

What is Guy Fawkes Day?

It is the anniversary of the discovery of the Gunpowder Plot. on Nov. 5. 1605, still celebrated in England & her colonies.

The conspirators in the plot were all English Catholics of gentle lineage and good position who bloodied their delicate fingers to no end.

Hence with a natural and pardonable injustice the entire Catholic party was held responsible for their acts, and the 5<sup>th</sup> of Nov. has been utilized for a Protestant and Anti-Catholic demonstration, borrowing many features from the celebration of Queen Elizabeth's Day.

When James 6<sup>th</sup> of Scotland became James 1<sup>st</sup> of England, the Catholics in the latter country had cherished hopes that the penalties imposed against their religion by Queen Elizabeth would be remitted or minimized. And indeed, the new monarch began his reign in a mild & tolerant spirit,

But he found Parliament arrayed against him,  
His pecuniary necessities obliged him to court  
the good-will of the Commons by putting  
afresh into execution the penal laws against  
Papists. The most odious severities  
were revived. The fanaticism of persecution  
bred the fanaticism of retaliation. Hence,  
the Gunpowder Plot, for blowing up at once  
the King, Lords & Commons, originated by  
Robert Catesby, a Catholic Gentleman of  
good family, who, doubly an apostate, had  
found himself back in the Church of his  
birth, after once being a Protestant convert,  
and had drawn, Thomas Winter, Guido or Guy  
Fawkes and several others. In a se-  
cluded house in Lambeth, oaths of secrecy  
were taken and the communion was ad-  
ministered by a Jesuit named Father Gerard,  
who however, does not appear to have been  
taken into the plot. The next step

was to hire a house near the building where Parliament formerly met, with the view of blowing the Legislature into the air by carrying a mine through the wall. But when they came to pierce the walls of the Parliament House they found their task beyond their powers, especially as all were gentlemen unused to manual labor.

One day while at work they heard a rumbling noise over their heads. Fear seized them that they had been discovered. Guy Fawkes going out to inquire, returned with the information that the disturbance had been caused by a coal dealer, who was moving out from a cellar he had rented below the House of Lords. Fawkes with the conspirators saw their opportunity. Hiring the cellar from the outgoing dealer, they placed therein thirty-six barrels of gunpowder. These they covered up with coal, and

faggots of wood. By May 1605 the preparations were all completed. The conspirators separated until the time to strike had arrived.

This was finally determined to be the 5<sup>th</sup> of Nov. when the King in person was to open Parliament.

