

Crime and Punishment in Britain,

c1000 – present

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The Historic environment, Whitechapel, 1870-1900: crime, policing and the inner city.

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Home revision question and answer booklet

The purpose of this booklet is to support your child with their revision for their GCSE examination.

This booklet is a summary of all the content that your child needs to know and will assist them with regards to preparation for the subject knowledge that they need to apply in the examination. Although the booklet is by no means a guarantee, it will make a significant contribution to their success.

This booklet should be used as a question and answer test booklet so that you can help coach your child into answering content correctly with accuracy. Ideally questions should be worked through at random and use a priority red, amber, green system to prioritise areas to work on.

This booklet is the **minimum**/basic amount of work that your child needs to complete based on the knowledge that they need to have.

I hope that you enjoy using this booklet to help check your child's understanding of the topics that they have completed. Should you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact a link within the faculty using the following email address: humanities-faculty@whickhamschool.org

Many thanks and good luck from the Humanities faculty.

Topic 1: The Medieval period, c. 1000 – c.1500.

2.1 Crime in Medieval England

Explain the changing nature of crimes in the period.

1. What Crimes were committed in the Saxon period? (100-1066). Poaching and the increase of this as a crime – mainly peasants hunting on what used to be common land, for food.
2. How did this change under Norman rule? (1066-1200).
3. How did this change in the late medieval period? (1200-1500).

How did the role of the government change over time?

1. Who were Justices of the Peace and what did they do?
2. What was the 'Murdrum fine' and how did it work?

How did key individuals change this?

1. How did William the Conqueror change law and order? New laws such as the forest laws created under Norman rule. What impact did this have?
2. How did this change in 1184?

2.2 New Crimes in Norman England

The new murdrum fine which meant that a fine had to be paid to the hundred where the body was found, if an Anglo-Saxon murdered a Norman and the culprit could not be found. New forest laws also caused big changes in crimes in England.

2.3 Anglo-Saxon Law enforcement

Explain how methods of policing changed over the period.

1. How was England policed under the Saxons?
2. How did this change under the Normans?
3. How did this change in the late medieval period?

Community-based policing was the main focus in the medieval period.

2.4 Norman and Later Medieval law enforcement

Change:

- Normans introduced trial by combat. What was this?

- Use of foresters to police the royal forests.

Continuity:

- Tithings, hue and cry etc. stayed the same and remained the responsibility of the community

2.5 Medieval punishments

Explain how punishment changed over the period.

1. How were people punished under Saxon rule? Why was this the case?
2. How did this change under Norman rule? Why was this the case?
3. How were people punished after 1200? Why was this the case?

Tithings, the hue and cry were the main systems of law enforcement at the start of the period, moving towards trial by combat and trial by ordeal as we move through the period.

Explain how trials changed over the period.

1. How were people tried under the Saxons?
2. How did this change under the Normans?
3. How did this change in the late medieval period?

2. 6 The influence of the Church

How did the role of the Church change?

1. What was 'Sanctuary'? Protection from the law for someone who had committed a crime – a priest could swear an oath agreeing to leave the country instead of going to court.
2. What was 'the Benefit of the Clergy?' Use of Church courts for members of the clergy.
3. How did 'trial by ordeal' work? Where someone's innocence/ guilt could not be proven in court they were subjected to trial by ordeal. There were a few different methods of this such as trial by hot iron and by water.

Topic 2: The Early modern period, c. 1500 – c.1700.

2.1 Crime in Early Modern England:

What social factors were causing challenges to authority at this time?

- **Increased population:** In 1450 the population of England was 2 million. By 1750 it was 7 million.
- **Increased urban growth and unemployment:** Growing towns were harder to control.
- **Crimes against property:** Most crimes committed by the poor were crimes against property, not crimes against the person. Landowners were rich law makers. Also many landowners restricted access to their land for hunting etc.

Why did the authorities feel under threat?

- Political changes between 1485 and 1750 caused rulers to feel under threat.
- In 1485 the Tudors came to the throne after a long period of civil war, but the first Tudor, Henry VII, was under constant threat from rival claimants.
- The reigns of Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary I and Elizabeth I were made more unstable by religious rivalry between Catholics and Protestants.
- In the reign of James I, Catholic plots continued (Guy Fawkes and the Gunpowder Plot).

How did rulers respond to this threat?

- There was an increase in accusations of treason, as religious opposition became linked to opposition to the authorities.
- Earlier harsh punishments – designed to crush opposition to royal power (hung, drawn and quartering) – were increasingly used in this period. The lessening of political tension after 1750 reduced the use of such punishments.

