

Still remembering November 5

This year sees the 400th anniversary of the Gunpowder Plot, remembered each year in Britain on November 5, when people gather around bonfires, watch fireworks and burn effigies of "Guys" to mark celebrations ordered in 1605 by King James after Guy Fawkes failed to blow up Parliament

ORIGINS

► **1533:** English king **Henry VIII** splits with Catholic Church by divorcing **Catherine of Aragon**, marrying **Anne Boleyn**, and making himself head of Church of England

► **1553:** New queen, "**Bloody**" **Mary I**, attempts to restore Catholicism to England through savage persecution of Protestants

► **1558:** **Elizabeth I** ascends throne and sets about undoing Mary's work by harsh repression of Catholics

► **1587-88:** Defeat of **Spanish Armada** and execution of Elizabeth's rival, **Mary Queen of Scots**, are setbacks to Catholic cause

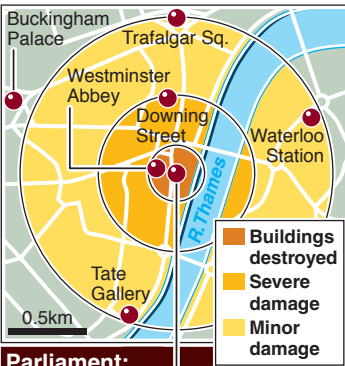
► **1603:** Accession of **James I** to English throne. Hopes for greater religious tolerance quickly dashed by renewed Catholic persecution

► **1604:** Group of 13 Catholic conspirators, including explosives expert **Guy Fawkes** and led by **Robert Catesby**, hatch plot to blow up Houses of Parliament and King James

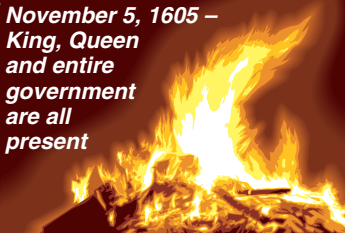


If he had succeeded, Guy Fawkes would have devastated the entire Westminster area of London

Effect on present-day London



**Parliament:
November 5, 1605 –
King, Queen
and entire
government
are all
present**



THE PLOT

► **1605, March:** Plotters rent cellar directly beneath Parliament building and begin moving in 36 barrels (2,500kg) of gunpowder

► **October 26:** **Lord Monteagle** alerts authorities after receiving anonymous letter warning him to avoid **State Opening of Parliament** on November 5

► **November 5:** Fawkes, preparing to light fuse, is arrested when early morning search discovers gunpowder in cellar

► **November 8:** Fawkes is tortured to reveal names of co-conspirators. After fleeing London, remaining plotters are killed or captured in Midlands

► **1606, Jan. 30-31:** Tried and sentenced to death for treason, eight surviving plotters, including Fawkes, are hung, drawn and quartered

► **Aftermath:** Rather than sparking a Catholic revolt, the plot backfired spectacularly. Not until 1829 were Catholics granted equal civil rights