

Stuart Tamblin

PRISONERS PARDONED

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Prisoners Pardoned, 1782-1805

Copies were kept of the Home Secretary's correspondence relating to prisoners and their supporters in the *Criminal Entry Books*. Each original volume, covering approximately a year, contains a contemporary listing, alphabetised by surname of those involved, in sections relating to pardons (free and conditional), references, remissions, respites and warrants particular. The indexes are being released in volumes corresponding to the originals. Details given are name, alias, court, notes, type of record and PRO reference. The whole of England & Wales is covered in each volume.

Volume 1	28 Nov 1782	to 19 Mar 1784
Volume 12	7 Jun 1798	to 1 Jul 1800
Volume 13	3 Jul 1800	to 19 Jun 1801
Volume 14	18 Jun 1801	to 6 Sep 1802
Volume 15	27 Aug 1802	to 12 Jul 1803
Volume 16	3 Jan 1804	to 11 Jul 1805

Prisoners Pardoned

Introduction - HO 13 Criminal Entry Books

The historical records of the Home Office are held at the Public Record Office, Kew, Surrey. Among them is Class HO 13 - the Criminal Entry Books. These hold copies of the Home Secretary's correspondence (out-letters) relating to criminals. Very often, the whole letter is recorded but there are many instances where only an indication of the contents of the correspondence is given - "The usual letter..."

The letters tie in very well with the petitions in HO 17 and HO 18.

Entries were listed alphabetically in contemporary summaries in each volume. There were two ways in which this was done. Usually, there is a separate booklet, slightly smaller than the register, although sometimes the last few pages of the register itself are used. Often, both types of list are found. When this happens, it seems that fuller information is given in the separate booklet. In other words, although the entries in the actual pages are duplicated in the booklet, there are more categories summarised in the booklet.

Whatever the format, the entries are divided into the following sections:

- ◆ Pardons - Free
- ◆ Pardons - Conditional
- ◆ References (where the Home Secretary asks for information about a convict from the prison governor)
- ◆ Remissions (where a convict is freed)
- ◆ Respites (where a sentence is postponed for a given period)
- ◆ Warrants Particular (which cover other requirements - see examples in this index.) Note that not all individuals recorded under this heading are themselves criminals.

There are other headings from time to time, such as "Admiralty", "Treasury" and "Letters Promiscuous" but, as these do not seem to name common individuals, they have been omitted from this index.

Although the Home Secretary signed each warrant (the clerk's facsimiles appear in the Criminal Entry Books), it is always made clear that he does so "By His Majesty's Command".

The Public Record Office document reference number is made up of three parts. The initial lettercode relates to the department in which the document originated. The first number indicates the class, which is a collection of documents of the same type. After the oblique stroke (slash), the other number refers to the actual document within the class. The full reference (eg HO 13/16) is required when you wish to order an item to be seen at Kew.

Content of the indexes

The books cover every part of England and Wales and as such provide a useful source of names of individuals in each county starting before the full Criminal Registers in HO 26 and HO 27 and of course long before the time of the nominal censuses and civil registration - both being mid nineteenth-century innovations.

Each entry in this index concerns one person. The surname is given first and then the forename. If an alias is given in the register, this is shown and a completely separate entry is also created, indexed under the alias. Also shown is the PRO piece number. This is the reference needed to order the original document at Kew. Under the surname and slightly indented is the convicting court or occasionally the name of a prison. Notes are given where appropriate to the individual case.

Although this is an index to the names of common individuals listed in the summaries, it must be emphasised that any further research occasioned by these should start with a check of the entry in the summary and in the body of the Criminal Entry Book. Much relevant information may therefore be gained immediately. After that, a look at the contemporary newspaper, and court papers will be beneficial. (See below).

If you are lucky enough to find an entry of interest which relates to a "warrant particular", you should definitely look at the original letter in HO 13 because these (although few in number) are amongst the most interesting. They may deal with orders to hang criminals in chains (eg Haynes and Clark, HO 13/12) or even to take down their bodies five years after gibbeting to make way for a new housing development (p157, HO 13/16)!

Further Information

Further research into the people and crimes found in these volumes can be carried out in three main ways. Firstly, for assize proceedings, consult Class ASSI at the Public Record Office. Secondly, for Sessions, the records can often be found at the appropriate County or Borough Record Office. A comprehensive list of surviving records can be found in J S W Gibson "Quarter Sessions Records", 4th Edition, FFHS 1995. Thirdly, contemporary newspapers not only give lists of prisoners but also report details of many trials. These are available in local libraries and record offices and centrally at the Newspaper Library at Colindale. For a location list, see J S W Gibson "Local Newspapers, 1750-1920", FFHS 1987-1991. Additionally, for matters relating to forgery, the Bank of England Archive may be able to help.

Acknowledgments

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Any extracts from or references to this series of indexes should note the above and make full reference to Stuart Tamblin as compiler and indexer. Please quote the full PRO piece number with any extracts.

