The surveillance and regulation of serious offenders, 1880-1940

Barry Godfrey
Stephen Farrall
David J. Cox
The Penal Crisis

- Transportation to the American colonies 1718-76, thence to Australia 1787-1868
- Transportation to Australia declines 1855-68
A ticket of leave being issued
Criminals amongst us

- The Ticket-of-Leave men
- Disenchantment with prison
- The garrotting panic of 1861/2
The Legislative response

- Increased prison sentences for repeat offenders
- Reporting conditions for released prisoners
- The 1869 and 1871 Habitual Offender Acts
Identification and control

Identify known offenders and create a huge bureaucracy to manage knowledge about individual offenders:

- Prisons
- Police
- Metropolitan Police
- Home Office
- Government
Information recorded

- Date and place of birth
- Hair and eye colour, tattoos, scars, birthmarks, height
- Antecedent history
- Date of release from custody
- Police response
- Recording details and breaches
- Date they left the area or died
PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORD OF PRISONERS IN READING GAOL, 1887
PRISON DISCHARGE RECORD OF GEORGE PAGE, AGED 12 (1873)
Information flow

- Prison wardens/governors
- Police Gazette
- Criminal Record Office
Vancouver “Rogues Gallery” 1897

Andy Miggins (101)
Natives English. Age 36.
5'10 tall. Fair hair. Blue eyes.
Tattooed on both wrists. Sentenced
4 months with hard labor on
Feb 13th 1899, on a charge of theft.
Police Information bulletin received by Hamilton Police Department, Canada (Offender originally wanted in New York)

**Police Department**

**City of New York**

**Detective Division**

**Information Bulletin**

**Serial No. 34**

**No. 413**

**Extortion**

Arrest for extortion, the following described Italians, important members of the so-called Blackhand, Blackmailers and Bomb Exploders:

**Guiseppi Ferrara, alias Joe Fay**

** Bertillon**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Height</th>
<th>Weight</th>
<th>Build</th>
<th>Complexion</th>
<th>Hair</th>
<th>Eyes</th>
<th>Hat</th>
<th>Collar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5'10&quot;</td>
<td>140 lbs</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Dark</td>
<td>Brown</td>
<td>Brown</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Soft</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nativity, Italian or Italian descent; tailor by occupation; speaks good English; well dressed; "Wop" type; age, 22 years, 5 feet 7½ or 8½ inches in height, 130 to 140 pounds, medium build, dark brown hair, eyes brown, dark complexion, smooth shaven; usually wears blue suit with invisible white stripes, blue cap or black derby hat, low cut tan shoes, soft collar. Best known in 12th, 13th and 15th precincts, but may be in any other precinct where Italians reside.

**Guiseppi Polaro, alias Bedinzo, married, has two children, Italian, wife resides at 43 Spring Street, Manhattan, don't speak very much English; age, 32 years, 5 feet 6 or 7 inches in height, 155 pounds medium build, dark complexion, dark brown curly hair, small dark brown mustache; shabby clothes, black shirt, black and white check cap. Alleged to have served term for counterfeiting in United States Penitentiary, Atlanta, Ga. Best known in 12th, 13th and 15th precincts, but may be found in any other precinct where Italians reside.
109 (S40). MORRISON, William, @ STACK, Benedict, & MORRISON, Benedict, @ JACKAMARRA, Benedict. A native of Pinjarra, Western Australia, born 1932, height 5ft 9in, slim build, dark complexion, black hair, brown eyes, labourer.


Photo. taken 24/1/50.

Address: Newcastle Road, Northam.

Convictions in Western Australia, in the Children's Court, for assault, receiving liquor, obscene, threatening and abusive language, disorderly conduct, escaping legal custody and in prohibited area. Last convicted at Northam Children's Court on 23/1/50 on a charge of unlawful assault and sentenced to one month imprisonment.

Modus Operandi.

(1) Assaultant, disorderly person.

