

= Thomas Bates =

Thomas Bates (1567 ? 30 January 1606) was a member of the group of provincial English Catholics who planned the failed Gunpowder Plot of 1605 .

Bates was born at Lapworth in Warwickshire , and became a retainer to Robert Catesby , who from 1604 planned to kill King James I by blowing up the House of Lords with gunpowder , and inciting a popular revolt during which a Catholic monarch would be restored to the English throne . Bates was invited to join the conspiracy after he accidentally became aware of it . As he rode with Catesby to prepare for the group 's planned uprising on 5 November 1605 , Guy Fawkes was found guarding the gunpowder stored under the House of Lords and arrested . Bates subsequently accompanied Catesby and his small group of fugitives to Holbeche House in Staffordshire , but left shortly before his master was killed there by government forces on 8 November . He was subsequently captured and taken to London .

Bates was the only member of the group to implicate the Jesuits in the conspiracy , but may have done so only to alleviate his punishment . He retracted his statement when it became clear he was to be executed . Three days after his trial on 27 January 1606 , he was hanged , drawn and quartered .

= = Biography = =

= = = Servant = = =

Bates was born at Lapworth in Warwickshire , and was married to Martha Bates . He was employed as a retainer to Sir Robert Catesby 's family , and with his wife lived in a cottage on the Catesby family estate . He was allowed his own servant , as well as his own armour . Bates was considered a loyal and devoted servant to Catesby .

Bates was the seventh man to be enlisted into what became known as the Gunpowder Plot , a scheme devised early in 1604 by Catesby to kill King James I by blowing up the House of Lords with gunpowder , and inciting a popular revolt during which a Catholic monarch would be restored to the English throne . Bates 's involvement in the plot began when he became suspicious of Catesby 's movements . In December 1604 he was invited to his master 's lodgings at Puddle Wharf in London , and questioned there by Thomas Wintour and Catesby , who had noted his suspicion . Bates told them that he thought that they " intended some dangerous matter about the Parliament House , because he had been sent to get a lodging near unto that place . " At that point the two men let Bates in on the secret .

In the same month it was announced that because of the plague , the re @-@ opening of Parliament would not be in February , but rather in October . During this delay the conspirators may have dug a tunnel beneath Parliament , although no evidence for its existence has ever been found . The plotters ultimately stored their gunpowder in the undercroft directly beneath the House of Lords . In July 1605 the opening of Parliament was again delayed , this time until Tuesday 5 November . Catesby had funded most of the plot , but by August 1605 he was running out of money . During a secret meeting at Bath in August , at which he , Percy and Thomas Wintour were present , the plotters decided that " the company being yet but few " he was to be allowed to " call in whom he thought best " . Bates was uncomfortable with the idea , and was the only member of the conspiracy to object . He was overruled however , and Catesby soon enlisted Ambrose Rookwood , Francis Tresham and Everard Digby .

= = = Failure = = =

The last details of the plot were finalised in October . Guy Fawkes would light the fuse and then escape across the Thames , while simultaneously a revolt in the Midlands would help to ensure the capture of Princess Elizabeth . Late on Monday 4 November , Bates set out with Catesby and John

Wright for the planned revolt . The following day while at Dunstable re @-@ shoeing Catesby 's horse , they were met by Rookwood , who delivered the devastating news that Fawkes had been discovered guarding the gunpowder and arrested . As those conspirators still in London fled the city , the group soon integrated Christopher Wright and Thomas Percy . They rode toward Dunchurch , on horses sent from Everard Digby by prearrangement . They met Robert Wintour (brother to Thomas) at Ashby St Ledgers , and Digby at Dunchurch . On 6 November they stole horses from Warwick Castle , and collected stored weapons from Norbrook , near Stratford @-@ upon @-@ Avon . As they continued toward Huddington , and as the government issued a proclamation for the fugitives ' arrest (Catesby 's servant was listed as Robert Ashfield , probably a mistake for Bates) , Catesby ordered Bates to deliver a letter to Father Garnet at Coughton Court , asking for his support . Bates 's news proved momentous for the Jesuits ; he overheard Tesimond exclaim " we are all utterly undone " . Garnet 's reply to Catesby begged them to stop their " wicked actions " , and to listen to the pope 's teachings .

= = = Capture = = =

By the time the fugitives and their supporters arrived at Holbeche House on the border of Staffordshire , they were exhausted . Drenched from the rain , they spread out some of the now @-@ soaked gunpowder in front of the fire , to dry out . A spark from the fire landed on the powder and the resultant flames engulfed Catesby , Rookwood , Grant , and another man . At some point between then and the arrival of the Sheriff of Worcester and his men , Bates left the house , possibly with his son and Digby . If he was with the latter , he was captured later the same day and taken to London . Catesby was killed early that day along with Percy , John Wright and his brother Christopher .

= = = Imprisonment and execution = = =

While imprisoned , on 4 December Bates claimed that Father Oswald Tesimond knew of the plot . In the opinion of author Antonia Fraser however , Bates 's evidence is suspect ; he was of a lower class than his co @-@ conspirators , and could therefore reasonably have assumed he was at more risk of being tortured than the others . Perhaps trying to curry favour with his interrogators , he was the only conspirator to implicate the Jesuits . He later retracted his confession when it became clear that he was to be executed .

Bates was charged with high treason , and tried at Westminster Hall on Monday 27 January 1606 , alongside seven of his fellow conspirators . He arrived at the hall separately from the others ; prisons operated on a class @-@ based system and so he was kept at the Gatehouse Prison , rather than the Tower . Only Digby pleaded not guilty . On the morning of 30 January 1606 therefore , Bates was tied to a wattled hurdle and dragged by horse along the street , from the Gatehouse Prison to the western end of St Paul 's Churchyard . There he was present as first Digby , then Robert Wintour , and then Grant , were hanged , drawn and quartered . Bates was the last to ascend the scaffold that day , and met a similarly gruesome end . The following day the four remaining conspirators were executed in the same manner .