

The Catalogue of Imagined Provenances



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A Miscellany of Carceral Objects

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**We would like you to believe everything
you read here is true.**

Objects with Confirmed Attributions

Soap Head

Soap
3" (7.5cm)
Mid 19th Century

Researcher: Birnie



One of the older items in the catalogue, this piece was made by Clare Faddon during her imprisonment at HMP Stafford in 1840. Faddon, a domestic servant, had been imprisoned for the theft of a coat and sentenced to three months.

Facts surrounding the making of the object are hard to come by, but evidence suggests Faddon made it for the prison's Governor in return for visiting privileges. I have been unable to discover whether the request was granted, but clearly the Governor was impressed with the gift as he kept it, along with the letter Faddon sent to him. A search of the prison's Register of Inmates confirms Faddon was held at the prison between May and August 1840. As far as we know, she was never reconvicted.

Dear Governon
would it be possible
for you to let my mother visit me
soon as I have not seen her since
my date of conviction
I have made you this gift of soap
and hope you will favorably
my request
Yours humbly
Clare Faddon

Letter from Faddon to the prison Governor

Date..... 26 May 40

Name..... Clare Faddon

Aliases..... Faddon-Fallon, Claval

Age..... 37

Height..... 5' 3"

Hair..... Black

Eyes..... Blue

Complexion..... Fair skin,
light - pale

Where born..... Birmingham

Married or single..... Single

Trade or occupation..... Domestic servant

Distinguishing marks..... Scar on back of neck

Address at time of apprehension..... No settled home

Place and date of conviction..... Birmingham 26 May 1840

Offence for which convicted..... Simple larceny - stole coat

Sentence..... 3 months

Date to be liberated..... 27 August 1840

Previous Convictions..... Larceny of coat and feloniously making 2
pieces of coin



Faddon's entry in the prison's Register of Inmates

Soap Figure Old Joe

Soap
 5½" (14 cm)
 Late 19th Century
 Researcher: Jamie



Recent discoveries indicate this statue was carved in the late 1880s by a prisoner serving his sentence at HMP Dartmoor.

Samuel Braithwaite, a stonemason, was serving 12 months for the theft of a chicken. It is understood the statue was carved by Braithwaite to commemorate an inmate called Old Joe (real name Joseph Mason), an elderly malnourished man who, according to the Governor's journals, fought throughout his time in prison for the rights and fair treatment of inmates. More specifically, Old Joe played a vital part in the abolishment of the ball and chain in 1887.

Old Joe had been a regular inmate at Dartmoor for petty theft and pickpocketing. He was a very thin and sickly man with dark sunken eyes and a prominent nose and chin. Braithwaite made the statue and upon his release gave it to Old Joe.

In 1888 Old Joe was admitted to the prison's hospital wing where he remained until his death in early 1889.

Upon clearing his possessions a prison officer, Mr Parker saw the statue, commenting, "that old bugger gave us hell", and decided to keep it.

Throughout the subsequent years, Mr Parker progressed through the ranks to Governor, before eventually retiring in 1910. When the new Governor took occupancy of his quarters, he discovered the statue at the back of a drawer, labeled 'Old Joe'. It was at this point the statue was donated to the Home Office archive and assigned the catalogue number 1640.

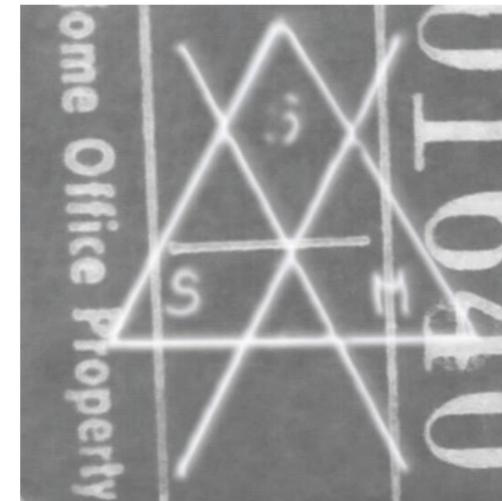
The proof that it was Samuel Braithwaite who carved the statue was only confirmed in 2021 when the piece was sent for analysis to the Savonnerie de la Licorne in Marseille who confirmed the age of the soap, and discovered a mason's mark hidden under the Home Office sticker.

A search of the Register of Inmates of Dartmoor indicates that this mark was used by Braithwaite to confirm receipt of his possessions upon release, "Two farthings, one cloth cap, and one wishbone (broken)."

HMP Dartmoor Medical Officer Visits Record Page 33

Date	Time	Prisoner Name	Complaint	Recommendation	Medical Officer Name
1 st April 1888	10:30am	Joseph Mason	Malnutrition and Consumption	Extra 2oz Cheese Move to Hospital Wing	Dr. Gladstone
1 st April 1888	11:45am	David Miller	Gout	Not Gout Prisoner Well	Dr. Gladstone
2 nd April 1888	12:15pm	William Knee	Hearing voices	Recommend Transfer to	Dr. Alfred Wright

Entry in the Medical Officer's Journal showing the date of Joseph Mason's admission to the hospital wing



X-ray image of base of statue showing Braithwaite's mark



The label found attached to the statue upon its discovery in 1910

Slate Painting

Chalk and ink on grey slate
14" (35 cm) and 10" (25 cm)
Late 19th Century

Researcher: Clayton



Reverse of slate

This piece was discovered at HMP Parkhurst and is believed to have been made in the late 1890s by an African prisoner, Ebenezer Johnson. At this time, Johnson, a former sailor with a reputation for hard drinking, was serving a five year sentence for repeated incidents of drunk and disorderly conduct.

The work consists of two images. On the front is what is described as a 'Sketch decoration of altar piece HMP Parkhurst'. This shows different stages in the life of Christ as well as Moses and the Ten Commandments, and the Apostle's Creed.

On the reverse is a striking image showing Parkhurst's chapel with a preacher in the pulpit and the faces of many staff and prisoners. We believe Johnson included himself here as his is the only black face in the crowd in the lower right of the painting.

It is understood that Johnson started working on the piece prior to a special visit to the prison from the

Archbishop of Canterbury to give a Good Friday address. Upon completion Johnson was keen to offer the piece as a gift to His Grace.

Unfortunately, some days before the visit, Johnson was involved in an altercation with another prisoner. The Governor's records show he was accused of breaking prison rule 17 (talking to another inmate) and prison rule 23 (refusing to follow an order). As a consequence he was to be held in the prison's 'dark cell' for 14 days. Johnson was so incensed by this punishment that he attempted to erase the painting on the reverse, hence the large smudge across the surface.

Fortunately, the painting was snatched away from Johnson before he could go further and whilst it was never subsequently given to the Archbishop, it was held and displayed in the chaplain's office as a memento of the visit. It remained in the possession of the chaplaincy until the late 1970s when it was donated to the Prison Service archive.