(2) Since 12/2/49 MORRISON has been convicted on nine different occasions, the offences being of a serious nature, but he has been treated leniently on account of his youth. He is a "trouble maker" and will be a nuisance to Police anywhere. A surly type with a bad temper and a hatred for Police.

(3) Assaulted an exempt native in the camp and when the Police attended he threatened them with violence. On another occasion he assaulted a man after having been refused wine.

(4) Appears likely to develop into a criminal of the "posed artist" type. Associates with other natives of similar character. Usually found in or near Northam.

A typical photograph in the Birkenhead Town Thieves Register.
Data Collection: Birkenhead Habitual Offenders

- 200
- 176 Men  23 Women
- 56% manual labourers and 36% unemployed
- 73% unmarried
Criminal career

- Approx half (56%) desisted before death
- 58% minor offenders
- Approx half (55%) committed first offence by age 21 and a third (33%) by age 16
- Vast majority were property offenders
- 21% were dangerous
Joseph Tomlinson 1860-1920

- Juvenile offending, reform school 9-14
- Joined railway works as apprentice
- Sacked after assaulting co-worker
- Unemployed, theft boots 5yrs, released 1884
- 1887 theft
- 1888 rape reduced IA (6m)
- 1889 shop-breaking (9m)
- 1891 burglary (3 yrs)
- 1896 assault
- 1897 rape 11 year old girl (7 yrs)
- 1903 vagrant, fail report (3m)
- 1904 IA boy aged 8 (2yrs)
- 1907 IA girl aged 7 (Dis)
- 1910 UCK girl aged 13 (5 days)  UCK boy aged 12 (10 yrs) released 1918
- 1918 IA boy (Dis)
Punishment

- Half (53%) were imprisoned by age 21 and a third (30%) by age 16
- 68% were imprisoned on first offence
- 65% received 1-6mths for first custody and a fifth (20%) received 18 months plus.

Edward Howard received a first sentence of 144 mths (12 yrs) for rape of a 10 yr old girl in Liverpool.
Valentine Craighill 1850-1912

1864-1867  5  summary convictions
1868  Larceny of coat from employer (6 mths)
1869  Larceny at Hull (12 mths)
1871  Larceny chain from Hull Docks (8 mths and 5 yrs supervision)
1874  Larceny watch at Hull (16 mths and 7 yrs supervision)
1875  Larceny 10s cash.
1877  Larceny cask of mustard from Hull Docks (7 yrs and 7 yrs supervision)
1882  Larceny from person 2s cash (7 yrs and 7 yrs supervision)
1890  Released from  HMP Portland
1892  Fail to report (Cautioned)
1893  Larceny Hull  (9 mths and 1 yr supervision)
1894  Larceny Hull  (3 yrs)
1897  Larceny Hull (3 yrs)
1908  Larceny
1912  Larceny
Charles Dunning 1886-1967
Conviction for vagrancy begging as child

1898  Larceny from person (bound over)
1901  Census shows him as textile worker in Yorkshire
1903  Indecent assault (2m 2nd div)
1905  Larceny from meter (6 wks) and larceny from shop (4 mth)
1906  Attempted suicide (bound over) Found on enclosed premises (3 mths)
       Attempted suicide (4 mths)
1907  Housebreaking at Northampton (12 mths)
1908  Incorrigible rogue at Northallerton (12 mths)
1910  Burglary APC at Nottingham (5 yrs)
1914  Joined Cheshire regiment.
1917  Discharged under Kings Reg. 392 (Idiot)
1920  Shop-breaking in Peterborough (5 yrs and 3 yrs supervision)
1925  Shop-breaking at Liverpool (5 yrs)
1929  Receiving stolen goods (3 yrs)
1948  Became missionary in Bahai faith in Belfast
1953  Became a missionary in the Orkneys
Impact of legislation

Four periods identified

1853-1869 increasing punishment
1871-1879 surveillance
1880-1909 reduced punishment
1909-1940 preventative detention

Impact on careers? Impact on individuals?