

The Story Behind Bonfire Night

Imagine a time in England when people were punished for being Catholic, according to the Manchester and Lancashire Family History Society. Some Catholics were very upset with this and with King James I. A group of them came up with a secret plan, called the Gunpowder Plot.

Their plan was to blow up the Houses of Parliament, a very important building in London where the King and his government met. They hoped that by doing this, they could change how things were in England and have a Catholic ruler who treated everyone more fairly.

One of the men involved, Guy Fawkes, was given the job of hiding lots of barrels of gunpowder in the cellar under the Houses of Parliament. He was going to set them off when the King and his government were all inside.

But the King found out about the plan. A letter was sent to someone who worked in Parliament, warning them to stay away on November 5th. The King's guards searched the cellars and found Guy Fawkes hiding there with the gunpowder. He was arrested before he could light the fuse.

Because the plot was stopped and the King was safe, people were allowed to light big bonfires to celebrate. That's why every November 5th, we still remember the failed Gunpowder Plot by lighting bonfires and enjoying fireworks. Sometimes people even burn a dummy, or a fake person, on the bonfire called a "Guy," to represent Guy Fawkes.

