Examination. His Correspondents signed themselves *La Roche*, and *P. de France*.

And the 12th of *June* he was conducted from *Newgate* to the Court of *King's Bench* in order to be tried, when he pleaded *Not Guilty*, and excepted to eleven of the Jury before they came to be sworn.

Upon the Trial the identity of his Hand-writing was the principal Point to be proved, which was done by creditable Witnesses; namely Mr. *M--d--x*, on whom he had several Bills of Exchange, Dr. *W--m* of *Westminster*, who had received Prescriptions from the Doctor; for Patients under his Care, which they had kept on their Files. A Point of Law was urged in Favour of the Prisoner, concerning a flaw in the Indictment, wherein the Letters were said to be wrote in *London*, and that therefore the Indictment could not be laid in *Middlesex*; but it appearing that one of them was dated at *Twickenham*, the Matter was over-ruled.

The Foreman of the Jury having pronounced him Guilty of HIGH-TREASON, he was asked by the Judge, whether he chose any particular Time for



for receiving Sentence, and he desired the *Wednesday* following. Accordingly on *Wednesday, June 14*, he was brought to the Bar, and there received Sentence,  
 “ To be drawn on a Sledge to Tyburn, and there  
 “ to be hung by the Neck, but cut down before dead,  
 “ have his Bowels taken out, and his Heart thrown  
 “ in his Face, and his Body quartered.”

He held his Handkerchief up to his Face while his Sentence was read; and being asked if he had any Thing to offer in his Behalf, he desired a Fortnight to prepare for his End, which the Court granted, and allowed him till the 12th of *July*.

The Doctor after having received his Sentence, applied to the *Spanish* Ambassador, who sollicitated Mercy for him; but this Sollicitation being very coolly received, his next Effort to save his Life was a Representation made to the Ministry of the Discoveries he could make. This had so much Effect that a Council being held a Respite of his Execution for a Fortnight was ordered, which was sent to *Newgate* early on *Wednesday* Morning the 12th of *July*, the Day appointed for his Execution.

This Respite was so unexpected, that several new Scaffolds had been erected at *Tyburn*, to accommodate Persons desirous of seeing the Execution, and a prodigious Number of People, of both Sexes, had seated themselves early in the Morning to make sure of good Places; so that his not being executed occasioned great Quarrels; the Spectators having paid Half a Crown, and two Shillings for their Seats, and insisted upon having their Money returned.

After this he was three Times taken up to the Cockpit at *Whitehall*, and examined for several



veral Hours each Time; and in consequence of his Treachery as well as Treason, many other Persons have been since privately apprehended; but their Crimes are not yet publickly alledged against them, as there are others, attained by him of divers Felonies, which are not at present taken up.

It is now apprehended that the Doctor will not suffer; but it seems he has not received any positive Assurances, being kept in suspence in order to induce him not only to make Discoveries but to provide the Government with proper Evidence for convicting his Confederates.

His last Respite is till the Eight Day of November next.

F I N I S.