

## Father John Huddleston 4/15/1608-9/13/1698

Monk of the Order of St. Benedict; b. at Farington Hall, Lancashire, 15 April, 1608; exact date (../cathen/04636c.htm) of death unknown; buried at London (../cathen/09341a.htm), 13 September, 1698. He was the second son of Joseph Huddleston of Farington Hall, Lancashire, and Hutton John, Cumberland. All that is known of his youth is contained in his statement made on applying for admission to the English College, Rome (../cathen/05472b.htm), in 1632. This document is given in full in Foley's (../cathen/16041a.htm) "Records of the English Province S.J.", but Foley (../cathen/16041a.htm), following Dr. Oliver, confuses Dom John Huddleston alias Sandford, O.S.B., with Father John Stafford, S.J., and has accordingly largely reconstructed the Huddleston pedigree to fit in a "Fr. John Huddleston alias Sandford S.J." who never existed; for the true (../cathen/15073a.htm) pedigree see Jackson, "Papers and Pedigrees relating to Cumberland and Westmoreland" (2 vols., Kendal, 1892). In his statement Father Huddleston mentions that he was educated (../cathen/05295b.htm) at the school (../cathen/13554b.htm) of Great Blencow, near Hutton John, until his fifteenth year. In his twentieth year he was sent to St. Omer's (../cathen/13365c.htm) College, and on 17 October, 1632, entered the English College at Rome (../cathen/13164a.htm). It has been stated that he served for some time in the royalist army as a volunteer; in reality it was another John, his second cousin, the son of Ferdinando Huddleston of Millom Castle, Cumberland, who served under King Charles. On 22 March, 1637, Dom John was ordained (../cathen/11279a.htm) priest (../cathen/12406a.htm) in St. John Lateran's, and left Rome (../cathen/13164a.htm) for England (../cathen/05445a.htm) on 28 March, 1637. Dom John was ordained priest in St. John Lateran's, and left Rome for England on 28 March, 1639. Dodd declares that he was educated and ordained priest at Douai College, Flanders; but his name does not appear in the "Douay Diaries". There is a tradition that on arriving in England he acted as chaplain at Grove House, Wensleydale, Yorkshire (Barker, "Three Days of Wensleydale", 96). In 1651 he was residing at Moseley, Staffordshire, as chaplain to the Whitgreave family. After the defeat at Worcester on 3 September, 1651, Charles II was conducted by Colonel Gyfford to Whiteladies, where he was sheltered by the Penderell family, and it was while seeking for some safer hiding place for the king that John Penderell

happened to meet Father Huddleston. Accordingly Charles was disguised as a peasant and removed to Moseley during the night of Sunday, 7 September. To guard against surprise Huddleston was constantly in attendance on the king; his three pupils were stationed as sentinels at upper windows and Thomas Whitgreave patrolled the garden. On Tuesday, 9 September, Cromwell's soldiers came to search the house. The king and Huddleston were hurriedly shut away in the priest's hiding place, and the troops, after first seizing Whitgreave as a fugitive cavalier from Worcester, were eventually convinced that he had not left the house for some weeks and were persuaded to depart without searching the mansion. That night the king left for Bentley, after promising to befriend Huddleston when restored to his throne. Some time after this Huddleston joined the Benedictines of the Spanish Congregation, being professed while on the mission in England. This event took place before 1661, in which year he was elected to the titular dignity of cathedral prior of Worcester by the General Chapter of the English Benedictines held at Douai. In the next general chapter, held also at Douai, in 1666, he acted as secretary. At the Restoration in 1660, Huddleston was invited to live at Somerset House, London, under the protection of the Queen Dowager, Henrietta Maria, shortly after whose death in 1669 he was appointed chaplain to Queen Catherine, with a salary of 100 pounds a year besides a pension of like amount. In 1671, with Dom Vincent Sadler, O.S.B., he visited Oxford, where he made the acquaintance of the eminent antiquary Anthony à Wood. During the disturbances produced by Titus Oates's pretended revelations the House of Lords, by a vote on 7 December, 1678, ordered that Huddleston, Thomas Whitgreave, the brothers Penderell, and others instrumental in the preservation of his Majesty's person after the battle of Worcester, should for their said service live as freely as any of the king's Protestant subjects, without being liable to the penalties of any of the laws relating to Popish recusants. Barillon and Burnet state that Huddleston was exempted by name from all Acts of Parliament against priests, but this is a mistake, though such an exemption is found in a bill drafted at this period, which, however, never became law.

When Charles II lay dying "upon Thursday the fifth of February, 1684-5, between 7 and 8 o'clock in the evening" the Duke of York brought Huddleston to his bedside, saying, "Sire, this good man once saved your life. He now comes to save your soul." Charles received him gladly, declaring that he wished to die in the faith and communion of the Holy Roman Catholic Church. Huddleston then heard the King's confession, reconciled him to the Church and absolved him, afterwards administering Extreme Unction and the Viaticum. On the accession of James II, Huddleston continued to reside with the Queen Dowager at Somerset House. Shortly before his death his mind failed and he was placed in the charge of "the Popish Lord Feversham", one of the few persons present at Charles II's reconciliation to the Church, who managed his affairs as trustee. To this arrangement is probably due the unusual circumstance that the probate of his will was obtained the day before his funeral. He was buried in the churchyard of St. Mary le Strand (Parish Register, manuscript). Snow's "Necrology of the English Benedictines" gives 22 September as the date of his death, but this is obviously wrong. Numerous contemporary writers, including Anthony à Wood and Samuel Pepys, mention Huddleston with respect

and there seems no reason for Macauley's statement that he was ignorant and illiterate. He published "A short and Plain Way to the Faith and Church" (London, 1688), a little treatise written by his uncle Richard Huddleston, O.S.B., and read by Charles II in manuscript while hiding at Moseley. The volume also contains the famous "Two papers written by the late King Charles II", found in his closet after his decease, and "A briefe account of Particulars occurring at the happy Death of our late Sovereign Lord King Charles II". At the end, under a separate title page, is "A summary of Occurrences Relating to the Miraculous Preservation of our Late Sovereign Lord King Charles II after the Defeat of his Army at Worcester in the Year 1651. Faithfully taken from the express testimony of those two worthy Roman Catholics, Thomas Whitgreave. . .Esq., and Mr. John Huddleston, Priest of the Order of St. Bennet". The whole work was reprinted by Dolman (London, 1844) as vol. II of the "English Catholic Library" edited by Canon Tiernay, and again later (London, 1850). The account of the death- bed of Charles II is also reprinted in the "State Tracts" (London, 1692-3); its truth in every detail is confirmed by the rare contemporary broadside "A true Relation of the late King's death, by P(ere) M(ansuete) A C(apuchin) F(riar), Chaplain to the Duke".

Several portraits of Huddleston exist; the best, by Houseman, 1685, "aetatis suae anno 78", is still preserved at Hutton John; another at Sawston Hall, Cambridgeshire, was engraved for the "Laity's Directory" of 1816. Father Huddleston seems to have spelled his name with a single or double "d" indiscriminately, and at times to have used the name "Denys" (Dionysius) after John, having presumably adopted it on receiving the Benedictine habit.

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