

The Gunpowder Plot

The Gunpowder Plot

The Gunpowder Plot was a plan to blow up the king of England, Members of Parliament and many important people that ran the country at that time.

How the Plan Came to Be

In 1604, England was ruled by King James I. He was not a Catholic and treated Catholics badly. He made new laws against Catholic people, which made them angry.

A Catholic man called Robert Catesby met with two other men in London. Catesby told them he had an idea to get rid of the king and some other important people in parliament.

Gathering the Plotters

One of the plotters, who was called Thomas Wintour, asked Spain if they could help with the plan but they refused.



He soon met Guy Fawkes. Fawkes was an explosives expert. He was a Catholic, who also hated the king. He agreed to help so the two men sailed back to England together.

That night, Wintour and Fawkes met with Catesby and two other men in the Duck and Drake pub in London. They talked about their plot.

Planning

Thomas Percy rented a vault, which was like a cellar, right under the House of Lords. At night, Guy Fawkes hid the barrels of gunpowder in the vault.

The Anonymous Letter

Lord Monteagle was given an anonymous letter, warning him not to go to the opening of Parliament on the 5th November, 1605.

The king was shown the letter and he ordered an investigation. The House of Lords was searched and there in the vault was Guy Fawkes with 36 barrels of gunpowder!

anonymous - The person who wrote the letter did not put their name on it.

The End of the Plot

Most of the other plotters escaped to the Midlands. Gatesby, Percy and the Wright brothers were killed in a gunfight. The rest were caught and taken to the Tower of London. They were later executed.

Fawkes was arrested. He was tortured until he told the soldiers everything about the plot. This included the names of the other men involved. Fawkes was also then executed.



The Gunpowder Plot Questions

1. In your own words, explain what the Gunpowder Plot was aiming to achieve.

2. Why did the Catholics not like King James I? Explain your answer.

3. When did Robert Catesby first tell others about his idea?

4. What does 'replant the Catholic faith' mean?

5. Why did the Spanish not agree to help with the plot?

6. Why do you think Catesby's men 'swore an oath to secrecy'?

7. How did the practical arrangements of the plan change?

8. Why do you think the barrels of gunpowder were hidden 'under the cover of darkness'?

9. Why do you think the letter to Lord Monteagle was sent anonymously?

10. Explain in your own words, why you think Catesby would not be persuaded to give up on his plan.

11. What made Guy Fawkes look guilty when he was found in the vault?

12. Why do you think that Fawkes did not confess straight away?
