

# Crime and Punishment - The Tudors

## Fact Sheet

Learn about crimes, laws, trials and punishments in Tudor times, between AD1485 and AD1603.

### Public punishment

Tudor punishments were cruel and humiliating, designed to scare people into doing what the Tudors wanted. This was often **Corporal Punishment** – causing physical pain or discomfort. The Tudors hated people misbehaving or not attending church and children were punished in the same way as adults. Public **flogging** (being whipped) and branding (burned with a mark) were common.



The **Tudors** punished criminals in public so that everyone could see. People were locked for several hours in the **stocks** (where they sat) or the **pillory** (where they stood) for more serious crimes. Cards were left describing the crime. People yelled at prisoners, they threw food (usually rotten and stinking!) or even stones.

Tudor children who misbehaved were treated like criminals. If they were late to school or answered questions wrongly they were hit with a birch branch!



# Crime and Punishment - The Tudors

## Fact Sheet

### Capital punishment

Serious criminals were put to death under the Tudors: this was called Capital Punishment. The Tudors practised gruesome **executions** on those who committed serious crimes, like **treason**. The Tudors came to power at the end of The Wars of the Roses and needed stability. They wanted to stop people committing crimes again and show the power of the monarch. **Elizabeth I** (right) even had her cousin **Mary Queen of Scots** executed for treason.



### Capital punishment at Reading Abbey

The last abbot of Reading Abbey **Hugh Faringdon** was executed for treason against **King Henry VIII**. He disagreed with the King's style of rule and the new Church of England. In 1539 Hugh Cook of Faringdon was publicly hung, drawn and quartered in front of Reading Abbey for everyone to see.