



# THE LAST WORDS & DYING SPEECHES OF JOHN BLY & CHARLES ROSE;

Who were EXECUTED at LENOX, in the COUNTY of BERKSHIRE, and COMMONWEALTH of MASSACHUSETTS, on THURSDAY, the sixth Day of DECEMBER, in the YEAR of our LORD One Thousand seven Hundred and eighty Seven, for BURGLARY.

To the good People of MASSACHUSETTS, more especially to DANIEL SHAYS, and other Officers of the Militia, and the Selectmen of Towns who have been instrumental in raising the Opposition to the Government of this Commonwealth:

**K**NOW YE, That I, JOHN BLY, an unfortunate young man, hardly arrived at the age of 22 years, now under sentence of Death, and on the morrow to be executed for the crime of ROBBERY, do utter and publish these as my LAST WORDS and DYING SPEECH.

I was born in Voluntown, in Connecticut, in a Christian family; at the age of fifteen, I went to learn the trade of a taylor, with one William Tew, of Rhode-Island. After my apprenticeship was ended, I returned to my father's house, and in the year 1785 came into this State.—When the insurrection began I took an active part against the Government, as a soldier.—When the troops under General LINCOLN came into the country, I fled to the State of New-York, remained there until Hamilton made the road into this country; there I joined him, was at Stockbridge, and in that action I was taken, and confined a prisoner until the rising of the Supreme Judicial Court in March last, when I was discharged, the Jury not having found a bill against me.—A few days after, hearing that evidence was like to be found against me, I fled again to York State.—On the 4th of May, as I was returning, I was taken up at Stockbridge, and confined in Barrington gaol, but the next day, unhappily for me as it has turned out, I was set at liberty.—Soon after, hearing great stories that Shays was coming down, I took orders to raise men to join him. This being found out, I again fled for safety; but being encouraged by some of our principal men) whose names I wish not to mention, except one, hoping that God may forgive them, as I do, and that they may yet become good members of the State) to go with a small party to get arms from the Government-men. The first party I went with, was to West-Stockbridge, where we went to Mr. Fowler's, to Mr. Collins's, to Mr. Baldwin's, and to Mr. French's.—A few days after, we went to Mr. Kingsley's, in Becket, from whom we took fourteen guns—one of the party took a watch.—I then left the State, with design to find out whether Shays was going to do any thing, or not. Finding that he was not, I went and found Dunham, who wanted me to join him and others, to go to Sheffield, to get from Mr. Kellogg a suit of clothes which he had got from Dunham.—Dunham likewise told us, that the Rev. Mr. Steele had got a suit of his clothes, to pay for damages done his orchard, by girdling his trees, which he supposed Dunham had done.—I joined Dunham, and went with the party to Mr. Kellogg's and Mr. Steele's.—A few days after, I heard of the pardon, supposed myself within it, and returned home, where I was taken up, in about four weeks, and carried to Barrington, and confined in gaol until the time of my being brought up to Lenox for trial.—Having been tried for a crime of which I was not guilty, though I might have been convicted of robbing both Mr. Kellogg and Mr. Steele, as well as Mr. Kingsley, Mr. Fowler, and others; yet I was found guilty of robbing Capt. Brooks, of Lanesborough, on his own oath, and that of his family—Capt. Brooks has the reputation of an honest man; I have no malice against

him, but believe that he swore what he thought was true, though I know he was under a mistake as to my person.

I, as a dying man, declare, that Robert M. Clannan, of West-Stockbridge, was the principal person who induced me to go to that place with the party; although, after he had given evidence against me to the Grand Jury, he went to the place where I was confined, and declared that he had never known me.

I wish that Capt. Brooks may be informed, that one Martin Downing, of Sheffield, was the person who was with the party at his house, for whom Mr. Brooks has mistaken me—I at that time was not in the State of Massachusetts, and never was at Lanesborough in my life, to my knowledge.

Since my confinement in gaol, I have ever conducted as if I never was to be executed. The many pardons that have since been granted, induced me to suppose that many others vainly encouraged me in, that we should never be executed. But as it seems Rose and myself are to fall victims to our own folly, rashness, and presumption, in believing your representations as to the affairs of the government, and the power of Shays? we hope and trust the mercy of an all-gracious GOD may be extended to us, dying men. We sincerely wish to die in charity with all the world, and request the prayers of all good men.—Our fate is a loud and solemn lesson to you who have excited the people to rise against the Government. We lay not our blood at your doors; but it behoves you well to consider and observe the shameful death that awaits our following your counsels, and crediting your accounts.—

Remember, we beseech you, that at the final rendering of judgment, you cannot procure your own pardon, by electing men like yourselves to legislate for you.—In the High Court of Heaven, the hope of the wicked shall fail them.—pardons are not there granted to unrepenting sinners.—Advert to those things—live peaceably with all men—be not too jealous of your Rulers—remember that Government is absolutely necessary to restrain the corrupt passions of men—obey your Honest Governors—be not allured by designing men—pay your honest debts and your reasonable taxes—use your utmost endeavours to give peace to your divided, distracted country—and remember, that if you finish with the suit of iniquity, your hearts shall not endure, nor your hands be strong, when the LORD your GOD shall bring you in to judgment.

Merciful GOD! have mercy on us, dying men!—Forgive us all our trespasses—pardon all our sins—and look on us, miserable offenders, with an eye of pity, through the merits of thy dear SON, who promised abetting to the dying 1 thief.

JOHN BLY,  
CHARLES ROSE.

LENOX, Dec. 5, 1787.  
Signed by the said John and Charles, before us,  
CALEB HYDE,  
JOSEPH PEIRCE.