Poster advertising visit of the Archbishop of Canterbury

H.M.P. Parkhurst		Governor's Report		
Date	Convict Number	Nature of Offence	Officers Name	Punishment
April 30th	1909 Ebenezer Johnson	Breaking Rules 17 and 23 Use of intemperate language	Willfred Cooper	Held in the dark cell for two weeks as punishment plus by order of the Governor

Entry in Governor's records

Headphones

Rubber, wire, fabric, foam, electric flex
11" x 8½" (28cm x 21.5cm)
Mid 20th Century

Researcher: Ryan M



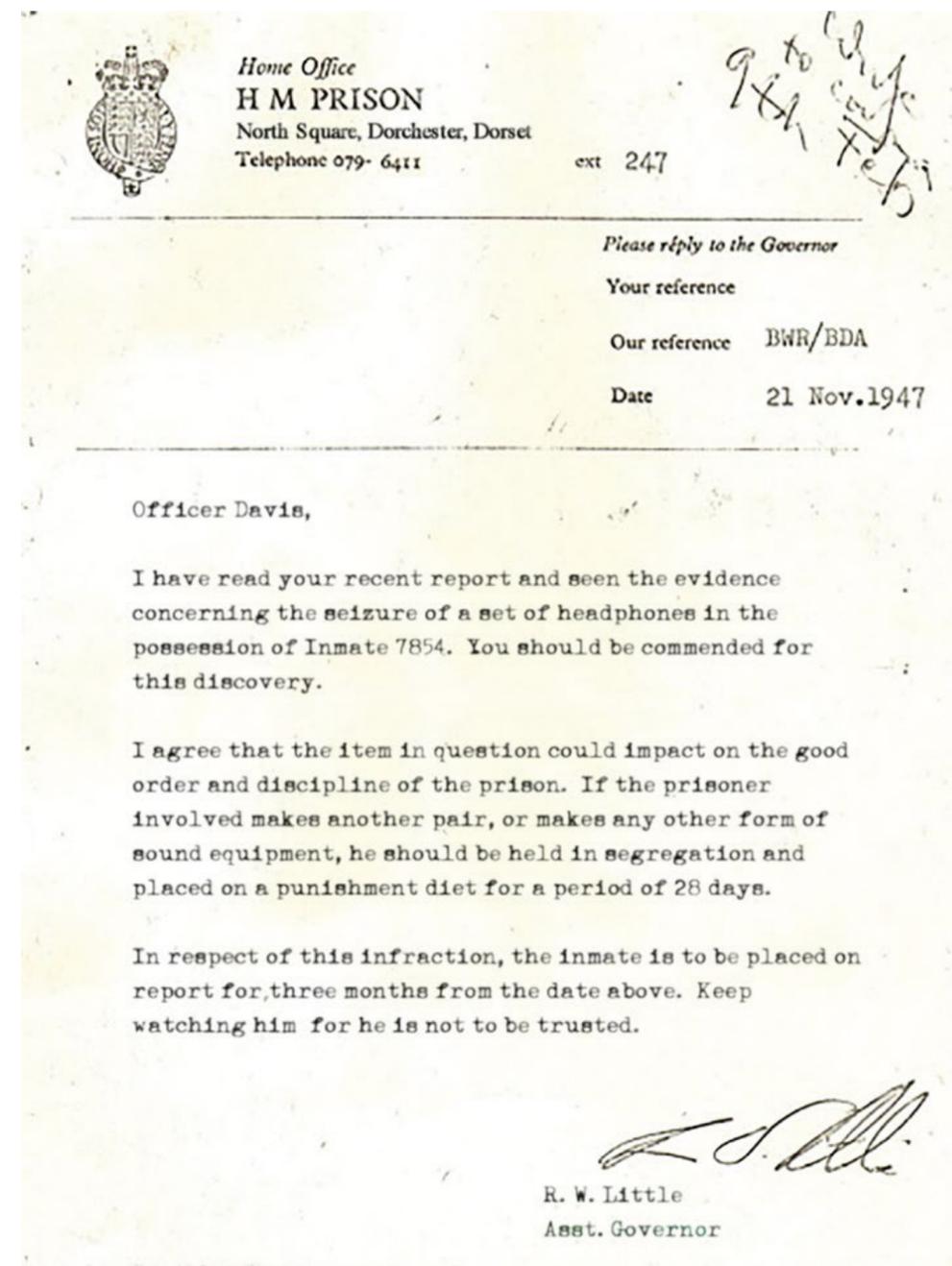
An improvised set of headphones that a prisoner would have used in his cell to listen to the radio without disturbing others. Made from materials available in prison; replacement rubber heels, a blanket, wire from a coat hanger, and foam from a chair cushion. The maker has also scavenged some electric wire from a different piece of equipment (possibly a lamp), and used small speakers from another radio. The style of electrical flex suggests the item was made sometime in the 1940s.

A search of HMP Dorchester's archive records indicate the headphones were discovered in the possession of the maker, James Smith on 17 November 1947. An evidence label from Officer Davis and subsequent memo from Assistant Governor Little indicate the headphones were seized from Smith's cell because they were classed as contraband.

Further investigation into archives show that Smith had been a corporal during World War II. After leaving the army, Smith found it hard to adjust to peace time, especially after everything he'd been through and everything he'd seen. He had been a radio operator in a tank as part of the 27th Armoured Brigade which was attached to the British 3rd Division, and had landed on Sword Beach as part of Operation Overlord (code name for the Battle of Normandy).

Corporal Smith was 20 years old when war broke out and 25 when he left the army. Smith was arrested for assaulting a German airman POW who was at work repairing roads in his local area. Smith was sentenced to five years for his actions.

The headphones were held in a store at HMP Dorchester until its closure in 2013 when the headphones were passed onto the National Justice Museum.



Letter to Officer Davis



Label attached to headphones after discovery

Enamel Disc “Darkness in Light”

Glazed alloy
4" (10cm) diameter
Mid 20th Century

Researcher: Rhys



This piece, entitled ‘Darkness in Light’, is considered one of the earliest interpretations of the Art Deco era of modern art, being created in 1958 by a woman named Carmelita Montegue, aged 39. At the time, Montegue was residing in HMP Holloway serving 14 years for GBH, following the mutilation of a client to expose their abuse of other women.

In her own words, Montegue stated on many occasions of the constant turmoil she faced in her life, and the feelings of desperation she battled daily in order to keep the darkness out.

After speaking out about her experiences, Montegue became known as advocate for exposing underground sex rings, being labelled as a new age Pankhurst. Many women petitioned for her release from prison, while others called her a liar.

Within the design itself, Montegue has juxtaposed either side of an alloy disc in order to develop the immediate contrast in her personality. The lighter side uses bold, vibrant oils to stain the surface with a flourish of deep red to represent her innocence, and the reclaiming of her virginity and the purity that was stolen from her.

