

# Victorian School Days



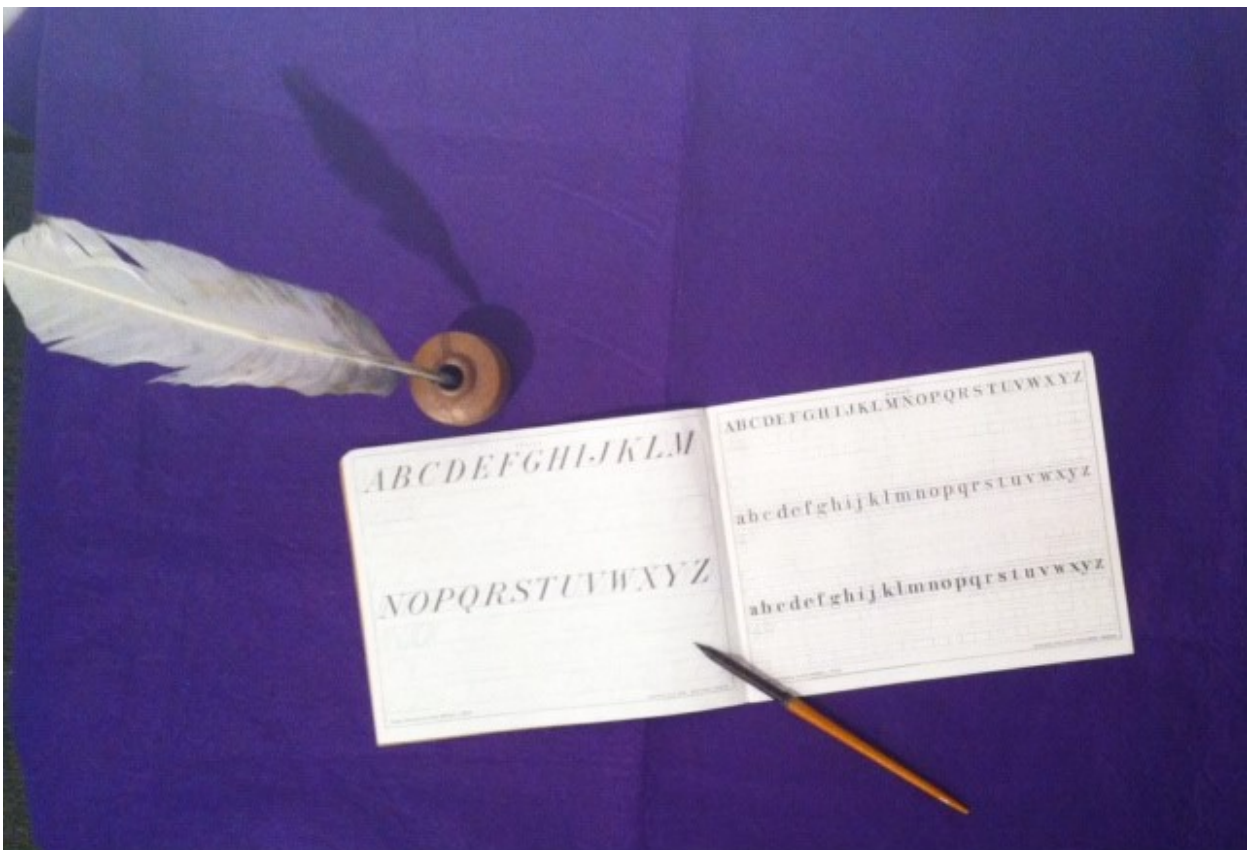
# Slates and Slate Pencils



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Victorian children started to learn to write using a slate - a sort of small blackboard - on which they wrote with a sharpened piece of slate called a slate pencil. Pupils brought a piece of sponge or a rag from home to clean the slate, or some just used their sleeve!

# Dip Pens , Quills and Copybooks





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When Victorian children got older they would write in a book using a dip pen and blue-black ink from out of an inkwell. A book with ruled lines was used for handwriting practice, the copybook. The first line was printed, or copied carefully from the blackboard, then the entire page was filled with identical lines. If a mistake was made it stood out glaringly, and it is from this that we say you "blot your copybook" when you make a serious mistake.

# Cane



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The Victorian teacher would use a cane to punish naughty children. The cane was given on the hand or the bottom, or sometimes given across the back of the legs. In public schools even prefects would carry and use a cane. All sorts of things might be punished: being rude, answering back, speaking out of turn, poor work, in fact anything that displeased the teacher. Children who had been caned usually kept quiet about it because if their parents found out they would probably be punished again.

# Attendance medals and certificates





# **Attendance medals and certificates**

To encourage children to attend school, rather than perhaps go out to work to earn money for the family, pupils were given awards for good attendance and punctuality.

# Bell



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This is a similar bell as the ones that would have been used in a school, without a handle. In the Victorian classroom children would have sat in straight rows at their desks. There were few decorations or learning aids and equipment. The school teacher would have had her desk at the front of the class, where he/she would have kept the school bell and the cane. The bell would have been used at lunch time, after play time and at the end of the school day.

# Backboard and Finger Stocks





# Backboard and Fingerstocks

These were both used to punish Victorian children in the classroom. The backboard or back straightener was used to improve a child's posture. Each arm was hooked over the narrow ends to prevent slouching. This replica version is made out of wood. It is only suitable for use by children. The finger stocks would have been used to hold children's fingers behind their backs to prevent fidgeting. These are a replica version, but serve well to give modern children a taste of Victorian punishment. Wooden with ribbon ties.