

ANGLO_SAXON SOCIETY

- Small population (roughly 2m), 90% lived in countryside in small homesteads and hamlets
- Social structure meant nobles got land for helping with laws and crimes against higher classes were punished severely.
- Towns grew in importance like Hamwic (Southampton), Eoforwic (York) and Lundenwic (London) which increased crime there.
- Danelaw was different again in North-East England. Threat from the Vikings meant that the different kingdoms became more centralised over time.
- The Church played an important part in defining law and order system. This increased over time with restitution increasing. They focused on moral crimes.

NORMAN SOCIETY

- The Normans defeated the Anglo-Saxons at the Battle of Hastings. The Normans faced challenges from powerful Anglo-Saxon nobles like Edwin and Morcar after the Battle and in York and East Anglia.
- William's claim to the throne was challenged by nobles like Edgar Aethling so he had to increase the role and power of the king.
- William had to centralise power in the hands of Normans but keep some Anglo-Saxon laws. However, Normans were made more important than Anglo-Saxons
- The Feudal System introduced with Normans in the top three echelons. Thegns and AS Earls mostly replaced with Tenants-in-Chief, Under Tenants-in-Chief and Knights.
- He kept the church on-side with church courts.

EARLY ANGLO-SAXONS

- A unified system of law and order in Britain ended when the Romans departed
- Different Anglo-Saxon kingdoms had their own systems of law and order
- The king was responsible for law and order in each kingdom
- Blood Feud meant a family had the right of revenge against those who did them wrong
- There was still no police force – solving and punishing crime was down to the family
- Blood Feuds could last for generations...
- Blood Feud was unfair on smaller families who would be unable to get justice over larger families

Anglo-Saxons & Normans

NORMAN CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

- William introduced Forest Laws, Church courts and Murdrum.
- Norman law was based on the 'mund' – an area of land around a person's home
- The King claimed all of England as his 'mund', making him responsible for law and order in the whole country
- The Normans continued to use shires (counties), hundreds, tithings and the hue and cry
- They introduced a new Trial – Trial by Combat
- Most people experienced the law at their local manor court; towns had their own borough courts
- The death penalty was used more to keep control
- Sanctuary was where a person could not be arrested (normally a church)
- Right of sanctuary

LATER ANGLO-SAXONS

- England was divided up into shires and hundreds (an area with 100 farms in it)
- Men belonged to a tithing (group of ten) responsible for the behaviour of each other
- The hue and cry was to chase a criminal; everyone took part once alerted to a crime by a tithing
- The King remained in charge of the law; later kings (Alfred the Great) drew up codes of law
- Anglo-Saxon codes of law were less complete than Roman law because it was based on custom
- Blood Feud was replaced by wergild – a system of monetary compensation
- The growth of the Christian Church led to the idea that God could act as judge and jury
- Trial by Ordeal was when God decided on the guilt of an accused person
- The Church believed people should be given a chance to repent – this led to more mutilations and fewer death sentences
- Most Anglo-Saxons still believed criminals should face harsh punishment, but not prison, which was still considered too expensive

CHANGE AND CONTINUITY

- Changes – death penalty used more; Forest laws; Church courts; Sanctuary; Trial by Combat; decline of wergild
- Continuity - no police; prison for holding only; hundred, tithing, hue and cry; public punishment; king remained in charge of law and order

TRIAL BY ORDEAL

- Trial by Hot Iron
- Trial by Hot Water
- Trial by Cold Water
- Trial by Consecrated Bread (sometimes called 'Trial by Cake!')