The rear of the disc, decorated with mossy undertones, represents the seedy, unspoken world she was dragged into from an early age.

Montegue passed away aged 49, two years before her release from Holloway. She declared all proceeds from her art should go to her charity, survivors of Sexual Assault and Exploitation, to offer assistance to future victims of prostitution, and to help prevent further injustice where the woman is punished for the crime.

After her death, this piece was donated to Vivienne Carmichael, a local curator at John Rylands Museum. To this day, Montegue’s art can be seen alongside many pieces from the Suffragettes and activism era, continuing to shed light on the issue of prostitution and re-iterating her struggle for change.

Dr Joanna Burke’s celebrated book about Montegue was published in 1968. In 1982 however, a revised edition was issued after Burke came into possession of correspondence between Montegue and some of her ‘girls’, which cast considerable doubt upon her motives. The black book to which Montegue refers has never been found.

Dearest Eliza,
I fear that I am not long for this world.
Life has become a lonely place, especially when one is confined to these four walls.
I am not one whom is scared easily, however the thought that I may not leave this place troubles me immensely. I understand some may resent me for what comes next, but it was my only intention that I would look out for you, my girls. My whole ^{sorrowful} life has been dedicated to ensuring that you are all free, free from the pain, free from the torment, free to be who you want to be.

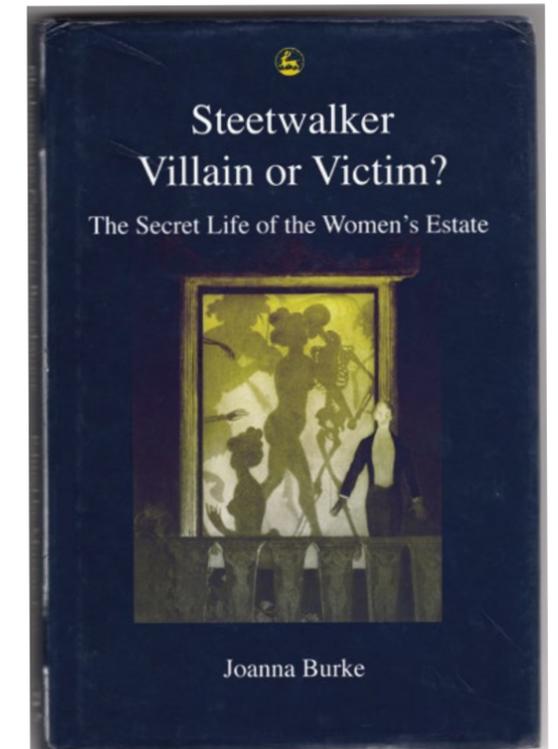
When my time comes, when death knocks at my door, there must be no tears, no sorrow. Our movement will continue. The victims of sexual abuse and exploitation will conquer the justice system one day. Soon, people won't label us as whores, as streetwalkers or ladies of the night, soon we will be recognised for who we truly are, victims. Victims of a mans world.

My friend, I leave to you my black book. This book is yours to keep and for your eyes only, for if this book is to see the light of day, I fear that many lives will be ruined not just ours, others. They tried to get the names during the trial, the victims, however I managed to keep them concealed, from their favourite, "The man in the ~~black~~ window" to "Mr Dorcy" I am one of the lucky ones in knowing that I have maintained my morals and kept these names concealed, for if they were to be exposed, hell would soon freeze over with what would come next.

Take care my dearest friend,
until we meet again.
your ~~friend~~ eternal friend,
Carmelita Montegue

12-2-67
E. MURROE
9 TAYLOR ST
BURTON
DEAR MARY,
"LADY" CARMELITA IS DEAD.
THE WENCH WROTE TO ME BEFORE SHE DIED. SHE PROPOSED THAT SHE HAD OUR BEST INTERESTS AT HEART.
HYPOCRITE!
SHE CARED FOR NOBODY OTHER THAN HERSELF AND BECAUSE OF HER WE NOW NO LONGER HAVE THE TRUST OF OUR CLIENTEL ALL BECAUSE SHE WANTED TO LINE HER OWN POCKET.
Yours sincerely,
Eliza Murroe

Some of the correspondence that led to Burke revising her book



Front and back of Burke’s 1968 biography of Montegue

Two Painted Jars

Glass, alloy and oil paint
4" x 2½" (10cm x 5.75cm) diameter
Mid 20th Century

Researcher: Peter



The painter of these jars would have remained a mystery were it not for new technology. Investigations by staff at the Department of Conservation and Technology at The Courtauld Institute of Art have determined that whilst initially these works looked unsigned, hyperspectral imaging indicates there is indeed a signature. Cross referencing against prison records held at the National Archives in Kew confirm the name and signature belong to a George William "Billy" Dobson.

My subsequent extensive research of local records and newspapers indicate Dobson was born 22 January 1908 in Hyde Street, South Shields. The youngest of three children, his father, Jim, was well known for working in Holland's - one the best butcher's shops in the area. Dobson's elder brother, Stanley, was only 19 when he was killed in action in 1914 during the first battle of Ypres. Further tragedy struck four years later when Jim died aged 48 in the influenza pandemic of 1918. This meant the responsibility for the survival of the family fell to his mother Emily, who worked as a cleaner in one of the local shipyards, and his elder sister Susan, who got work on a counter in a department store.

Dobson soon became known as Billy as it was not so posh sounding amongst his friends. He left school at 12

and got a job delivering produce from his father's old employer at the butchers. He saved to buy a bicycle and enjoyed riding up into the Cleadon Hills to spend time in the countryside on his day off.

He was never called up for service during WW2 because he had a major operation to his lower back in the late 1930s. So Dobson's contribution to the war effort lay not in fighting but in the running of a variety of black market operations using his butchery connections. This involvement in crime went unheeded for many years until in the late 1950s he was convicted of embezzling money from his then employer and spent several months in Durham Jail. It was during this stint of imprisonment that he made these two pieces.

The jars are painted with oil based paint and are landscapes. The fact that they are painted on glass indicates they may have been done under supervision in an art class, which might also explain how they finished up in the prison's store cupboard before submission to the Prison Service archive. The colours are bold yet blended where required, with care taken in the details of fencing and plants. The trees are created using a stipple effect and the overall results reflect, perhaps, his longing for and love of the countryside.



Photo of Holland's Butchers circa 1910



Hyperspectral imaging reveals Dobson's signature

'Believe' Slippers

Textile and string
10" x 4" (25cm x 10cm)
Mid 20th Century

Researcher: John



These slippers were not made by a prisoner, but rather a prisoner's son. We have good provenance on this piece as they were a recent donation to the museum, complete with a small dossier of documents.

They were the last present from John Wilson, aged nine, for his father Terry Wilson who was hanged in November 1964. The custom at the time was that condemned prisoners were allowed to wear their own clothes at the time of their hanging. Following an execution, all personal effects would be returned to the family of the prisoner and so it is in this case that John Wilson's mother kept the slippers hidden away until her death.

