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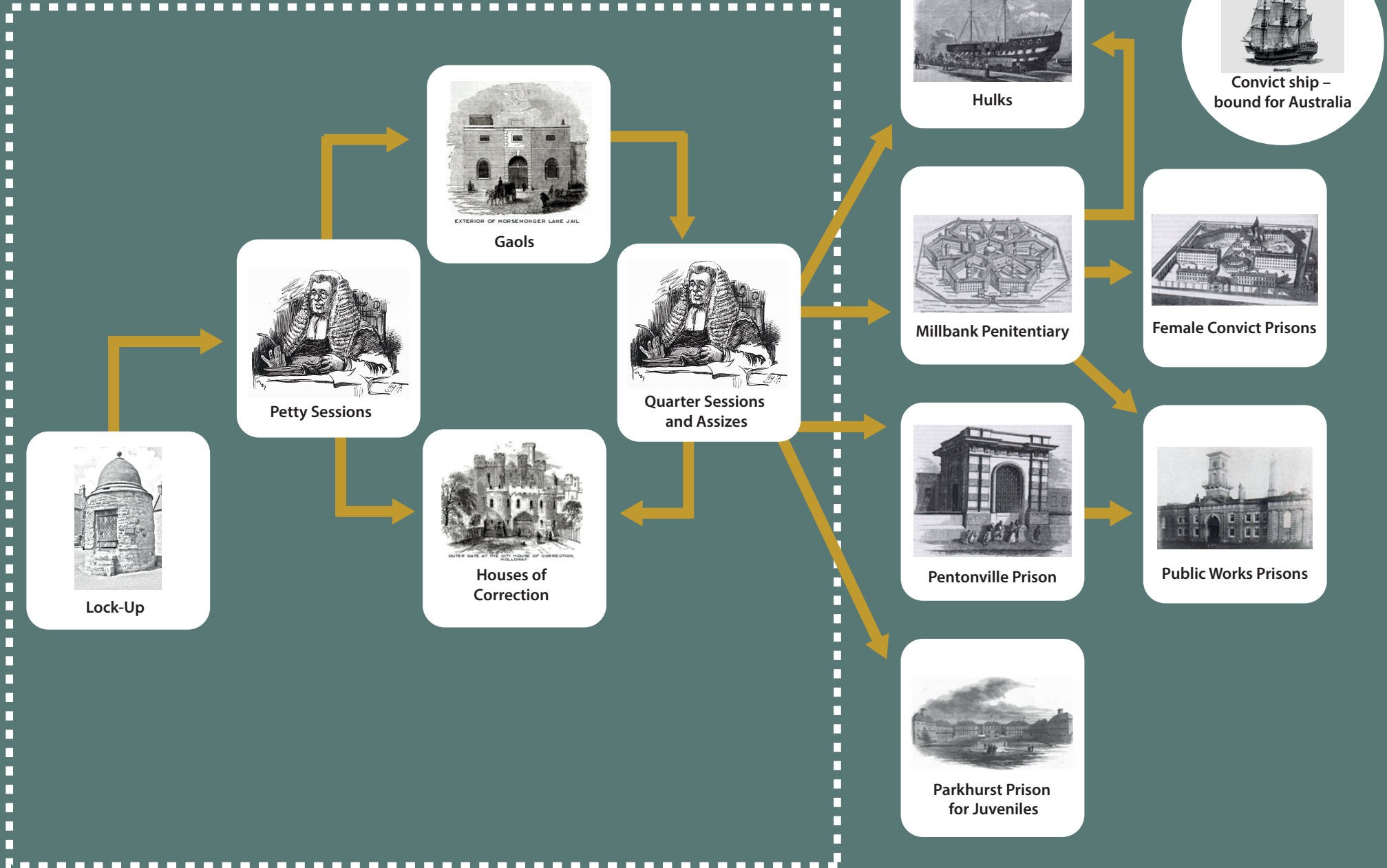


Prison system in England and Wales

Prison System in England & Wales

Local Sector (sentences <2 years)

Convict Sector (sentences >2 years)





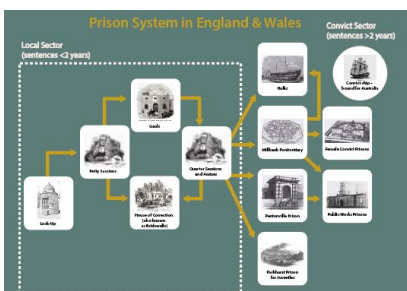
Lock-Up

Someone who was accused of crime in the 1800s might have been taken to a lock-up after being apprehended. Small lock-ups containing one or two cells, like the one in the picture, could be found in towns and villages. Sometimes lock-ups were located in the basement of the town hall.

