

# [Britain during the victorian era criminology essay](https://assignbuster.com/britain-during-the-victorian-era-criminology-essay/)

[](https://assignbuster.com/)[History](https://assignbuster.com/essay-subjects/history/), [Middle Ages](https://assignbuster.com/essay-subjects/history/middle-ages/)

When convicted criminal were transported to Pentonville they were required to leave all their clothes and personal belongings to a member of the prison staff. The next step of the entering process was the prisoner to have a specific type of bath. The purpose of it was not to actually clean their flesh, but to “ wash off” their criminal background. Furthermore, every single prisoner was required to have their heads shaven. They were also supplied with uniforms which were with different colours and marks according to the longevity of their sentence. Though, in the first few decades of the institution’s establishment the prisoners were not provided with underwear. According to the visits the prisoners were allowed to have, the measure is considered to be extremely harsh. In addition, they were only one visit every six months. The reason for this was to tear them away from the outside-world as much as possible. Moreover, every visit was observed by a prison officer in order avoid prisoners to be hand items in by the visitor and it was lasting for only 15 minutes. Every letter that a prisoner was receiving or sending was read by a member of the prison staff. Furthermore, mentioning of other prison or anything about the prison was prohibited. In 1865 was introduced a strict daily routine which included eight hours of work.[2]A bell was waking the up at 5: 45 a. m., followed by some time for exercise and then work. The daily routine also included visiting the chapel, having meals and sending the prisoners to bed at 8: 00 p. m. They were visiting the chapel on daily basis in order to turn them into better persons and erase any criminal thoughts in their minds. To compare with other prisons in Britain, Pentonville was having considerably better conditions. For example the health state of the prisoners in Pentonville was well better than those in Millbank and Newgate. Also, for example the inmates in Millbank were made to work more hours than those in Pentonville.[3]

The cells were often described as extremely depressing due to poor lightening. Also, the prisoners had to experience temperature differences, as being hot in the summer and cold in the winter. The beds in the cells were not provided with mattresses, unless the prisoner was aged 50 or over. Each cell was provided with certain items such as hammock, broom, chair, corner shelf, broom, bucket, table, corner-shelf, bible and a towel. When there was an inspection in progress all the prisoners must had every item in a particular place. The original design of Pentonville was to have 520 cells, comparing to Millabank which was having 1000. Considering the medical care in the prison, a medic was required to visit Pentonville two times every week. His responsabilities were to observe prisoners’ health state and also to keep a record of every individual. According to the prison’s harsh policy and strictness, controversial fact is that the medical staff had the authority to prescribe tobacco or alcohol to prisons.

It has been suggested that Pentonville was meant to serve as model prison in second half of the 19th century and it must work like a ” machine’. The main idea of the separate system was not only to punish people who committed crime, but also ensure that they will not end up imprisoned again. The institution was trying to convert the criminal convicts into dutiful and hard working individuals, and reintroduce them to the society. Which however it did not always work, as a report claims that that some 30% of the prisoners were serving sentence more than once.[4]

Not every individual who was convicted of a convict offence was recognized as a convict. On the other hand who had committed a minor offence should be recognized as a prisoner. A minor offence might accord a sentence of from days to a maximum of two years without work. A minimum offence for penal servitude was three years that increased to five years in 1864 for first offence but seven years for each consecutive offences.

The last five decades of the nineteenth century saw the development of deterrence. Edmund Ducane was in charge of convict prisons and additionally the head of the prison commission. In 1877, the Prison Act was bypassed and allowed the prison arrangements to come to be increasingly centralised and uniformed. Sean McConville has suggested the years 1850-1900 as being the most restraint in the history of prisons. The formation of Pentonville prison gave to the rise of deterrence. Pentonville was both architecturally and the mile stone for all prisons and was recognized as the ideal prison.. The 1877 Prison Act managed to countless closures of innate prisons due to them becoming below the government’s control. ‘ This is a close, confined, ill- crafted prison, and extremely badly situated: as there is ample room for all the prisoners in the County prison at Southwell House of Correction, that is a extremely superior prison and inside facile admission, it appears a most un-necessary price retaining it. Sir Edmund Du Cane enforced the Prison Act of 1865 that abolished the distinction amid prisons and institutions of correction. All prisons were deprived of their autonomous power and severe laws were in use, each of the prison powers who declined to comply alongside the new laws had their power allowance seized away from them. Local prisons were then needed to grasp prison sentences for up to two years rather than those that were merely awaiting prosecution, debtors and doomed prisoners.[5]