Why was crime increasing in the 16th and 17th centuries?

- Growth of towns led to more footpads in dark alleys.
- Enclosure of land, including common land once used by all, led to hedge levelling to give access to common land again.
- Changes in religious beliefs led to refusal to follow official religious beliefs.
- Increased unemployment led to beggars wandering from town to town.
- Improved quality of roads led to more highwaymen, robbing travellers.
- Crimes against authority increased.

2.2 New crimes in Early Modern England

1. **Smuggling** - The government imposed high taxes on many everyday goods such as soap, tea and coffee, as well as more luxurious items such as lace and brandy. This often led to goods being smuggled in. Most ordinary people didn't see it as a serious crime because they could benefit. Lawmakers made it punishable by death.

2. Witchcraft – had been a minor crime in medieval times but new laws were passed in early modern period which made it a more serious offence. How did the different monarchs deal with witchcraft?

3. Why did vagrancy become a big issue in the 16th century?

BEFORE: Changes in the economy in the late 14th and 15th century had increased the numbers of people wandering and looking for work.

SO: Changes in society led to a moral panic with beggars (often healthy) being thought of as criminals – and punished.

Why did the number of beggars increase during the 16th century?

- Problems in the cloth industry lead to higher unemployment.
- Prices go up faster than wages.
- Landowners kept sheep instead of growing crops. This needed fewer workers.
- Closure of monasteries took away support for the poor.
- Population increase put pressure on jobs and food.
- No national system to help the unemployed and sick.
- End of wars in England led to soldiers being out of work.

Why was begging treated so harshly?

- The cost of supporting beggars was resented by communities they ended it up in
- Poor people were more likely to turn to other crimes such as theft
- Large numbers of travelling beggars seemed to be a threat to people who felt they should know their place within a community.
- Acts of charity did not seem to be enough to meet the rising demand from the poor people.

Which laws were introduced to deal with begging?

1531: A law passed by parliament separated the 'Deserving Poor' (sick or injured beggars worthy of help) from 'Sturdy Beggars' (those considered lazy). All beggars were to be classed as either deserving a licence or punished. Justices of the Peace put the new law into effect.

1547 VAGRANCY ACT: Forced beggars to work. It also ordered they should be whipped and branded. This law, though, was impossible to enforce and was repealed (abolished), but showed how worried people were.

2.3 Law enforcement

1. **What continued to be the same in the early modern period?** Community based policing and law enforcement did continue but there were also some changes.
2. **Changes in the role of the Church** – The church became less important in society than it had been, therefore its system of justice was less influential.
3. **What were the watchmen?** – They patrolled streets at night and were overseen by a town constable.
4. **What were town Constables?** – They had the power of arrest and take suspects to the Justice of the Peace.

2.4 Punishment

Punishments varied according to a person's social group. Commoners were hanged, drawn and quartered. Nobles were beheaded. Until the 18th century, any first-time offenders who claimed benefit of clergy (were able to read a passage of the Bible) were often acquitted.

Criminalising beggars.

The use of fear: authorities aim was a mixture of retribution (punishment) and deterrence (preventing crime), with no real prison system, the punishment was either removing them (execution), fining them, hurting or humiliating them in stocks or pillory).

1. How did attitudes and beliefs affect how crimes were punished?

Divine right: It was believed that God gave power to kings and queens-challenges to monarchs deserved severe punishments.

Hierarchy: There was a strong belief that society had strict ordering with some groups above or below others in terms of power, wealth and rights-challenges to this hierarchy deserved severe punishments.

Property: The richest people owned most property and only wealthy people were represented in parliament, where laws were made. They made laws with harsh punishments in order to protect their property.

2. What was the Bloody Code?

Historians use this phrase to describe how the number of crimes carrying the death penalty rose significantly in this period (including stealing sheep, smuggling and damaging trees). At the height of the Bloody Code, in 1815, 225 crimes were punishable by death. Transportation also began in this period.

3. Transportation –

Under James I convicts were sent to colonies in North America to do manual work. Criminals were sentenced to either 7 or 14 years but most could not afford to travel back home after. Why did this become a punishment? How does this show change in the nature of punishments?

2.5 Gunpowder plotters

The Gunpowder Plotters

- 1. Who were the plotters and what was their plan?**
- 2. Why did this group want to achieve this?**
- 3. Reasons for the harsh punishment of the plotters.** This was seen as treason and was the only way to deter crime as there was no police force. This was also seen as a harsh punishment to stop Catholics from rising up against Protestant monarchy.