Increasingly, police stations with cells were built.

Accused criminals would have been imprisoned in a lock-up cell for a few hours or maybe a day or two until they could be seen by the local magistrate.

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Houses of Correction

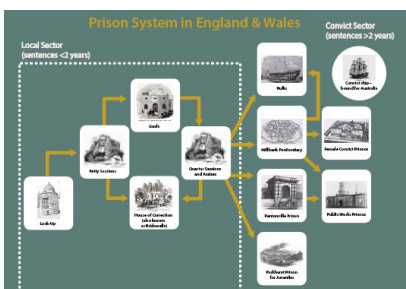
Historically, houses of correction were reserved for convicted petty offenders – for example, vagrants, thieves and prostitutes. This changed in the 1700s, as houses of correction began to take on some of the functions of gaols. Increasingly, houses of correction were built next to gaols or included in the same building.

In the 1800s, in a house of correction you might find:

1. Those who had been summarily convicted by a magistrate for a less serious offence.
2. Those who had been convicted of a more serious offence at Quarter Sessions or Assizes and sentenced to imprisonment.
3. Those accused of crime who were waiting for trial.

In 1865, the distinction between gaols and houses of correction was officially abolished and all became known as **‘local prisons’**.

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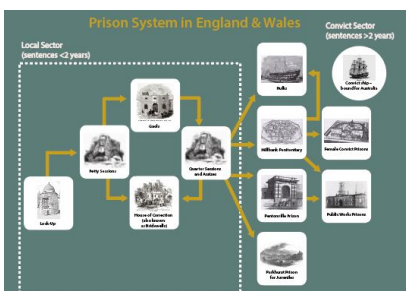


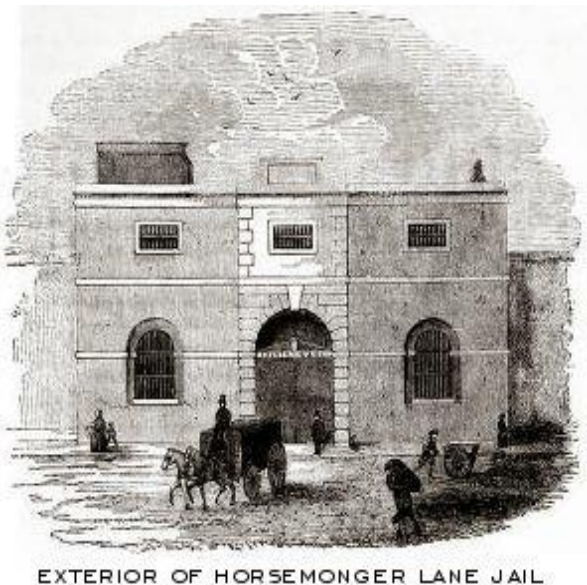


Convict ship – bound for Australia

Between 1787 and 1868, more than 162,000 men, women and children sentenced to transportation departed Britain and Ireland bound for the Australian penal colonies. Until the 1840s, many convicts were delivered to awaiting ships from local prisons and hulks. After 1842, all convicts passed through convict prisons before their voyage. The transportation of women was abolished in 1853, and of men in 1857, and the sentence was replaced with penal servitude (i.e. long term imprisonment) served in Britain and Ireland. However, a small number of convicts continued to be sent to Western Australia until 1868, and some convicts continued to serve part of their sentence of penal servitude on prison hulks at Gibraltar and Bermuda until 1875.

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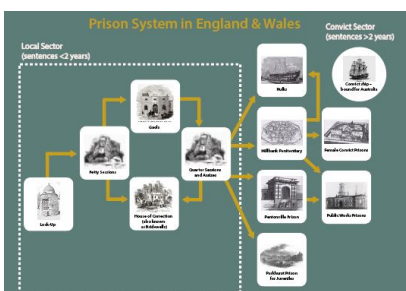
Gaols

Traditionally, gaols were used to hold those accused of crime who were awaiting trial (i.e., on remand), and those who had been convicted and were awaiting punishment (i.e., death, transportation, or some other physical punishment). Over the 1700s, the gaol took on some of the functions of the house of correction. Some convicted criminals sentenced to imprisonment served their sentence in a gaol.

In the 1800s, in a gaol you might find:

1. Those who had been accused of crime and were awaiting trial at Quarter Sessions or Assizes.
2. Those who had been convicted at Quarter Sessions or Assizes and were awaiting punishment – death, transportation, or transfer to a convict prison.
3. Those who had been convicted of crime and sentenced to a period of imprisonment (less than two years).
4. Those who had defaulted on payment of fines imposed by the courts.
5. Debtors (bankrupts sentenced to imprisonment).

