

## Did you know ...?

This is lost in antiquity, but apparently, you can shoot a Scotsman carrying a bow and arrow in York; but not on a Sunday.

1542 Henry VIII's Religion Act, banned any book, including the Bible which had been translated into English.

In 1551 Edward VI passed a law, compelling all citizens to walk to church on Christmas Day - it has never been repealed. Did you break the law? I did.

1605 the Plays Act, banned plays that mocked God, Christ or the Trinity.

1625 a law was passed, banning 'bear-baiting, bull-baiting, common plays, and all other unlawful exercises and pastimes on the Lord's Day'.

1637 the Court of the Star Chamber decreed that all books should be licensed by the Archbishop of Canterbury – as if he had time to read them all!

1642 a law was passed decreeing a fast on the last Wednesday of every month.

1643 the Act was passed to destroy altars, candle-sticks, crucifixes, stained-glass windows, images of persons of the Trinity and the Virgin Mary ... later organs, vestments roods and fonts - *'to please God'*.

In 1644 the Puritans banned Christmas, when it fell on a Wednesday, so no feasting, or merrymaking.

1657 Oliver Cromwell banned eating mince pies on Christmas Day, as this was a mark of celebration.

1648 a law was passed making 'denying the Trinity' a crime punishable by death.

1781 under the Sunday Observance Act, it was made illegal to charge for admission to any place of entertainment, effectively putting an end to them.

In Manchester, there was a bye-law forcing every city councillor to attend church on Sunday.

In Somerset, there was a bye-law maintaining that people should not wear their weekday clothes on a Sunday.

1928 The Easter Act provides that, *'Easter Day shall be the first Sunday after the second Saturday in April'* - it was never brought into force.

Howard Brayton