



Source 3

Task

- 3a.** Why was it more difficult to break into a warehouse than a house?
- 3b.** What evidence is there in sources **2** and **3** that burglaries in Victorian Britain were well planned?
- 3c.** Use the information from source **2** and **3** to write your own entry for the Police Gazette (source **1** will give you some ideas) asking for information to help solve a burglary.

Source 3

This was written by the same prison governor who wrote source 2. In this source an inmate describes how to break into a warehouse.

Warehouses mostly become the spoil of the Burglar, they being for the most part made fast outside, where from the presence of valuable property, a guard is left on the Premises; a plant is put upon the place. The guard is observed to go to some neighbouring pot house to take his pipe and pint of Beer in the Evening. The plant is continued - it is soon discovered what time the watchman leaves his trust and when he returns. This point gained an opportunity is taken to get the lock. A piece of Steel, the shape of a key, coated with wax, tallow, or blackened by the flame of a Candle is introduced into the

(PRO ref: HO 73/2)



look. Upon the coating, the impressions of the
swords are imprinted and in this way, should
the skeletons they have in hand not answer
the purpose, a key is soon formed. Three or four
settings may be required. Enabled to gain
admittance, the next step is to lay a plant
upon the guard; for this purpose one of the
party, possessing the "gift of the gab" is chosen
and sent to the house frequented by the guard,
sometimes a few nights before, but always on
the night of the intended robbery. He tells a



good tale - sings a song, is noticed by, or notices his man - an acquaintanceship is soon formed, he vouches the guard is the kindest and most convivial fellow in the World, feigns drunk - insists upon the other drinking at his expense, let it suffice, he keeps the poor watchman engaged till the signal is given by his confederates that all is right, when he takes his departure, leaving a shilling for another glass for his dupe - thus making certainty doubly sure.