



Prison Registers in Institutions And Organisations

Prisons were often in old buildings, such as castles. They tended to be damp, unhealthy, insanitary and over-crowded. All kinds of prisoners were mixed in together, men, women, children; the insane; serious criminals and petty criminals; people awaiting trial; and debtors. Each prison was run by the gaoler in his own way. He made up the rules. If

you could pay, you could buy extra privileges, such as private rooms, better food, more visitors, keeping pets, letters going in and out, and books to read. If you could not, the basic fare was grim. You even had to pay the gaoler to be let out when your sentence was finished.

Law and order was a major issue in Victorian Britain. Victorians were worried about the huge new cities that had grown up following the Industrial Revolution – how were the masses to be kept under control? They were worried about rising crime. They could see that transporting convicts to Australia was not the answer and by the 1830s Australia was complaining that they did not want to be the dumping-ground for Britain's criminals.

Discovering your ancestor in prison records doesn't necessarily make them a hardened criminal, nineteenth century law was harsh and children as well as adults were imprisoned for minor misdemeanours. These records are often very detailed and can include physical descriptions of height, weight and eye colour.

Accused - Marcus Phillip Westhorpe Prescott Barthropp

Victims - Herbert Richard Ponting & Albert Nicholls

Accused	Surname	Given Names	Age	Trade or Occupation	Degree of Instruction
	Barthropp	Marcus Phillip Westhorpe Prescott	34	Journalist	
Alias	Barthrope	William	Date of Birth		Place of Birth
			Year	Date	
			1877	22-Aug	Little Roundwood, Suffolk
Physical Description					
Height	Complexion	Hair	Eyes	Affliction	Marks, Tattoos or Scars
Committing Magistrates	Surname	Given Name	Title	Address	
	Applegate	F.	Esq.	Wooley Hill House, Bradford on Avon	
	Un-named	Un-named			
Name of Victim or Victims					
Surname	Given Names	Surname	Given Names	Surname	Given Names
Ponting	Herbert Richard	Nicholls	Albert		
Date of Warrant	1911	22-May	When Received into Custody	1911	15-May (On remand)
Details of Trial					
Date of Trial	1911	26-May	Quarter Session Court	Salisbury	
Offence as Charged in the Commitment					
Unlawfully and knowingly did by certain false pretences, obtain of and from one Herbert Richard Ponting, a servant to Albert Nicholls the sum of £4 5s. 3d. in money, and a receipt for 14s. 9d with intent to defraud at					

Bradford-on-Avon, on the 10th May 1911					
Before Whom Tried	Surname	Given Names	Title		
	Coleridge		Mr. Justice		
Verdict of Jury	Guilty of obtaining money by false pretences				
Particulars of Previous Convictions Charged in the Indictment and Proved in Court					
Sentence or Order of the Court	12 months with hard labour			Prison to Which Sentenced	
Dates when Penal Servitude Ended or Supervision Commenced or Liberation					
Penal Servitude		Supervision Commenced		Liberation	
Year	Date	Year	Date	Year	Date
Intended Address on Release				Intended Occupation upon release	
Other Crimes Committed and Sentence Received	1 month North London Sessions 6th January 1903 (larceny) as Marcus P. P. Barthropp				
	4 months Marlborough St. Police Court, 26th March 1903 (obtaining £5 by false pretences) as William Barthrope				
	3 months Windsor Court Petty Sessions, 19th December 1903 (obtaining money by false pretences)				
	Dismissed on payment of 15/-, Marlborough St. Police Court 1st June 1904 (obtaining money by false pretences), as Marcus Barthrop.				
	6 months and 2 months consecutive Brighton Petty Sessions, 21st October 1904, and Slough Petty Sessions 31st October 1904 (obtaining money by false pretences) as Marcus Barthrop				
	8 Months Hard Labour Oxfordshire Assizes 9th November 1905 (obtaining money by fraud), as Marcus P. P. Barthrop.				