

# CONTENTS

<b>1</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>‘Hanging not Punishment Enough’: Attitudes to Aggravated Forms of Execution and the Making of the Murder Act 1690–1752</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Patterns of Post-execution Sentencing in England and Wales 1752–1834. The Murder Act in Operation</b>	<b>77</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Changing Attitudes to Post-execution Punishment 1752–1834</b>	<b>113</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>183</b>
	<b>Index</b>	<b>205</b>

# LIST OF FIGURES

## **Chapter 3**

Fig. 1	Corpses hung in chains under the Murder Act, 1752–1832 (including Admiralty cases)	86
Fig. 2	Corpses hung in chains for non-killing offences, 1752–1832 (including Admiralty cases)	87
Fig. 3	Corpses made available to the surgeons under the Murder Act, 1752–1832 (including Admiralty cases)	94

# LIST OF TABLES

## Chapter 2

Table 1	Types of aggravated execution and post-execution punishment advocated for murderers and property offenders between 1694 and 1752	32
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## Chapter 3

Table 1	Outcomes of convictions under the Murder Act	81
Table 2	Patterns of post-execution punishments 1752–1834; by court and type of case	83
Table 3	<b>a</b> Number of Murder Act Sentences involving dissection/gibbeting by decade 1752–1832; Assizes and Admiralty courts (pardons excluded). <b>b</b> Proportion of Murder Act Sentences involving hanging in chains (HIC). By decade 1752–1832. Assizes and Admiralty courts (pardons excluded)	85
Table 4	Sentences under the Murder Act—dissection or hanging in chains—by county 1752–1832	89
Table 5	Number hung in chains, non-killing offences by county 1752–1832	91

## ABSTRACT

This volume analyses the different types of post-execution punishments and other aggravated execution practices (such as breaking on the wheel) that were discussed by contemporaries; the reasons why they were advocated; and the decision, enshrined in the 1752 Murder Act, to make two post-execution punishments—dissection and hanging in chains—an integral part of sentences for murder. After tracing the origins of the 1752 Act it then explores the ways that Act was actually put into practice. After identifying the dominance of penal dissection throughout the period, it looks at change over time—at the abandonment of burning at the stake in the 1790s, at the rapid decline of hanging in chains just after 1800, and then at the final abandonment of both dissection and gibbeting in 1832 and 1834. It also analyses the changing attitudes that led contemporaries both to advocate the use of post-execution punishments against murderers and to suggest that they also be used against other categories of offender, but then to turn decisively away from their use. It concludes that the Murder Act, by creating differentiation in levels of penalty, played an important role within the broader capital punishment system well into the nineteenth century, and that both Gatrell's and Garland's models of penal change need to be modified in the light of this. Although eighteenth- and early-nineteenth-century historians have extensively studied both the 'Bloody Code' that made a huge variety of offences into capital crimes, and the resulting interactions around the 'Hanging Tree', they have largely ignored an important dimension of the capital punishment system—the courts extensive use of aggravated and post-execution punishments—and this book aims to rectify this.