

## The Great Train Robbery



One of the most famous robberies in British history happened at 3 am on the morning of 8<sup>th</sup> August 1963. A gang of 15 men stopped a Travelling Post Office Train which was travelling to London from Glasgow in Scotland. They stopped the train by changing the signal to red, and stole letters containing £2.6 million in cash (this would be £46 million today). The robbers drove away to a farmhouse near the railway line where they shared out the money between them.

Unfortunately for them a neighbour told the police about the men hiding in the farmhouse. When the police went there they found post office bags and fingerprints, and all the robbers except four were caught and sent to prison. Most of the money was never found.



## Three famous crimes in the UK

The most famous of the robbers was called Ronnie Biggs. He was sent to prison for 30 years but in June 1965, after only 15 months in prison, he escaped in a furniture van and ran away to Brazil. He lived there until May 2001, when he decided to return to the UK and he was sent back to prison.

### An unusual burglary



In the early morning of 9<sup>th</sup> July 1982, the Queen was asleep in her bedroom at Buckingham Palace in London. Suddenly she woke up when she heard the curtains move. There, at the foot of her bed was Michael Fagan, a 31 year old unemployed decorator.

## Three famous crimes in the UK

Fagan had climbed up the walls of the palace and then climbed up a drainpipe to the Queen's private rooms. According to the newspapers, he stole a bottle of wine and then spent 10 minutes sitting on her bed chatting to her. When he asked for a cigarette she called one of her staff who held Fagan until the police arrived. The court decided that he was mentally ill, so he was sent to a mental hospital and not to prison.



After this incident there was a lot of discussion about security in the Royal Palaces. Now the security system has been improved so the Queen has had no more strange night time visitors!

## The doctor who murdered his patients

Harold Shipman looked like a kind, friendly family doctor, but in 2000, when he was 54, he was sent to prison for life. He killed 218 of his patients between 1975 and 1998 and the police believe he probably killed many more than this, perhaps as many as 355.

Most of the people he killed were elderly women. At that time only one doctor needed to sign a death certificate and nobody thought this nice family doctor could be a murderer. He usually killed the women in their own homes, by giving them injections of a drug called diamorphine. He was caught in 1999 when he changed the will of an elderly patient to leave £386,000 to him.



Nobody knows why Shipman killed all these people. He was sent to prison for life but he committed suicide in prison in January 2004.