Spain sent armada after Welsh spy tip from Hugh Owen

Isambard Wilkinson, Madrid

Friday February 19 2021, 12.01am, The Times



Hugh Owen influenced the sending of at least one armada against England between 1585 and 1604 ALAMY

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A Welsh spymaster and his network of Elizabethan Catholics used court moles to give Spain intelligence about England's forces and played a hand in an attempted invasion.

Hugh Owen influenced the sending of at <u>least</u> one armada against England and handed Philip II of Spain copies of government documents, according to a study by Jonathan Roche, of the

University of Nottingham. Roche's work, based on Owen's reports in Spanish archives, suggests that the espionage had an impact on Spanish military strategy during the Anglo-Spanish War from 1585 to 1604. Owen's network included Jesuits and a double agent said to have worked for the Earl of Essex.

"We remember Elizabethan Catholics as martyrs, executed brutally for practising their faith, or as terrorists hell-bent on reestablishing the Catholic church in England through extreme acts such as the Gunpowder Plot, but the discovery of this English Catholic spy network and the intelligence it sent to Spain highlights a far more subtle and sophisticated method through which English Catholics sought to realise their dream," Roche said.



Philip II's third armada, inspired by Hugh Owen, came within miles of Cornwall in 1597 but was thwarted by the weather ALAMY

In 1597 Owen, who co-ordinated his network

from Brussels where he had fled after his part in the Ridolfi Plot to assassinate Elizabeth I, told Spain that Essex had taken most of the frontline fleet to the Azores to intercept a treasure fleet, leaving England undefended.

His report led to the immediate deployment of the third Spanish Armada, which failed only because of storms off the Scilly Isles. "The Armada of 1597 came within miles of landing in Cornwall and, if it weren't for a storm, who knows what might have happened?" Roche said.

Papers that may have pointed to his involvement in the first armada, of 1588, have been lost. In 1605 London accused Owen of involvement in the Gunpowder Plot and demanded his extradition from the Spanish Netherlands. He was arrested but his Spanish protectors freed him. He died in exile in Rome in his eighties.



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Add to the conversation...



June Kirk 6 MINUTES AGO

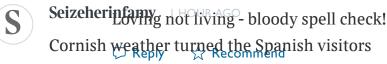
Living the comments today! Let's thank whoever you pray to, that they didn't succeed. Instead of renaissance and our scientific excellence to come, we'd have had the Inquisition. Don't you just love Henry VIII yeah I know armada was later, before you reply!

☆ Recommend ☐ Report □ Reply



June Kirk

6 MINUTES AGO | ★ June Kirk



back! ☐ Report

□ Reply

2 A Recommend

☐ Report



Nick Ratcliffe

Still does.





Recommend

Paul C Report

Some funny comments today. Worth a read.

□ Reply



☐ Report



Hev I HOUR AGO

A spy ring against England based in Brussels......Plus ca change !!!

□ Reply





Pedlar I HOUR AGO

I had no idea there had been a third armada. Nor had I any idea that, presumably, that means there was a second? Must do a bit of googling...

□ Reply

12 ☆ Recommend

☐ Report



Thomas Young

Is your first name Dominic?



David Gard 2 HOURS AGO Reply ☆ Recommend

I imagin that 16th century Catholic's would have been, if transposed to the 21st century, avid Remainer's.

□ Reply

13 ☆ Recommend

☐ Report



Pointless comment

□ Reply 7 ☆ Recommend

☐ Report

2Twin 2 HOURS AGO | ← Maddie

Not really, it was humorous. Possibly accurate too!

□ Reply 3 ☆ Recommend



Tanjore 2 HOURS AGO | ♠ David Gard

No, the 16th century catholics were campaigning to go back to the good old days (even though the good old days never really existed) and were lying and being sneaky and getting foreign help to achieve their aims of a worse Britain. It's a perfect analogy for brexit.



2Twin 2 HOURS AGO | ← Tanjore

"lying and being sneaky and getting foreign help" defines Remainers!

 \bigcirc Reply 6 $\stackrel{\wedge}{\bowtie}$ Recommend $\stackrel{\square}{\sqcap}$ Report



james S 46 MINUTES AGO | ← 2Twin You've destroyed the economy.



