Thursday 28th April 2022

Whitechapel (1870-1900)

Whitechapel

Whitechapel is in the East End of London, near Canary Warf. It was mainly made up of narrow streets, with many enclosed courtyards and alleyways. The areas near the main road were described in Booth’s map as “*middle class*”, but most of the areas in the backstreets were “*lower class*”, and “*mixed*”.

The Problems in Slums

* High levels of poverty
* Lack of employment
* Links between poor environment and high levels of crime.

Why Whitechapel?

* Whitechapel was the hub of the Victorian East End
* By the end of the 17th century, it was relatively prosperous
* However, some areas began to deteriorate in the mid-18th century
* In the second half of the 19th century the area became overcrowded and infested with crime.

Social Problems

* No stable housing meant no community ties
* Immigration from Ireland and Easter Europe creates tensions.
* Anti-Jewish attitudes, with people wanting segregation.
* Growth of Socialism and Anarchy (wanting less/no government control)

Problems for the Police

* Area – Whitechapel was a maze of alleys, rookeries, and courts, which made it difficult to find your way around if you were not local.
* Cultural and Language barriers due to Irish and Jewish immigrants.
* Alcohol
* Protection Rackets
* Gangs
* Prostitution
* Demonstrations/Protests
* Attacks on Jews

Investigation Techniques

* Traditional Method – Beatings, deprivation of water, food, and sleep. Stopped in 1937
* Reid Technique – Telling if a person is lying by watching how they blink. However, we now know that anxiety is not linked to blinking. 1940s – 1970s.
* Good Cop, Bad Cop – Two interrogators, one nurturing, and the other angry and threatening. When under pressure, many people will agree with the good cop. Still used today.
* The PEACE (acronym) method – Journalistic approach. The more someone lies, the more difficult it is for them to keep track of all the lies. Eventually, their story will change. Still used today

Catching Criminals

* Sketches
* Photographs
* Interviews
* Equipment

Cooperation between Police Forces

There were three different police branches in Whitechapel:

* Metropolitan Police – Regular police on patrol in the district of Whitechapel
* City of London Police – Regular police on patrol in the 1 square mile district of the city.
* The CID/detectives – Constables and detectives that were first setup in Whitechapel. Separate to the Met Police but worked in the same districts.