Terry Wilson was hanged for a murder, which he always claimed he did not commit. At the time, the only person who believed in his innocence was his son, John. However, as the newspaper article shows, developments in DNA technology now cast more than a reasonable doubt on the conviction.

In his letter to the museum, John Wilson explains how he made the slippers from carpet and string in a class at school, and how he now wants them to be known as 'Believe Slippers' as a tribute to his father.



Liverpool Echo, 20 November 2020

February 13th 2021

My name is John Wilson.

I am written to you today is to donate my Dad's Slippers that I made for him in 1964. He was in HMP Liverpool and was hanged for murder. I Believed that my dad Never did the crime. In recent year DNA has put my father crime of Murder in doubt.

The way I was give these Slippers was my Mum, Clare passed away 23rd January 2021, When we was cleaning the house out I found this Slippers with these old notes.

The Story I remember is when I was 9 years old my father was arrested for Murder his name was Terry Wilson. I was in Primary School at the time and we was in Textiles class, I made this Slippers for my Dad. But I didn't have ~~money~~ ^{Any} money because my dad was in Jail and my Mum was broken because of the events.

I knew my dad didn't ~~make~~ ^{do} this crime. I always Believed him. I used carpet or the fiber and string from the mill to make these Slippers but I wanted my dad to know I still cared and believed him.

He was hanged and all his belongings was given back to my mother 'Clare' and this lead me to finding them today.

I want to donate this Slippers to keep my dad's story alive and show his legacy off and to show that he is my hero. The Slippers, I would love them to be called "Believe".

I hope these Slippers can be in your collection's
Thank you for Spending time to read this letter

John Wilson

Wilson's letter to the museum

Millefiori Box

Glass and brass
1½" x 1½" (4cm x 4cm)
Mid 20th Century

Researcher: Harry



Homosexuality in 1967 was still a criminal offence, punishable by a custodial sentence. Concealed within this small decorated box, gifted as a meaningful act of kindness, is the hidden truth: the life of a gay man within the prison system. A history of forbidden love, and the reality of the consequences of being gay in prison that befell the individuals who endured them. A burden, that in this case, led to tragic consequences.

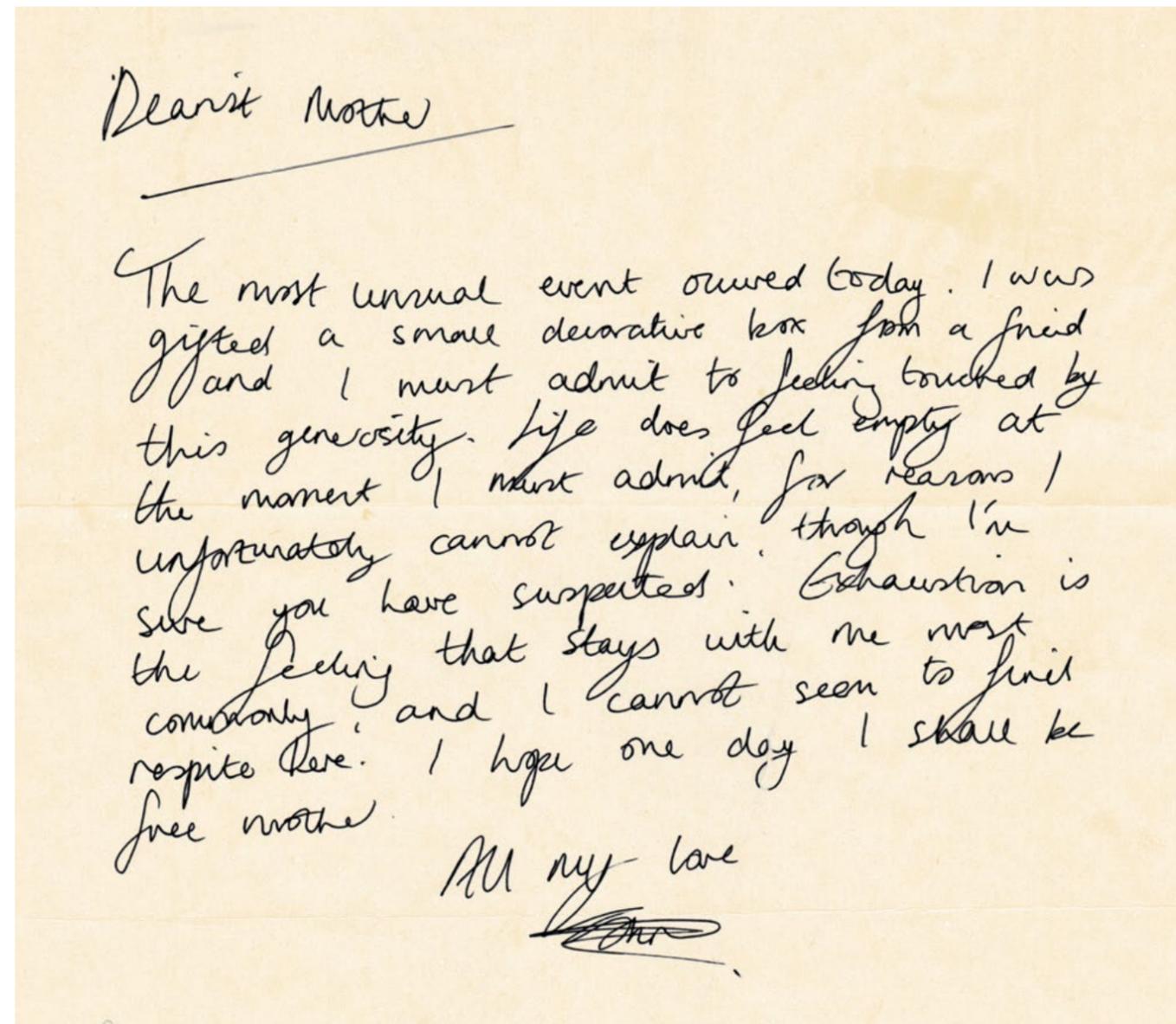
John Wilkinson was imprisoned in HMP Pentonville, in 1967, for homosexual activity, sadly just before it was decriminalised. Even at this time it still held exceptional stigma within society, but a far greater stigma within prison. In order to try and conceal himself from other prisoners (to prevent attacks or questions with regards to his offence), Wilkinson stayed in his cell as much as possible. During his sentence, an unnamed prisoner who attempted to look out for Wilkinson, gifted him a small box, designed in the Italian Millefiori style, in an act of kindness to try and reach out to John.

In the late 1960s, Government policy began a radical shift in how to deal with prisoners, moving from a system solely designed to punish, to one attempting to rehabilitate and train prisoners ready for employment upon release. The box was most likely created as part of a prison creative workshop, since a kiln is needed as part of the process. It would have been made from a special Millefiori kit containing both the box and the glass beads. The small size of the box enabled the maker to complete it within the course timeframe.