Howard Gleave

Apart from the fact that the investigation of the allegation of Cambridge Analytica collusion with Russia found no evidence at all.

	$\widehat{\mathbf{D}}$	David Gard 2 HOURS AGO ← Tanjore
		You had to crowbar that scenario in to
		fit.
		□ Reply□ Report9 ☆ Recommend□ Report
		Show all 6 replies
	(N)	Nick Ratcliffe → MINUTE AGO
J	Jeremy '	Westpoose your illiteracy is an
	Sophisticate attractor our hore in the ss?	
	•	
J	Iohn Rh	Ne-Davies 2 Hours Ago
	John Rhys-Davies 2 HOURS AGO David Bridge I fin it astonishing that my comment is	
	awaitin	g approval. There may be an errant apostrophe
	□ Reply	which does not signify illiteracy i
		wonder what faux intellectual
	T	superiority signifies?
		2 HOURS AGO ♠ John Rhys-Davies ☐ Reply ☆ Recommend
		There often seems to be no rhyme or
		reason as to why a comment is held
	$\widehat{\mathbf{T}}$	up. I have discovered that we can say Tony Perryman "bugger" though Seems the software
		is American and they don't know what
		it means. □ Reply I ☆ Recommend
		□ Reply I \(\frac{1}{2} \) Recommend □ Reply I \(\frac{1}{2} \) Recommend
		☐ Report
	0	Oldstead Shawik previous replies avid Gard
		Oh for God's sake give it a rest.
		□ Reply



Thomas Young
Bordergrump | ← David Gard

29 MINUTES AGO | ← Jake Either that or just pro-freedom of So you can! Well bugger the cat they speech and religion: can't have that.

Reply Recommend

Replyrt I A Recommend

☐ Report



causam dico

Jake INDITED MIGTES AGOT hom Bordburggump

Ink@athlolicism? You're 'avin' a larf!

Reply Recommend

Thaven't felt so free since my school
abolished caps and I fed mine to a goat
on the way home! True story.



Oldstead 29 MINUTES AGO | ← Jake

I once had a post blocked automatically because I used a four letter word for excrement. Even though that very word was used in the article without any deletions. I reposted using shlt instead and it got through.

Worth noting that in the article the offending word was used to describe the Prime Minister.



Jake 26 MINUTES AGO | ♠ Oldstead He is a piece of cap.

$\overline{\mathbf{T}}$	Thomas Young 25 MINUTES AGO ♠ Oldstead			
	An article about Winnie the Pooh?			
	□ Reply			
$\overline{\mathbf{J}}$	Just-a-Bloke 26 MINUTES AGO ← Jake			
•	You can't say f * g sorry cigarette			
	paper: I was painfully deleted			
	yesterday			
	□ Reply			
$\overline{\mathbf{J}}$	Jake 21 MINUTES AGO ← Just-a-Bloke			
	Take a look at my comments about			
	Gerard Baker's column today. He			
	correctly used the N-word but then,			
Do Nodo	redundantly, went on to say it rhymed			
	with "bigger".			
	we were sold short and life would			
	elf sovenedo setterdidaseradueen, any			
•	anhealic/Agrianchelanvilcdom/thealstinhgatoe the			
glory tha	astais the hRytchelse which it in incleied.			
□ Reply	□ Report □ Report □ Report			

Show I previous replies 🗸



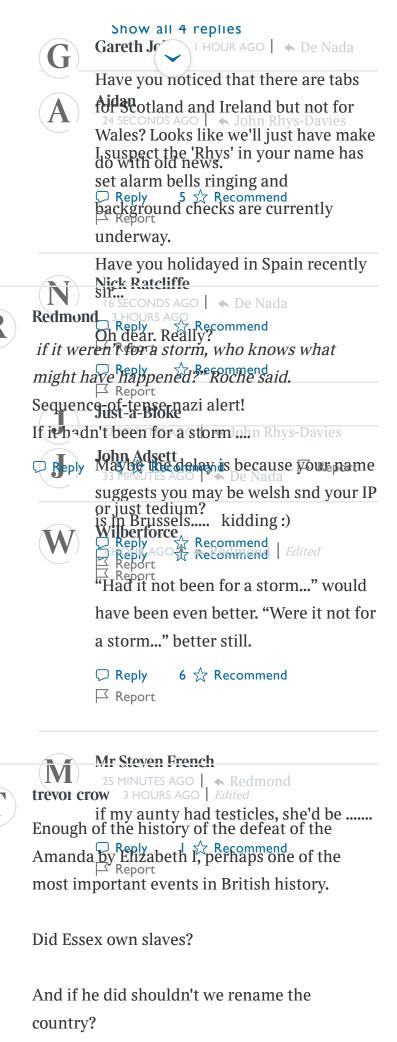
GrubStreetGeezer Tony Perryman John Rhys-Davies 49 MINUTES AGO | ♠ De Nada | Edited