Not all prisons presented the warders with accommodation but the bulk did. They were additionally needed to wear uniforms but what uniform they were endowed depended merely on their ranks. They were additionally delivered alongside a truncheon for protection and protection reasons. This locale might be a extremely hazardous job due to prisoners being able to use the instruments that they worked with as weapons. Their obligations were lacking a mistrust, extremely difficult. It has been stated that a real sense that wanders were themselves prisoners both inside and beyond the walls, for far of the off obligation existence was additionally supervised, encompassing their housing identifies that their job locale was ongoing and they were never off duty. They were constantly under surveillance just like the prisoners were. Additionally their job was extremely demanding and in 1865 there was a report stating that 1000 wardens to cope alongside an average prison populace of 8, 000 that works out at roughly 8 prisoners each warden. Convict prisoners should be on obligation from 6am till 9pm and they were merely allowed dates off every single supplementary Sunday so the warden had to be a stable character as they had to tolerate long hours. Like the governors, they were additionally incapable to seize each depart lacking it being authorised first. They had to leave their keys, orders book and report book in the governor’s workplace before they left the prison site. Working conditions for prison warders softly enhanced from the 1860s onwards. Rise in number of workers meant that by 1864 the warders were allowed a half day off across the week that was normally a Sunday.

Even nevertheless Pentonville was recognized as the ideal prison, prisoners yet grasped to get away from it. For example in December 1850 George Hackett, a convict who mastered in bus muggings and had a convict past alongside the Thames police and Mansion House made a getaway from Pentonville . During the investigation, it was discovered that Hackett escaped the police court alongside one more man, and a turnkey had consented a colossal number of money. Hackett was assisting a sentence for an offense that he committed on the 29th May 1850 in that he nearly slayed a police constable. He was sentenced to 15 years of transportation. The investigation arose in powers trusting that the turnkeys had been tampered. The subsequent date on the 4th December, the Times commented on this speculation after once more by uttering that the power inspectors of prisons dispatched an inquiry into a confidential investigation into the getaway of Hackett. They were suspetin that members of the prison staff had helped Hackett to get away from the prison that identifies that the bureaucrats at the prison were facilely affected and like Millbank grasped slight manipulation of the convicts.[6]

It has been shown that the system was incredibly hard for the prisoners to tolerate, the food was scarcely eatable, and bedding was hard for the majority of the time of their sentence. Prisoners were from time to time so hungry that could even eat paper. If they misbehaved next they were subjected to a diet of just bread and water that inspired the starving prisoners to be on their best actions and to stick to the prison rules. The prison surgeon had substantial power to grant prison discharge from labour or need them alongside a larger diet so prisoners discovered methods to injure themselves so that they might circumvent hard labour and get some some extra amountof food. Pentonville prison came to be one of the most challenging signals of the late 1800s. Silence came to be a law inside Pentonville prison and the labour was incredibly long and tiring. Pentonville was run like a machine, alongside set periods and precise routines for everything. The prisoners were needed to do as they were told and work under system. There was six main convict prisons across Britain- Millbank was utilized as a transportation dept, Pentonville as ideal separation, Portsmouth and Portland for associated labour, Parkhurst for juvenile delinquencies, Brixton was a woman’s prison and Dartmoor was for invalids that were incapable to participate in labour process.[7]

The question of control though was re-examined in 1863 alongside the Carnarvon Committee. The number of prisons increased from 187 in 1850 to 125 in 1867. In 1865, prisons encompassing Pentonville yet lacked adequate staff there were merely one thousand warders to cope alongside a prison populace of 8, 000 so prisons were struggling to uphold manipulation of their prisoner and convicts so the merely method to make sure that this manipulation was upheld was to make sure that the prisoners were frightened of the system. Countless prisoners did not incline to assist long sentences and it was discovered that in the 1860s approximately 74, 000 people were sentenced to imprisonment merely 52, 000 were for meant to serve one month or less and of the 12, 000 that were sentenced by the elevated court’s merely 7, 000 were meant to serve up to six months.