

Criminal Justice: An Overview of the System

Module 4: Law Enforcement

Section 4.1: Early History of Policing

Amalgamation: The process or result of uniting or consolidating things.

August Vollmer: A police reformer known for his strong support for higher education and professionalism in policing.

Beat: The geographical territory to which a patrol officer is assigned.

Civil Service: A system of government service employment based on merit and examinations rather than on political patronage.

Code of Hammurabi: A set of laws developed by Babylonian King Hammurabi that date back to the 18th century BC; the earliest written legal code known.

Decentralized: Not having a single administrative center.

Frankpledge System: A system of policing used in England during the Early Middle Ages whereby communities were divided into small groups (tithings) that were collectively responsible for the conduct of all members.

Hue and Cry: A calling out to the members of a community in order to collectively pursue a criminal, as was mandated under old English law.

Hundred: A unit of ten tithings (or 100 households) under the old English Frankpledge system.

Kin Policing: An ancient system of law enforcement where law enforcement responsibility was held by all citizens, and everyone was responsible for the conduct of their extended families.

Magna Carta: A charter of liberties that the English Barons forced King John to sign in 1215.

Mosaic Code: The ancient code of laws that, according to the Old Testament, were given by God to Moses.

Mutual Pledge System: Another name for the Frankpledge System.

Nationalization: To bring under the control of a nation, such as the government of the United States.

O. W. Wilson: An influential leader in policing, popularizing the idea of police professionalism that would shape policing in America for decades to come.

Parish: A church based administrative division of territory; corresponds to a county in modern usage.

Political Era: A period during the Nineteenth Century when policing in America's large urban centers was defined by political patronage and graft and corruption were rampant.

Posse Comitatus: A Latin legal phrase meaning the "power of the county;" a group of all able bodied men that the sheriff could summon to give chase to a fugitive.

Preventive Patrol: A policing strategy base on the idea that officers in highly visible uniforms and vehicles will deter crime by their mere presence in the community.

Proactive: Controlling a situation by causing something to happen rather than responding to an event after it has happened.

Reactive: Acting in response to a situation rather than creating it or controlling it; the opposite of proactive.

Reform Era: A period beginning in the early 1900s when police professionalism became the dominate paradigm of policing in the United States.

Sheriff: The chief law enforcement officer of a county; the office originated in feudal England as the shire-reeve.

Shire: An old English term for a geographical area equivalent to a modern county.

Shire-reeve: An English office during feudal times that evolved into the modern office of sheriff.

Tithing: A group of ten families under the mutual pledge system.

Tithingman: A man elected to preside over a tithing (a group of ten families) under the mutual pledge system.

Watch and Ward: A policing system used in Medieval English towns where community members were appointed to serve as guards during the day (the ward) and at night (the watch).