There is beyond doubt a roaming Perhaps News of Ten would have been comment sniper, which picks off at introduced, Noson Dda o Brifddinas random entirely inoffensive posts. Caerdydd. Now that would have been Some eventually are approved, but a joyous event. others just vanish without trace.

Reply
Report
Report

 $\begin{array}{c} I \hspace{0.1cm} \swarrow \hspace{0.1cm} \text{Recommend} \\ 5 \hspace{0.1cm} \swarrow \hspace{0.1cm} \text{Recommend} \end{array}$

11 4 11



18 ☆ Recommend

□ Reply



Paul C | HOUR AGO | ← trevor crow

And whatever would TOWIE have been called!!

I ☆ Recommend

☐ Report



Oldstead 27 MINUTES AGO | ← Paul C

The same. The Only Way Is Eisteddfod.

□ Reply

2 ☆ Recommend

☐ Report



Rob36Ev I HOUR AGO | ← trevor crow

Just wondering what was in your post before you edited it, but was it a fight between Amanda and Liz, or perhaps something more ladylike? Whatever, but Essex must have realised it was a high stakes match to wager changing England's name on the result, any idea?

□ Reply

☆ Recommend



John Rhysrevariesow Hours Ago

Treason. There was a real threat to England from catholics like Owen, and the spy-catchers were not just torturing innocents. Even in our time and my industry there is still a breathless reverence paid to the Hollywood Blacklisters like Trumbo and the recently deceased he's Bernstein. They were wonderful writers but they were committed to the overthrow of the United States government and Constitution, at the service of a foreign government. If they had



had their way there would have been Tom Bloomfield 7 HOURS AGO hundredenisthousends of dead Americans. Guppowder plot "Elizabethan"? I think not. They all got off lightly.





don't see anti-slavery agitation in Mark Thomson

Spain, though. Tom Bloomfield

Studyihistofy Rlahink mot.





Kechria

Elizabeth I (7 September 1533 - 24 March 1603)[a] was Queen of England and Ireland from 17 November 1558 until her death on 24 March 1603. The Gunpowder Plot was in 1605. Post elizabeth.

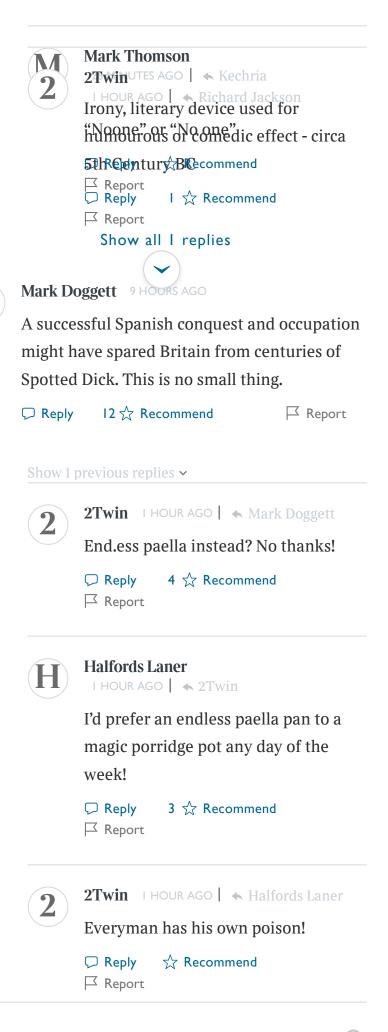
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Richard Jackson 7 HOURS AGO

Noone expected the Spanish Inquisition









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