

November 5, 1605 – A Night To Remember

By *Alexander Baron* - Nov 5, 2015



Guy Fawkes Night or Bonfire Night and Firework Night, is an annual commemoration observed on 5th November

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Four hundred and ten years ago today, the only man ever to enter Parliament with honest intentions nearly pulled off the crime of the century. Tonight, fireworks will light up the sky, and bonfires will burn all across England. Atop many of these bonfires will be an effigy of that man, who also gave the English language a new verb – to guy. Guy Fawkes, or Guido Fawkes as he called himself, was arrested in the cellar underneath the Palace of Westminster, the English Parliament, in the small hours of November 5. He had in his possession 36 barrels of gunpowder.



Illustration of Guy Fawkes, published in William Harrison Ainsworth's 1840 novel

The building he and his fellow conspirators had intended to blow up was not the fabulous one that exists today but a very much smaller one; it was the House of Lords, around 21 metres by 9, and has long since been demolished. Where it once stood there is now a car park! And the *cellar* was actually the ground floor of the building, something that was known as an undercroft. The plot took over 18 months to come to fruition, and had it succeeded, it would have changed the course of history.

In 2005, Richard Hammond presented a **special programme** for the 4th Centenary of the Gunpowder Plot which involved building a replica of the actual building in Cumbria and blowing it up with 36 barrels of gunpowder; the result was impressive.

What happened to Mr Fawkes and his co-conspirators was not impressive but terrible; he was tortured until he implicated five others in the plot. Ringleader Robert Catesby was shot dead on November 8; Fawkes and seven others were put to death in gruesome fashion on January 31, 1606, he was the last to die.

There is perhaps a lesson here for us today, not that traitors and mass murderers should be put to death, but that the *tolerance* which has been foisted on us by political

correctness should be subject to drastic rethinking. The root cause of the **Gunpowder Plot** was the persecution of Catholics by the state. Today, *racists*, *homophobes*, even anti-war protesters are subjected not to violence but to unwarranted harassment and at times to arbitrary prosecution by the police and legal authorities, yet the main cause of political violence in this country does not come from these sources, and never has.

Terrorism may always be unjustified, but when people believe they have nothing to lose, when their religion, their freedoms, their livelihoods, their culture, even their national identity is under threat, it is not difficult to understand why they should resort to it.

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