In a letter to a relative, Wilkinson explains that the gift took him by surprise, yet does not appear to disclose his use of the box. The discovery of what Wilkinson used the box for comes with a tragic story. Wilkinson was reported by the jail to have taken his own life. Yet on the same day of his death, it was reported that a prisoner was heavily assaulted for an unknown reason, leading Wilkinson's family to believe that this assault was an act of homophobia that was covered up by the jail. In a possessions document given to the family following his death, it states that within his pocket at the time of death was the Millefiori box, containing a small photograph of a man. We do not know the name of this man, but it is believed to be Wilkinson's partner. On the back of the photograph are the words 'my love, with me always'.

Wilkinson's box was given to his family and kept in a box of possessions in memory of him. 50 years later the box was discovered by a younger gay relative of Wilkinson's. Inspired by the story of Wilkinson, and living close to the National Justice Museum at the time, the relative decided to donate the object to the museum, in order to preserve Wilkinson and his partner's history, and to hopefully one day discover the identity of the man in the photograph.

The man in the photograph is a symbol of illicit yet completely real and existing love, and no matter how hard the system attempted to suppress the rights of gay men, their stories survive, even in the smallest and most concealed of ways.



Wilkinson's letter to his mother



Photograph discovered inside the box

Soap Face

Soap
1 7/8" x 1 7/8" (5.5cm x 5.5cm)
20th Century

Researcher: Darren



This soap carving, and associated drawing and writing, was found when cleaning out old redundant cells in HMP Lancaster when the prison closed in 2012, and gifted to the museum. I believe the carving was made in the early 1970s by Clarence Felix, and was kept on his bed when sleeping to ward off evil spirits.

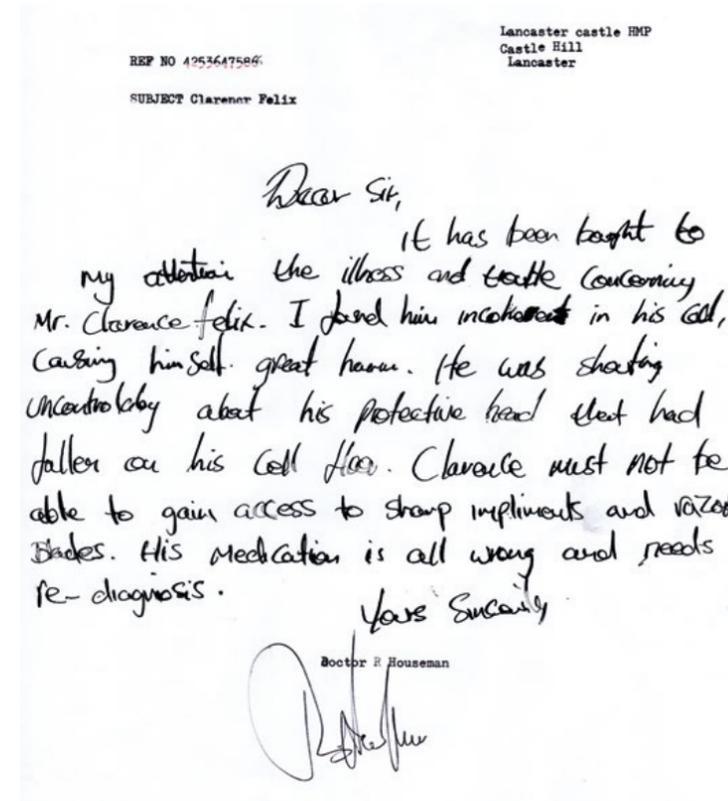
Quite a lot is known about Clarence Felix's life inside as he had been in the care of various institutions for much of his life. Felix's parents died when he was six years old. His uncle was unable to look after him and so Felix was admitted into Lancaster's Royal Albert Hospital. The Royal Albert, opened in 1870 and originally known as "The Royal Albert Asylum for idiots and imbeciles of the seven northern counties", was a psychiatric institution that cared for children and adults with learning disabilities and/or those who were mentally ill. By the mid 1960s the hospital housed over 1000 patients. However, public opinion about the use

of Victorian institutions led to changes in their use, and Felix was discharged into the care of the local authority in the late 1960s.

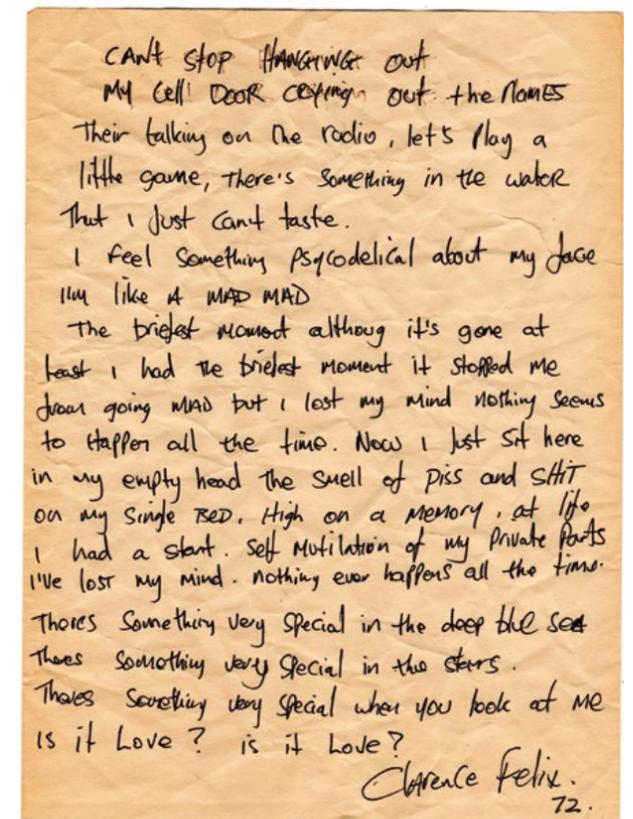
Unfortunately, Felix did not cope well, and he ended up being re-institutionalised, but this time in prison. Documents discovered through my research show that Felix found prison even more upsetting than the Royal Albert, and concerns about the treatment of his mental illness were raised by the doctor at the prison during his time there.

After years of torment and self abuse, Felix was diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia and transferred from prison to a Psychiatric Intensive Care Unit. He was finally discharged into the community in 1993.

His whereabouts today is unknown.



Doctor's letter expressing concern about Felix's state of mental health



Writing found with the soap face



Self Portrait

Four Chess Pieces

Clay and glaze
3" (7.5 cm) and 1" (2.5 cm)
20th Century

Researcher: David



These four chess pieces consist of a rather worn king, a bishop, and two small pawns. Each piece has a glaze covering a sculpted surface. The base of each piece has been shaped flat to permit standing. The two main figures, the king and the bishop, have been hollowed out with an instrument with a pointed end. The biscuit colour (the clay) shows inside and on the base of all the figures. The chess pieces are partially coloured with black and purple beneath the glaze. We have good provenance on these pieces, thanks to the Governor's note and associated evidence held in the Prison Service archive.