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In 1865, the distinction between gaols and houses of correction was officially abolished and all became known as '**local prisons**'.



Quarter Sessions and Assizes

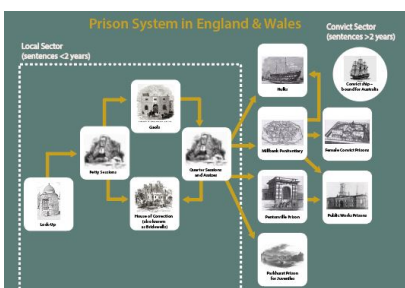
Remand prisoners would have faced trial in either the Quarter Sessions or Assize court, depending on the seriousness of the offence of which they were accused.

If the accused was found not guilty by the jury, he or she would have been released.

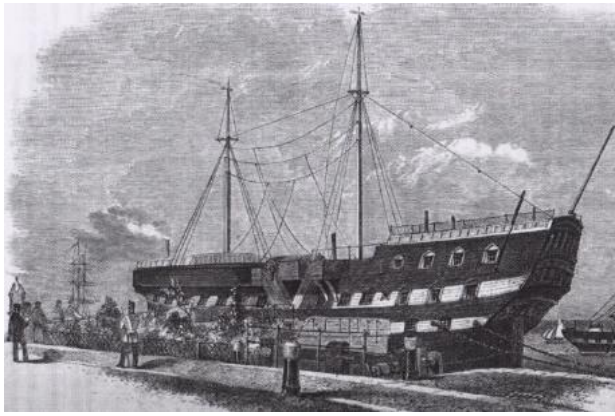
Otherwise, the following options were available:

1. Quarter Sessions magistrates could impose a sentence of imprisonment, not exceeding 2 years, which would be served at a House of Correction or a Gaol.
2. Until 1857, Quarter Sessions magistrates and Assize judges could impose a sentence of transportation for either 7 years, 14 years or for life.
3. From 1853, Quarter Sessions magistrates and Assize judges could impose a sentence of penal servitude – imprisonment for more than five years.
4. Assize judges could impose the death sentence. This would typically be carried out at the local gaol.

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Sentences of transportation and penal servitude sent a convicted criminal into the convict penal sector.

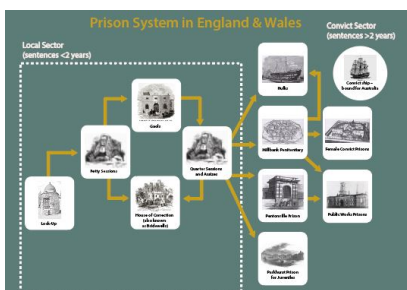


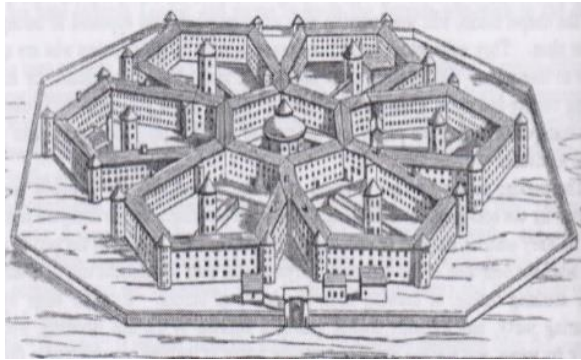
Hulks

Until the 1770s, convicted criminals sentenced to transportation were sent to America. When war with America broke out in 1775, transportation to America ended. Prisoners sentenced to transportation could not be sent to convict ships and so local gaols became overcrowded. As a temporary measure, the government decided to use old naval ships on the Thames as temporary prisons.

Prison hulks were soon stationed along England's south coast too. By the 1840s, they were used for men who were physically unfit and unable to be transported. From 1848, they began to be replaced with prisons onshore (public works prisons). The last hulk in England was destroyed by fire in 1857.

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Millbank Penitentiary

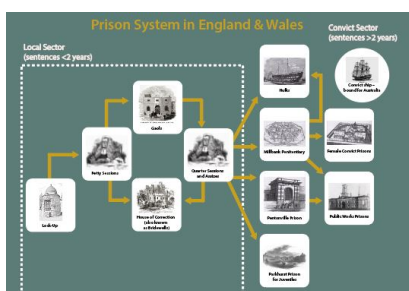
In 1816, Millbank Penitentiary was opened to accommodate men and women who had been sentenced to transportation but showed promise of reform. They were sent here to serve a long term of imprisonment instead.

In 1842, Millbank was converted into a depot – to receive men sentenced to transportation, assess them, and send them on to an appropriate institution – young male juveniles to Parkhurst, promising males to Pentonville, unhealthy males to hulks, and unpromising males to convict ships for immediate transportation. Women sentenced to transportation were held at Millbank until a convict ship was available to take them to the penal colonies.

