



## *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.

### George Austin

	Surname	Given Names	Age	Trade or Occupation	Degree of Instruction				
<b>Accused</b>	Austin	George	27	Carpenter					
<b>Birth Year</b>	1842								
	Surname	Given Name	Title	Address					
<b>Committing Magistrate (1)</b>	Barton	N.	Esq.	Warminster					
<b>Committing Magistrate (2)</b>	Powell	J.	Rev.	Sutton Veny, Warminster					
<b>Court</b>	Marlborough								
<b>Name of Victim (1)</b>	Sheppard	Charles							
<b>Name of Victim (2)</b>	Hillier	Henry							
<b>Name of Victim (3)</b>	Scammell	William							
<b>Date of Warrant</b>	1869	21-Aug							
<b>When Received into Custody</b>	1869	23-Aug		<b>Date of Trial</b>	1869	20-Oct			
<b>Offence as Charged in the Commitment</b>	Count 1:- Stealing a gouge, value sixpence, the property of Charles Sheppard, at Warminster on the 18th August 1869 Count 2:- Stealing a chisel, value sixpence, the property of Henry Hillier, at Warminster, on the 18th August 1869 Count 3:- Stealing a pair of T hinges, a sheet of glass paper, six pairs of hinges and eighteen dozen of screws, of the value of 6s., the property of William Scammell, at Warminster, on the 18th August 1869								

	Surname	Given Names	Title					
<b>Before Whom Tried</b>	Smith	T. C.	Esq.					
<b>Verdict of Jury</b>	Count 1:- Guilty of Larceny Count 2:- Acquitted of Larceny – no evidence offered Count 3:- Acquitted of Larceny							
<b>Particulars of Previous Convictions Charged in the Indictment and Proved in Court</b>								
<b>Sentence or Order of the Court</b>	Imprisoned with hard labour for nine calendar months in the Prison at Devizes							
<b>Other crimes Committed</b>								