Disclaimer

Although every effort has been made in the production and checking of these indexes, no warranty as to their accuracy can be made. No responsibility can be accepted for any inaccuracy or incompleteness whatsoever.

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Useful addresses, telephone numbers and World Wide Web sites:

Public Record Office
Ruskin Avenue
Kew
Richmond
Surrey
TW9 4DU
Tel 02088-763444

<http://www.pro.gov.uk/>

British Library Newspaper Library
Colindale Avenue
LONDON
NW9 5HE
Tel 02073-237353

<http://portico.bl.uk/>

Archive Section (HO-G)
The Bank of England
Threadneedle Street
LONDON
EC2R 8AH
Tel 02076-015096

<http://www.bankofengland.co.uk/>

Federation of Family History Societies
Tel 07041-492032

<http://www.ffhs.org.uk/>

Society of Genealogists
14 Charterhouse Buildings
Goswell Road
LONDON
EC1M 7BA
Tel 02072-518799

<http://www.sog.org.uk/>

Other indexes relating to criminals

By Stuart Tamblin

HO 27 - Criminal Register Indexes, 1805-1892

My main project for the past five years has been to index entries in the **Criminal Registers** in Class HO 27 at the PRO. My interest in and knowledge of the Public Records started following the discovery of a great great great grandmother, Hannah Mayes from Leicestershire, who was sentenced to transportation in 1825. She had stolen a sovereign and five shillings' worth of half-pence. Having found an entry for her in the Criminal Registers in Class HO 27, I started to transcribe these and have so far published on microfiche, disk and CD thirty-four volumes of indexes, starting in 1805 and covering a large part of the country. I have a database currently growing towards 75,000 entries.

HO 20/13 - Criminal Lunatics

This is a database (available on microfiche and disk) of 614 records, indexing the names of all the patients recorded in a document referenced HO 20/13 at the Public Record Office. This is a very interesting book which reads from both ends. At the front is the register of Bethlem Hospital with case histories for many patients. At the other end, is a list of Criminal Lunatics from around the country who were held in County institutions or occasionally who were released into the custody of individuals.

PRONames

PRONames 1, 2 & 3 are indexes to miscellaneous personal names occurring in documents at the Public Record Office and contain a number of references to criminals. Each collection is available on microfiche and disk and contains over **10,000 records** from a variety of sources. Entries are sorted alphabetically by surname and several personal details are given for each record as well as the full PRO document reference number. You should be lucky enough to find somebody in here whose name can be found on your tree!

Other indexes relating to criminals

By Jill Chambers

HO 17 - Petitions Index, 1819-1839

Class numbers HO 17 (1819-1839) and HO 18 (1839-1854) at the Public Record Office contain the original petitions of convicted criminals appealing against, or for a reduction in, their sentence. The amount of information given in these petitions varies considerably but many are very detailed. They relate to persons convicted in almost every county in England and Wales, with a smaller number from Scotland and Ireland.

The indexes include name, age (where given), place and date of trial, sentence and PRO reference number. They are being published as volumes on fiche and in book form, each corresponding to ten PRO piece numbers.

Available from Jill Chambers, 4 Quills, Letchworth, SG6 2RJ

Sample

Forename	Surname	Type	Alias	Court	HO 13/
James	Smith	Conditional Pardon		Croydon	14
James	Smith	Conditional Pardon		Old Bailey	12
James	Smith	Reference		Winchester	12
James	Smith	Remission		Liverpool	12
John	Smith	Conditional Pardon	Potter	Bristol	16
John	Smith	Conditional Pardon		Old Bailey	16
John	Smith	Conditional Pardon	Parker	Old Bailey	14
John	Smith	Conditional Pardon	H Stiles	Old Bailey	14
John	Smith	Conditional Pardon	Joseph Stonehouse	Chester	14
John	Smith	Free Pardon	Moore	Surrey	15
John	Smith	Free Pardon		Old Bailey	15
John	Smith	Conditional Pardon		Maidstone	15
John	Smith	Conditional Pardon		Old Bailey	15
John	Smith	Conditional Pardon		Chelmsford, Home C	12
John	Smith	Conditional Pardon		Old Bailey	12
Joseph	Smith	Conditional Pardon		Old Bailey	16
Joseph	Smith	Conditional Pardon		Oxford	14
Joseph	Smith	Reference		Oxford	14
Joseph	Smith	Conditional Pardon		Cambridge	15
Joseph	Smith	Conditional Pardon		Westminster Newgate	12
Joseph	Smith	Reference		Middx	12
Martha	Smith	Conditional Pardon		Old Bailey	15
Mary	Smith	Free Pardon			16
Mary	Smith	Remission		Gloucester	16
Mary	Smith	Free Pardon		Warwick	13
Mary	Smith	Conditional Pardon	Hall	Old Bailey	13