2.6 The witch-hunts

The witch hunts of 1645-47

- 1. What were the witch hunts?**
- 2. Who was Matthew Hopkins?** Employed to find witches and received money for convicting a witch. This helped stir up mass panic about witches in the years 1645-47.
- 3. Why were the witch hunts so intense?**
 - **The influence of individuals**
 - **Economic problems**
 - **Religious change**
 - **Lack of authority**
 - **Social change**

Topic 3: 18th and 19th century Britain

3.1 Crimes against the person and property

What were the four main changes in punishment in this period?

- 1) By 1850 the Bloody Code had been swept away due to changing attitudes to punishment.
- 2) Prison sentences became the most common punishment.
- 3) Professional police forces were set up. Rising crime and the fear of it was a common factor at this time.
- 4) The government became increasingly involved in matters through intervention and greater wealth.

3.2 Crimes against authority

Why were there challenges to authority at this time?

- Poor living and working conditions made many workers desperate for reforms.
- The French Revolution encouraged some people to hope for similar change here
- Many people made more moderate demands such as the right to vote, right to strike etc.

How did the government deal with challenges to authority?

- The government often dealt with it by using soldiers – this led to many deaths and unpopularity against them.
- They also used laws to control people who protested at how Britain was being run. This led to many people who demanded reform were treated as criminals. Reforms after 1850 meant that demands for change were no longer treated as crimes.

Who were the Tolpuddle Martyrs?

In 1833, a peaceful group of Dorset farm workers from the village of Tolpuddle formed a trade union to try and stop their wages going down. They did not act violently but the local rich farmers and the government feared they might lose control of their workers. The authorities reacted by using a navy law from years before about swearing secret oaths to arrest and transport them to Australia for seven years. After huge protests the Tolpuddle Martyrs were eventually released in 1836.

This case is a landmark as it shows how the authorities backed down.

What was transportation?

Transportation was a system that began in the 17th century and ended in the 19th century, whereby criminals were sent to penal colonies to serve their sentences. It was an alternative to imprisonment, which was considered to be too expensive, and hanging, which was considered to be too harsh in some circumstances. Transported criminals were sent to America initially, and after the loss of the American colonies, to Australia.

Why did transportation begin?

- There weren't enough prisons
- Prisons were too expensive
- To remove criminals from society
- Some people felt hanging was too harsh for some minor crimes
- It helped Britain to claim new areas as colonies

Why did transportation end?

- It was seen as inhumane
- Australia no longer needed forced labourers
- Australian settlers were fed up of Britain dumping criminals on them
- Some people had a better life in Australia than they would have had in England. It was not a deterrent.
- Prisons had been improved and become more frequently used since the 1820s.

3.3 Law enforcement

What changes in society were happening at this time that led to more crime?

- Many immigrants moved into areas of terrible poverty with many turning to crime.
- Huge growth in towns led to increased street crime and burglary.
- The increased movement of the population meant it was harder to know and keep track of people.
- Growth in alcoholism, disorder and riots.

What were the problems with law enforcement before 1829?

- Parish constables dealt with minor disorders, beggars and petty criminals. They did not have much chance of success in cities, especially London, where the crowded streets and houses provided ideal shelter for criminals. The system of law and order had been the same for centuries and couldn't cope with growing towns.

- Watchmen or 'Charlies' because they were set up under Charles II) kept an eye on property in London. They were usually old, poorly paid and organised by parish constables.
- Troops could be used to put down riots or rebellions.
- Bow Street Runners and Bow Street Horse Patrols: The magistrates John and Henry Fielding set up a civilian horse patrol to stop highwaymen, and the Bow Street runners, a team of thief-takers who patrolled the streets of London in the evening. They also published 'Hue and Cry', a newspaper that contained details of crimes, criminals and stolen property. This helped pass on information about criminal activities.

Was the setting up of the police force a complete success?

At first the police (peelers) got a lot of bad press including: there was not enough of them, and they did not have the right equipment (truncheons) to deal with criminals many of who were armed.

But by 1900 attitudes had changed. Improved pay and training meant that the police had developed a reputation for honesty. Targeting uniformed patrols in high crime areas helped to reduce street crimes and disorder. The use of photographs and fingerprints assisted crime detection.

3.4 Changing views on the purpose of punishment

Factors that changed views:

- People believed that punishments should be equal to the crime
- Corporal and capital punishments looked upon as inhumane
- More focus on rehabilitation

What were the main changes that took place in prisons in the 19th century?

- Imprisonment became the normal method of punishing criminals.
- Reforming prisoners became the aim of punishment (Bloody Code had not worked).
- The huge increase in prisoners led to the government taking over and reforming the whole prison system (Rising crime at start of 1900s).

