The Gunpowder Plot

On 4th November 1605, a dangerous plot (known as 'The Gunpowder Plot') was stopped in its tracks. A group of like-minded individuals planned to ignite over 30 barrels of gunpowder beneath the House of Lords. If the plot hadn't been stopped, many people (including The King of England) would have been caught in the explosion.

Plotting

In 1605, King James I was the ruler of England. For many years, Catholics had been poorly treated and were not allowed to worship freely. Many Catholics hoped that the new King would treat them more fairly. However, this was not the case and many people were unhappy.

It is thought that, early in 1605, Robert Catesby met with a group of people and suggested a dangerous plot. He was worried that the Catholic faith was going to be wiped out and suggested a plan to get rid of the people that he believed were to blame.

The Plot

On 5th November 1605, the House of Lords was due to host the State Opening of Parliament. This ceremony included The King and other important lawmakers.

The plan was for Guy Fawkes to ignite a large amount of gunpowder beneath the House of Lords on 5th November. Before the State Opening of Parliament, the group hired a vault that was directly beneath the House of Lords. By the beginning of November, it is thought that 36 barrels of gunpowder had been hidden underneath piles of coal and firewood in the vault.

On the evening of 4th November 1605, Guy Fawkes waited amongst the barrels of gunpowder for the perfect time to light the fuse and escape.

The Letter

On 26th October 1605, Lord Monteagle (who was going to be at the House of Lords) received an **anonymous** letter. The letter told Lord Monteagle not to go to the House of Lords on 5th November. Immediately, Lord Monteagle took the letter to King James I who ordered guards to investigate.

When the guards searched the Palace of Westminster (the home of the House of Lords), they discovered Guy Fawkes hiding amongst barrels of gunpowder. Inside his pocket, the guards found matches and a watch.

After being captured by the guards, Guy Fawkes was taken to the Tower of London. He was imprisoned for three days and eventually gave the names of others who had been involved in the plot. The **conspirators** were all found guilty of **treason** and were punished.

Bonfire Night

After the Gunpowder Plot had been stopped, King James I said that 5th November each year would be a day of thanksgiving. He asked people to light bonfires to remember what could have happened. Over 400 years later, many people in Britain still choose to light bonfires and enjoy fireworks on 5th November.

Glossary

anonymous: Someone who is not known.

conspirators: People who are involved in a secret plan.

treason: A crime of doing something that could endanger your country.

Questions

1. According to the text, what was due to happen on 5ᵗʰ November 1605? Tick one.

   ○ The King was going to visit Robert Catesby.
   ○ The House of Lords was going to host the State Opening of Parliament.
   ○ Guy Fawkes was going to meet with Robert Catesby.
   ○ Lord Monteagle was going to give a letter to The King.

2. Draw **four** lines and match each subheading with the summary of its contents.

Plotting		Information about how the Gunpowder plot is remembered today.
The Plot		Information about how the plot was uncovered.
The Letter		Information about the plan for the Gunpowder Plot.
Bonfire Night		Information about why the Gunpowder Plot was planned.

3. How many barrels of gunpowder were thought to have been hidden in the vault by the beginning of November?

   _____

4. What **two** things were found in Guy Fawkes's pockets?

   • _____

   • _____

5. **He was imprisoned for three days and eventually gave the names of others who had been involved in the plot.**

   What does the word 'imprisoned' mean in this sentence?

   _____

6. Using 25 words or fewer, summarise what you have learnt from the section titled **The Letter**.

   _____

   _____

   _____

7. Explain how the layout of the text helps you to understand the information.

   _____

   _____

   _____

8. Compare Robert Catesby and Guy Fawkes. How are they similar?

   _____

   _____

   _____