In 1850, Millbank became a prison for men and women sentenced to transportation (or later penal servitude), serving their first stage of punishment in separate confinement (9 months). The men would then be transferred to serve a second stage of punishment at a public works prison. Women were sent to a female convict prison to serve their second stage.

In 1882, Millbank became a local prison, and all convict prisoners were removed.

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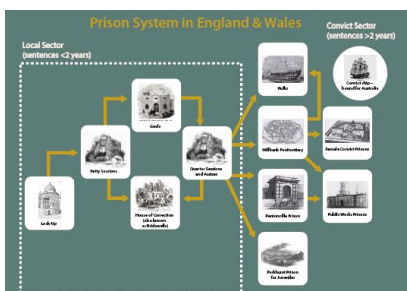
Pentonville Prison

Pentonville Prison was opened in 1842 for men sentenced to transportation who showed promise of reform. They spent 18 months in separate confinement before being transported to Australia under more favourable conditions.

In 1850, Pentonville became a prison for all men sentenced to transportation (or later penal servitude), serving their first stage of punishment in separate confinement (9 months). The men would then be transferred to serve a second stage of punishment at a public works prison.

In 1885, Pentonville became a local prison, and all convict prisoners were removed.

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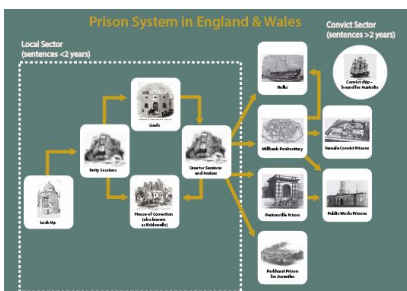


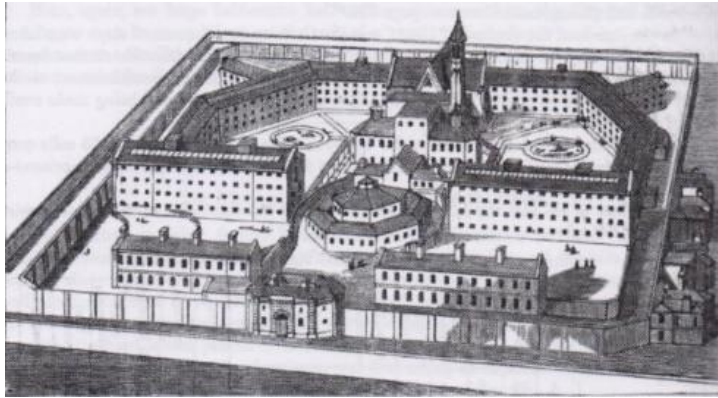
Parkhurst Prison for Juveniles

In 1838, Parkhurst Prison for Juveniles opened on the Isle of Wight. Originally intended for younger boys sentenced to transportation, it soon began to accept older teens as well. Its aim was to equip boys for emigration and a new life in the colonies. Soon it became used to hold boys prior to transportation to the penal colonies, and later as a juvenile prison from which boys would be released into British society.

By 1864, the boys had been removed. Parkhurst was temporarily used as a female convict prison before becoming a male public works prison.

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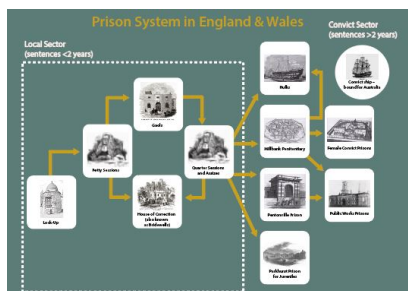


Female Convict Prisons

Female convict prisons appeared in 1853 when the sentence of transportation was abolished for women. The first female convict prison was at Brixton. Convict women were sent here after completing their first stage of punishment in separate confinement at Millbank Prison. Brixton was replaced by a larger female convict prison at Woking in 1869. Some convict women served a third stage of imprisonment at a 'refuge' – such as Fulham Refuge (later Fulham Prison).

By the 1880s, Woking Female Convict Prison had begun to accommodate convict women serving their first stage of penal servitude.

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Public Works Prisons

From 1849, a network of public works prisons for male convicts began to open. The prisons were intended as a second stage of punishment for those sentenced to transportation or, later, penal servitude. During the day, the men would labour on public works or in the service of the prison. At night, they would be confined in separate cells.

Public works prisons gradually replaced hulk imprisonment and transportation. Convict men sentenced to penal servitude spent the last stage of their sentence (and most of their sentence) at these prisons.

In the early 1880s, following the transfer of Millbank and Pentonville prisons to the local prisons sector, public works prisons became simply convict prisons.

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