What was the impact of prison reformers?

- John Howard: He toured prisons in Britain and wrote a book highlighting bad conditions and other issues. It highlighted problems in the system but reforms did not begin until after his death.
- Elizabeth Fry: Fry introduced changes in Newgate women's prison and then in others including female warders, schools for women and children and clothing/furniture.

3.5 Pentonville prison

In the 1830s there were new ideas for how prisons should be run, prisoners were given clean, separate cells and more work. A huge new prison-building programme took place. The first was at Pentonville, London, in 1842. By 1877 some 90 new prisons had been built.

3.6 Robert Peel

Sir Robert Peel (Home Secretary):

- Introduced acts that changed prisons including inspections of prisons, visits by doctors and basic education.
- Oversaw huge new prison building scheme.
- He also reduced the number of death penalty offences.

Topic 4: The modern period, 1900-Present day

4.1 Crime in modern Britain

How have changing attitudes led to different groups of people being punished for crimes they would not have been held accountable in the past?

- Traffic Crime. Speeding, dangerous driving and using your mobile phone while driving are all crimes today were not before the 20th century.
- Race crime. Race relations act (1968) made it illegal to refuse housing and employment to a person on the grounds of race. Before this, racist motivation of crimes would not have been considered seriously.
- Domestic violence. Violence in the home has often been ignored unless the crime involved murder or serious assault.
- Cowardice in the face of the enemy has always been a crime. Yet modern war (WWI etc.) meant you were executed.
- Conscientious objection. People who refused to go to war could be court-martialed and receive sentences up to 2 years imprisonment.

What are the main crime trends since 1900?

- Crime has increased since 1900
- The prison population has increased since 1900
- However, the percentage of women in prison has fallen since 1900
- Since 1992 the level of crime has fallen
- Some newspapers, though, give the impression that the level of crime is increasing

4.2 'New' crimes in modern Britain

How new are 'new crimes'?

There are several examples of crimes committed nowadays that appear to be brand new crimes, but are actually very similar to crimes that were committed in the past—they are just done in slightly different ways. Can you name any examples?

Possible new crimes and their links to older forms of crime	
OLD	NEW
Selling of poor girls into prostitution was a problem in 19 th century cities.	People trafficking. Many people from less economically developed countries are illegally bought to the UK and work in prostitution or for low wages.
In the 18 th century organised criminal gangs smuggled goods.	Drug smuggling is a multi-million pound industry.
Impersonating another person to steal money is an old crime, as is tricking money out of a person.	Computer crime is often used to commit fraud.
Street robbery and other forms of street crime have been a problem for centuries.	Street crime and anti-social behaviour causes great concern in many towns and cities.

What examples are there of completely new crimes?

There are totally new crimes due to new technology such as 'speeding'.

Changing attitudes can cause new definitions of crime. An example is driving while using a mobile phone, since people have realised over time that it leads to accidents.

4.3 Law enforcement in modern Britain

Changes in policing and combating crime

How has technology impacted on the role of the police?

- Fingerprinting: The Scotland Yard fingerprint department was set up in 1901.
- In 1995 a computer system was launched allowed all English and Welsh police forces to compare fingerprints.
- Radios: Modern communications makes it easier to report issues and call for backup.
- Computers: Sorting information, finding patterns and matching evidence saves a huge amount of police time.
- DNA evidence: Can be used to identify victims and criminals from tiny quantities of hair, blood and skin.
- Cars and motorbikes: Greater mobility means police can get to crime scenes quicker.
- CCTV: Can be used to monitor people's behaviour in real time or recorded.

What are the continuities between policing in the twentieth century and the past?

CONTINUITY: Modern Neighbourhood Watch schemes involves local people in crime prevention. This is similar to the 15th century, which made local communities responsible for the behaviour of their neighbours and reporting crime. *The difference is that the modern scheme is completely voluntary.*

What challenges have the police faced in the twentieth century?

- Robert Peel created a police force that had an immediate presence of the streets. Modern police feel they are more effective in car. However, people want the police on the streets to deter crime.
- The threat of terrorism. Police have to share intelligence across the world.
- Police have to be armed – look more like soldiers?
- Issues about how long to hold suspects.
- Can ordinary people on a jury understand evidence?

4.4 Punishment in modern Britain

The abolition of capital punishment.

Describe the process of the abolition of capital punishment.

The abolition of capital punishment in the UK was not a sudden decision. Due to arguments like those above, it was gradual. In 1908 people under 16 were no longer hanged, but it took until 1933 for hanging to be abolished for under 18s and 1969 until it was abolished for

murder completely. Jack Straw (Home Secretary) finally abolished the death penalty in the UK in 1998!

