


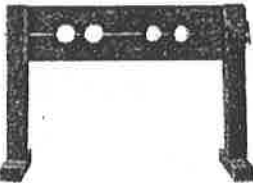

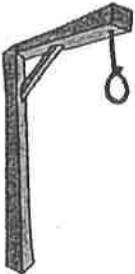
# Crime and Punishment

## Punishment

Throughout the medieval period it was believed that the only way to keep order was to make sure that the people were scared of the punishments given for crimes committed. For this reason all crimes from stealing to murder had harsh punishments.

Although there were gaols, they were generally used to hold a prisoner awaiting trial rather than as a means of punishment. Fines, shaming (being placed in stocks), mutilation (cutting off a part of the body) or death were the most common forms of punishment.

The table below shows typical punishments given for the most usual crimes.

Punishment	Description	Crime
<p>Fine</p> 	<p>A sum of money had to be paid to the Lord of the Manor or the King. Most people could not afford the fines so faced the punishments listed below.</p>	<p>Most minor crimes</p>
<p>Shame</p> 	<p>A period of time had to be spent in the stocks. The stocks were usually positioned in a public place and villagers would often throw rotten vegetables at the criminal.</p>	<p>Drunkenness, Swearing, Telling lies</p>
<p>Mutilation</p> 	<p>Cutting off part of the body. Amputation of ears, hands and tongue were all common punishments.</p>	<p>Stealing Hunting on royal ground without permission</p>
<p>Death</p> 	<p>The usual method of execution for men was by hanging. Most towns had a gibbet and bodies were left to rot as a warning to others. For treason the punishment was to be hung drawn and quartered.</p> <p>Women were usually strangled and burnt.</p> <p>Execution by beheading was used as a punishment for nobles found guilty of treason</p>	<p>Treason Murder, Arson, Mugging, Adultery Forgery, Guilty by Trial by Ordeal</p>

## The Manorial Court – You Decide

You have been selected to be a member of the Manorial Court jury for the court session of 15<sup>th</sup> October 1211.

For the following cases decide whether you think the accused are guilty or not guilty and if guilty what their punishment should be. All of the accused are too poor to pay a fine.

Evidence	Guilty or Not Guilty	Punishment if Guilty
<p><b>Mathilda is accused of telling lies</b> On 22nd September Mathilda did not help with the harvest because she said she was ill. Several villagers saw her outside her hut that day and she did not look ill. Peter says that Mathilda does not like hard work and lied to have a day off.</p>		
<p><b>Cedric is accused of stealing Walter's chicken</b> On the morning of 4<sup>th</sup> October Walter found one of his chickens was missing. The same evening Cedric and his family had chicken for dinner. Two villagers saw Cedric outside on the night of 3<sup>rd</sup> October and he was not usually outside at night. Cedric says he found the chicken in the woods.</p>		
<p><b>Benedict is accused of drunkenness and swearing</b> Several villagers say that on the night of 31<sup>st</sup> August Benedict was creating a fearful noise on the green. He is known to have visited the inn on that night where he drank vast quantities of ale. Mary and Eleanor say they were very afraid and shut themselves in their hut.</p>		
<p><b>John is accused of mugging</b> On the evening of 11<sup>th</sup> October Alice was walking across the green when she was hit on the shoulder. She did not see her attacker but believes it was John because she would not dance with him at the Harvest dance. Three villagers say that John was cross because Alice would not dance with him. Two villagers say that John is a kind man and would not hurt anyone.</p>		
<p><b>Margaret is accused of arson</b> On the morning of 30<sup>th</sup> August a fire was discovered at the back of Hugh's hut. Most villagers were helping with the harvest but Margaret was absent. Several villagers say that Margaret likes fire and often stares into the flames. Hugh and Margaret had had an argument the night before.</p>		