In 1948, a Scotsman, 'Jock' McDonald was born in the far north of Scotland. In 1955, at the age of seven, McDonald's parents decided to move south, to England. This was to allow them to improve their lives following the ending of rationing in 1954, and to offer their son an opportunity for a better education and lifestyle.

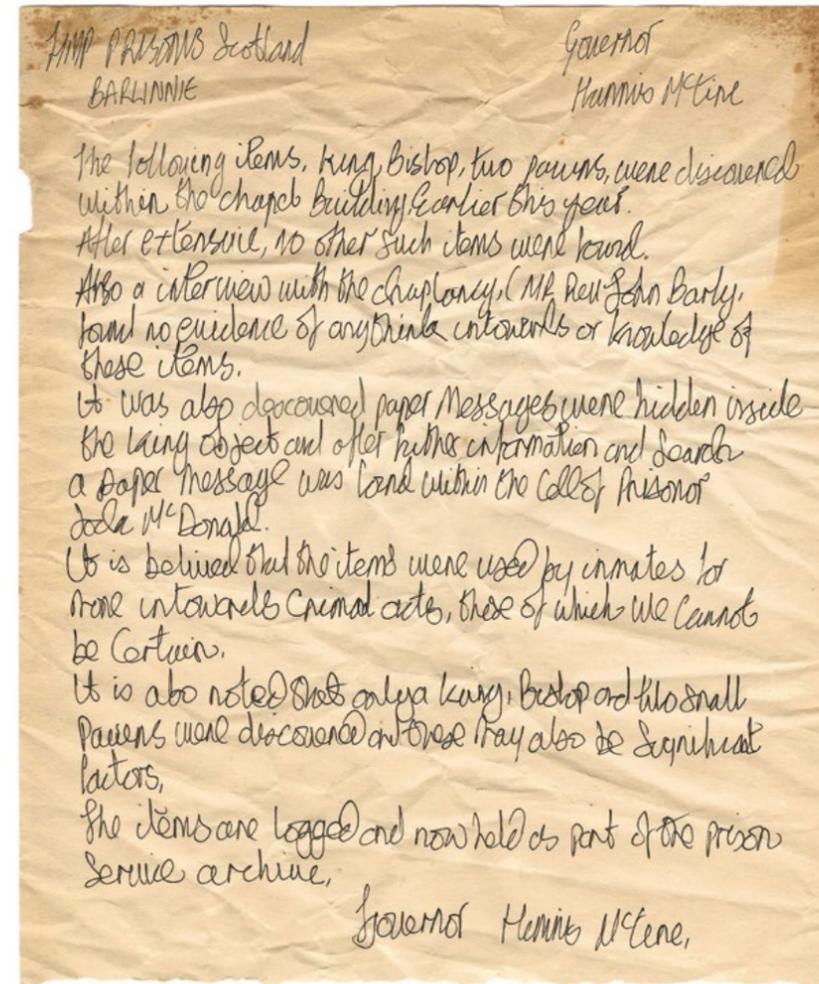
The 1960s witnessed the rapid growth of a more materialistic culture, especially in respect of consumer goods. McDonald, in his early years after finishing school at 15, started to work for Phillips, a well known producer of electrical goods. Over the coming years people demanded more and better products. McDonald became desirous of owning some of these new, more complex and expensive goods, but most of them were beyond the reach of working people like him. McDonald's desire saw him decline into crime and he was subsequently arrested for a string of burglaries and imprisoned at HMP Nottingham in 1968.

The sense of public shame and disgrace experienced by his parents, as a result of his imprisonment, led them to move back to Scotland. McDonald, missing his visits from his parents, placed himself on the transfer list and after a while was moved to HMP Barlinnie in Glasgow. Here he settled in quickly and soon began a course in a ceramics workshop where we believe he made the chess set from which these pieces survive.

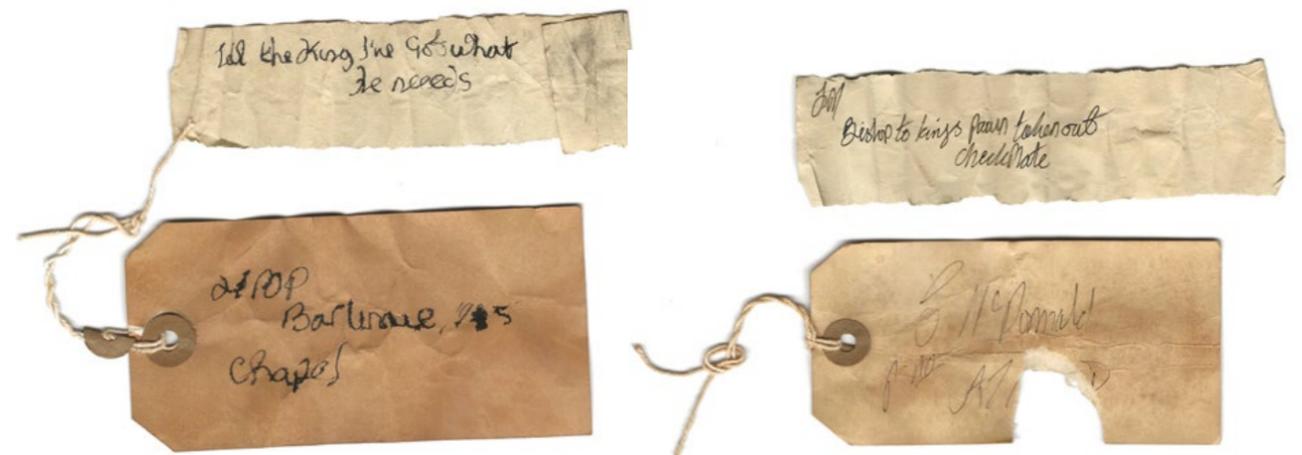
They were made using rubber moulds and local clay, which was then salt glazed. The style of the pieces is based on the famous Isle of Lewis Chessmen which were discovered on the island in 1831 but believed to date back to the 12th Century. For more information on the story of the original pieces, the reader is referred to Neil MacGregor's *A History of the World in 100 Objects*.

When McDonald was making the pieces, he deliberately dug out clay from the centre of the larger figures to make a cavity. The evidence suggests McDonald, and other prisoners unknown, were using these pieces to smuggle messages to each other. It is suspected that McDonald had become involved in one of the notorious Glasgow gangs but it is not clear which. We believe McDonald made a whole set of chess pieces but the whereabouts of the bulk of them is unknown.