What other factors led to the abolition of capital punishment?

Newspapers-Britain had a massive newspaper readership and newspapers attracted readers by publishing details about sensational murder cases and controversial hangings. This helped to raise awareness among the public and caused some people to question the use of capital punishment.

Many people attended protests about the executions of Bentley and Ellis. These were then publicised in newspapers.

The role of MPs-the main pressure to abolish the death penalty came from elite, liberal circles, rather than as a grassroots movement. Controversial executions and the inconsistent way in which the death penalty was applied had made some MPs uneasy. The Labour MP, Sidney Silverman, introduced a Private Members' Bill into parliament proposing to suspend the death penalty for 5 years, and MPs voted overwhelmingly in favour of this.

Changing punishments in the twentieth century

What changes have been made to prisons?

They had more functions such as officers trained to re-educate prisoners. 'Open' prisons for less dangerous criminals. Some prisoners on probation instead of straight inside.

What changes have been made to the way in which juvenile prisoners are dealt with?

From 1908 separate prisons were established for children, known as Borstals. These institutions focused on education and rehabilitation rather than retribution, and were initially quite successful at reducing re-offending rates among juveniles. Recently there has been rising levels of violence in youth offending prisons and re-offending rates have been high. But governments remain under pressure to be seen 'doing something' about crime, and so larger numbers of juvenile offenders are imprisoned in the UK than any other country in Western Europe.

What changes have been made to the way in which women prisoners are treated?

Recent years have seen a dramatic rise in women sent to prison. They have always committed much less crime than men and only about 6% of the prison population is female. Women tend to be imprisoned for crimes connected with poverty, substance abuse and mental health issues. Some women's prisons now allow them to spend some time with their children, and there are 7 mother and baby units in England for female prisoners.

What are the alternative punishments to prison?

Community sentences are now often used. Examples include drug or alcohol treatments, community projects (service) and charity work. Electronic tagging and ASBOs are other changes. A new method that has been tested with some success is restorative justice-where victims and criminals meet and victims are able to explain the impact the crime has had on them.

4.5 Conscientious objectors

These are people who have religious, moral or political objections to war. For a short time in the 20th century, this became a crime.

- What was conscription? During conscription conscientious objectors were made to stand in front of tribunals who judged whether their objections were genuine
- Treatment was very different in the two world wars, this shows change over time.
- However the treatment of conscientious objectors were treated as cowards by the general public, showing some continuity

4.6 The Derek Bentley case

Derek Bentley 1953

Derek Bentley (aged 19) and Christopher Craig (16) broke into a London warehouse in 1952. Craig shot and killed a policeman. Derek Bentley had serious learning difficulties and a mental age of 11. Both men were found guilty of murder but only Bentley was executed because Craig was under 18 years old.

The Historic environment, Whitechapel

1. The Metropolitan Police

- Police recruits generally came from outside London and were attracted by the relatively good pay
- Problems with absenteeism and drinking on the job
- Criminal Investigation department (CID) developed 1878
- May felt that the police were only working for higher class people
- Sir Charles Warren was commissioner of the Met, 1886

2. The local context of Whitechapel

Whitechapel is an area in the East of London which had very high levels of poverty and poor living and working conditions in the late 1800s. This contributed to a high crime rate.

- Housing was poor with poverty and homelessness high
- Workhouses seen as a last resort with poor conditions and the separation of families
- There was an economic depression which meant a lack of employment opportunities
- These environmental issues led to crime and further discontent

3. Tensions in Whitechapel

- Irish immigrants had a reputation for being drunk and violent
- Eastern European Immigrants tended to stick together creating segregation

- Anarchists and socialist movements wanted an end to capitalism and were feared by the authorities
- Fluctuating population
- Violence
- Abuse

4. The organisation of policing in Whitechapel

- There were many problems with policing, some are; gangs, prostitution, alcohol abuse, violent demonstrations and attacks on immigrants, especially Jewish people
- Made policing difficult and dangerous

5. Investigative policing in Whitechapel

- Used to investigate crimes such as Jack the Ripper in 1888
- Techniques included; house-to-house searches, appealing for info from the public and setting up soup kitchens to encourage the poorest to come forward with info
- The media however, encouraged hoax letters and confessions which made the police's job harder

Investigation and problems with evidence:

What types of evidence can you use to find out about crime in Whitechapel?

Which type is the most useful? Why is this the case?

How was the police investigation limited by problems with evidence?

How did the murders lead to change in policing?