

0. A BOGUS CHARGE - Story Preface

1. A BOGUS CHARGE

2. A SHAM TRIAL

3. A SHOCKING VERDICT

4. JURORS GO TO PRISON

5. EDWARD BUSHELL HOLDS FIRM

6. PENN'S LAWS



This image depicts Penn and Mead at the Old Bailey in 1670. The illustration is from a tapestry panel.

It was September 8, 1670. William Penn was still an Englishman, living in London.

A young man, he was 26 years old. He had not yet become an American. He had not yet founded the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania (Penn's Woods which he named for his famous father, Admiral William Penn) or the City of Philadelphia (Brotherly Love).

However ... he *had* already spent time in the Tower of London (depicted here in 1670) because the government disagreed with his views. (The linked mural, by Violet Oakley, is in the Supreme Court Room of the Capitol in Harrisburg). Now Penn was on trial for his life, charged with sedition against the Crown.

If found guilty, Penn would be executed.

In one of the most famous, magisterial courthouses in the world - the Old Bailey - Penn defended himself. It was a time when defendants charged with a crime were not **ALLOWED** to have a lawyer. Perhaps that is why so many defendants who stood trial at the Old Bailey ended up dead. For most, the "fix" was in long before the trial started.

And ... so it appeared for William Penn. A Quaker, Penn was upset with a law which made the Church of England the only place where people could worship. Called the "Conventicle Act," the law prohibited any "tumultuous assembly" from meeting outside the Church of England.

Challenging the law, Penn called a meeting at Gracechurch street in the City of London. He preached a sermon which resulted in a "tumultuous assembly."

He was promptly arrested.

See [Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:](http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/A-BOGUS-CHARGE-Penn-William-Jury-Goes-to-Prison)

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Media Stream



Portrait of William Penn

Image online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

PD

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Portrait of Admiral William Penn

Image online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

PD

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The Tower of London

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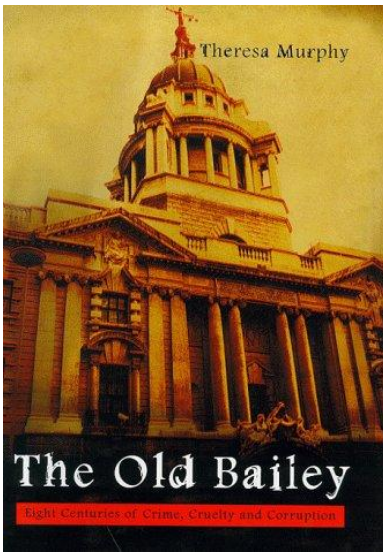
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William Penn in Prison

Image online, courtesy the archstreetfriends.org website.

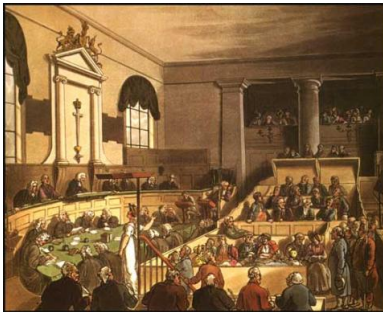
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The Old Bailey

Image online, courtesy [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com) website.

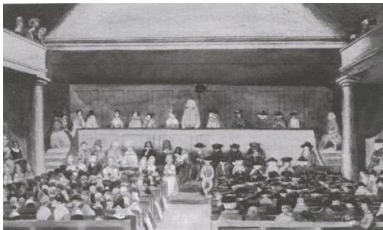
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Old Bailey Courtroom

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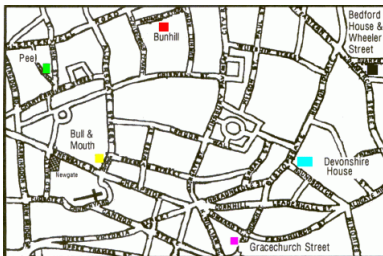


The Gracechurch Street Meeting

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London Map Depicting Gracechurch Street

Image online, courtesy [StudyMore.org.UK](http://www.study-more.org.uk)

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