So why did McDonald use chess pieces as a way to communicate? It may have been related to the growing popularity of the game as exemplified in the early 1970s chess match between American Bobby Fischer and the Russian Boris Spassky. Fischer declared at the time, "Chess is war on a board".



Governor's letter to the Prison Service archive



Messages found inside the chess pieces and evidence labels

Picture Frame

Matchsticks, glue and varnish
9" x 7" (23cm x 18cm)
Late 20th Century

Researcher: Ryan M



This frame was made by John Jones at HMP Birmingham in the mid 1980s. Serving an eight year sentence for armed robbery, Jones was 35 when he made it, and it was one of the last things he made before release on parole.

He made the frame specifically to house the image of a cathedral which had been on a card John had received from his father. Sadly, his father died shortly after John received the card. Jones decided to make the frame as a way to preserve the memory of his father. He called it his 'window of memories'. The cathedral, bombed during World War II and never restored, was his father's family church, and some of Jones' ancestors are buried in the grounds.

In the days before Jones' release, he grew increasingly concerned about the frame getting damaged when he left prison as he was unsure where he would be living.

As a result, he decided to give the frame to the prison's Governor, who in due course donated the piece to the Prison Service archive.

Jones' letter suggests he was extremely grateful to Governor Knapton for helping him through his sentence. "I wanted to give you this as a thank you for your trust and support when I was inside, so please take this and (I) hope it brings you as much happiness (as) it has given me."

When writing to Members of Parliament, please give your previous home address in order to avoid delay in your case being taken up by the MP.

Number Name

Wing

**ALL REPLIES MUST BEAR
SENDER'S NAME & ADDRESS**

Dear Governor Knapton its Mr Jones former prisoner D15976T I am
writing to you as both a thank you and to give you something. Its
been in my family since the second world war. This picture is of a
family cathedral from the 1700 to 1900 century. This picture was from
my father before he died I built the frame my self from matchsticks.
I wanted to give you this as a thank you for your trust and
support when I was inside so please take this and hope it brings you
as much happiness it has given me yours truly John Jones.

Prison Phonocard

Acrylic paint on plastic
3 3/8" x 2 1/8" (8.5cm x 5.5cm)
Late 20th Century

Researcher: Jamie R



The painting on this phonecard was done by Ronald Dudley in 1992. At this time, Dudley was beginning a life sentence for the murder of a 35 year old male. Dudley was young and skilled at painting, having studied art at college and then in prison. The painting is of a fictional landscape, done on a phonecard. Unlike today's PIN system, phonecards were used by prisoners to pay for phone calls to loved ones. The credit was held in a magnetic strip on the back of the card and once the credit was used, the cards were useless. As a result, Dudley used to collect spent cards and paint them, often just to pass time but occasionally to sell to other prisoners.

One morning an officer went to Dudley's cell only to discover he was gone. Until this day the authorities have been unable to figure out how he escaped. Furthermore, Dudley's life partner, Daphne, went missing the same day. It is believed the pair fled to Brazil. In 1992 there was no extradition agreement between Brazil and the UK, and despite a change in the law in 1997, and repeated requests from the Home Office, the Brazilian government has been unable to locate the pair. As a result Dudley is still wanted to this day.

Overall the painting is about freedom. It is believed Dudley was quite depressed at the time of painting this card. He was missing Daphne and this is reflected in the use of dark colours to show his emotions. The land of the painting is pretty dark and barren and suggests he is trying to find a way out. The only hope is represented by the footpath. The sky is a little brighter, perhaps representing escape, and the two birds, I believe, are symbolic of Ronald and Daphne fleeing to Brazil.

Some months after his escape, the prison's charity shop received a letter from Brazil. In the envelope was the painted phonecard, a poem, and a note saying, "This is the last time you will hear from me." The charity shop framed the card, but despite Dudley's notoriety, it never sold. When the charity shop closed some years later, the manager donated the phonecard to the Prison Service archive, and to this day, it is the last known contact with Dudley.

I'm free
No bars around me
Just open space
Sitting on a beach
Sun on my face
Pina Colade in hand
Bland food not me
Food with flavour yes Please

You'll never catch me
I'm the great Houdini
I disappear like smoke
Never to be seen again
And yet I see all

This is the last time you will
hear from me.

R. Dudley

Dudley's note to the prison's charity shop

Crossbow

Matchsticks, glue, pins and varnish
7" x 4" (17.5cm x 10cm)
20th Century

Researcher: Arron



I believe this item is about 30 years old. It would have been made by someone who feels like they need an item to defend themselves or potentially by someone who likes to cause trouble. It is made with matchsticks and glue, with pins. I imagine an emery board was used to help with the finishing. The propulsion is an elastic band fastened with pins and hooked around the wooden hook so it is ready to fire. Unfortunately, over time the elastic band has perished.

My research into this item has determined it was made by Arthur Johnson at the age of 34 when he was serving a 10 year sentence for GBH at HMP Garth. Johnson had a reputation for being a trouble maker in prison, with multiple adjudications on his file for violence and theft.

Johnson's father was a sculptor and as a child he would watch his father carving wood. As a result Johnson developed some considerable skill in working with his hands, and upon imprisonment, he took to working with matchsticks. A security report shows the crossbow was discovered during a routine cell search in which

Johnson claimed it was merely a model, but staff did not believe him and confiscated it.

The item was used in evidence in a subsequent adjudication. Notes from this meeting show that Johnson claimed this piece was a special request for another prisoner, although he never revealed the identity of the commissioner. Johnson was found guilty of possession of a contraband item that could be used as a weapon, and 'awarded' an additional 28 days on his sentence.

The crossbow was held by the prison in the event that Johnson might appeal the sentence. However, no appeal was lodged and the adjudicating governor, rather than disposing of the crossbow, thought it was rather well crafted and submitted it the Prison Service archive for posterity.

SECURITY REPORT
REPORTING OFFICER: <u>Winston Joff</u>
DATE OF REPORT: <u>27/11/92</u>
DETAILS OF REPORT:
<p>While conducting a routine search of cell F47, I discovered a small wooden crossbow, hidden under a pile of clothes. When asked about the weapon, Johnson replied, "Are you taking the piss? It's a model".</p> <p>In my opinion there is sufficient strength and detail which makes me think it could cause harm.</p>
PRISONER NAME: <u>ARTHUR JOHNSON</u>
PRISONER ID NUMBER: <u>D7416D4</u>
ITEMS REMOVED: <u>Wooden Crossbow</u>
PRISONER PRINT NAME: <u>Arthur Johnson</u>
PRISONER SIGNATURE: <u>[Signature]</u>
DATE: <u>27 November 1992</u>
REPORTING OFFICER NAME: <u>Winston Joff</u>
OFFICER SIGNATURE: <u>[Signature]</u>
DATE: <u>27/11/92</u>

