

Myths, Murders and Mysteries

‘Still to be Plotting...’

‘But ’tis the talent of the English nation
Still to be plotting some reformation’

John Dryden (1631 - 1700)



The Gunpowder Plot at Gayhurst Manor

Early on November 5th 1605 Guy Fawkes, a fanatical Catholic, was arrested in a cellar underneath the Houses of Parliament. With him were found thirty-six barrels of gunpowder, and the necessary fuses - all to blow up King James I, his wife, his heirs and his Parliament. Some plotting had been with Sir Everard Digby at Gayhurst Manor, a fellow Catholic who had to worship in concealed attic and underground chambers which could still be seen at Gayhurst in the 19th century. Sir Everard put up £1500 to help fund the plot. He was arrested, and on January 30th 1606 was hanged, drawn and quartered.

Legend has it that as the executioner cut out his heart, held it up and shouted out ‘Here is the heart of a traitor!’, Digby called out ‘Thou liest!’

The Plotting Fairies of Bow Brickhill

In the Brickhill Woods were said to be many fairies, with ghosts and witches in Gipsy Lane...

*‘Did you e’er see those little witches that went about the fields?’
‘No, I niver did, but begoy! I a sin they little people as dances about in the moonlight...’*

‘My grandfather, Thomas Riley Kent, would tell me fairy stories about Bow Brickhill. In one of them, the parson wanted to build the church on the green and they started to build. However the fairies moved every stone put down in daytime to the top of the hill during the night. I’ve always felt that such stories may hint at a dispute that took place many years ago. Fairies were old pagan gods.’ **George Munday (born 1914).**

Sources: Lipscombe’s ‘History and Antiquities of the County of Buckingham’
<http://www.mkheritage.co.uk/sga/gayhurst/gayhurst-owners.html>;
‘Bow Brickhill - A Brief History of the Village and the Church’ by Rev R Conyers Morrell