Portrait of a Woman

Metal and pearlescent nail varnish
 4" x 2" (10cm x 5cm)
 20th Century

Researcher: Stephen

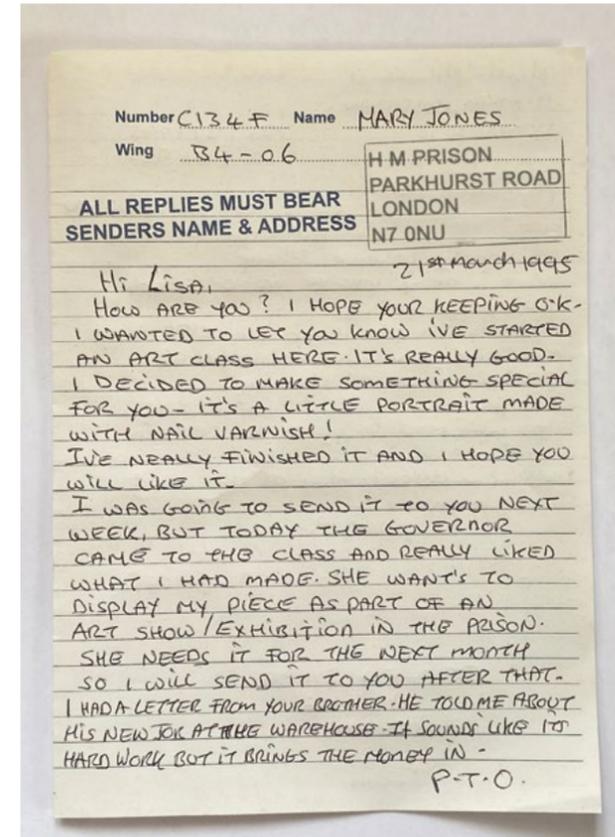


Rear of portrait showing Velcro strips applied for the exhibition

Made by Mary Jones in early 1995 as a gift for her daughter, this piece is in the style of church stained glass, and was created in an art class in prison using pearlescent nail varnish. The image is very colourful and bright, and the use of pearlescent nail varnish gives a real depth to the colours. On the back of the bits are two pieces of Velcro which suggest it has been displayed somewhere prior to submission into the archive. The artwork demonstrates great skill.

Mary Jones was in HMP Holloway when she made this piece. A letter, dated 21 March 1995, indicates she had recently started an art class where she discovered a talent for visual art.

The letter notes that the Governor was so impressed with Mary's work that she wanted to display it as part of an exhibition in the prison. It was during this exhibition that Mary received notice of participation in a pilot of a new scheme offering early release. As a result she was let out of prison before the end of the exhibition and so her piece never reached her daughter. Instead it was submitted into the Prison Service archive later that year.



Letter to daughter



Probation letter concerning early release scheme

Shotgun

Matchsticks, glue, pins and varnish
11" x 1" (28cm x 2.5cm)
20th Century

Researcher: Bernie



This amazing piece of art was made in 1997 by a 27 year old woman by the name of Sally Spence. Spence was in HMP Holloway when she was pulled into a competition being held in the prison's art department.

There were 12 contestants and she came first. She was presented with a Level 1 certificate in arts and crafts along with a certificate for Student of the Year. To show her huge effort and great work, her name was also featured in an edition of Inside Time.

The model was made in memory of her grandfather who sadly passed when Sally was a teenager.

Since her time in prison, Spence has made great effort and work in art and had her work displayed in many different exhibitions.

Insidetime August 2020

Looking Back... through Inside Time August 1997



Congratulations 1st Place

On 16 August Sally Spence of Newport, London won First place for Best Matchstick Model. It was a double barrel shotgun made from matchsticks and glue, and finished with varnish. It measures just a few inches and is a perfect example of Spence's craftsmanship. Spence had tough competition as she was up against last year's winner, Claire Turnbull. Turnbull entered with a wooden match made jewelry box which came second, and third place going to Leanne Chambers who made a matchstick boat.

Spence said, "I feel very happy and I wish to continue with my art. I hope to make many more similar models".

Inside Time article



Art qualification certificate

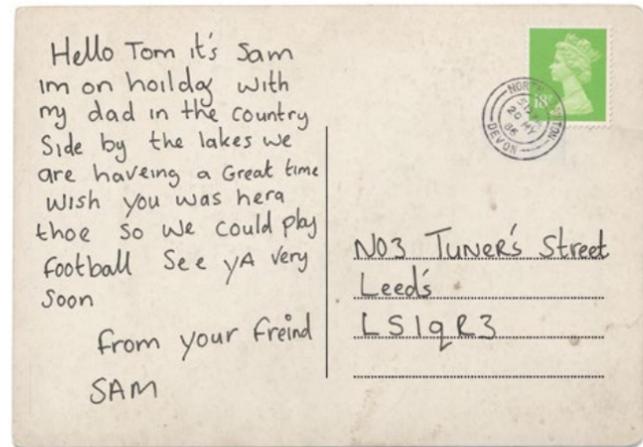


Student of the Year Certificate

Tobacco Tin

Oil and Tin
4" x 3 3/8" (10cm x 8.5cm)
Late 20th Century

Researcher: Emma



Postcard from Shuttleworth to Tom

This rural scene done on a tobacco tin lid, was painted by Sam Shuttleworth in 1998 when he was 22 years old. It depicts trees, a river and birds, and is of a place where he went on holiday with his dad. When it was made, he had been in prison for 18 months. He had learned to paint at school but didn't believe in himself until people in prison started saying that he was gifted and could make money by selling his work. He did lots more drawings, boxes and frames.

When he left prison, he began work in an art shop in Leeds and spent his weekends with his dad, Peter. He saved the money from the first things he sold and took

his dad to Spain on holiday. Peter had never been out of the country before and they had a really good time.

The tin was gifted to the museum by a former cell mate of Sam's following an article that appeared in the Sun newspaper in 2008. Whilst not named in the article, his cell mate (Tom) had been an old friend of Sam's and along with the tin, he also included a postcard sent to him from Sam that showed the place he painted on the tin.

Sam has not gone back into prison and is now married with a family.



Front page of The Sun, 18 March 2008

Ink Bottle

Glass, acrylic and oil paint
3½" x 2" (8.9cm x 5cm)
21st Century

Researcher: Katie

This dark blue and gold painted bottle is very colourful. There are trees, plants and birds outside in a field. It is the size of a tennis ball with a coloured lid. It used to be an ink bottle and was made in 2002 by a young lady in prison.

Her name was Bella Jones and she was in her twenties when it was made. She has always been very artistic and used to do art in school. She has always had a passion for experimenting with art, creating and trying new things.

She had a big family with four brothers and seven sisters. Her mother also had an interest in art and loved to show her new things. Her father was not into anything like this but would always support her. She was thinking of this place where she had been with her father. It was a good memory, and she was very emotional while making this piece of art because she wished she could go back there. It was out of the city where she lived and they would go there most weekends and would always love it.

The reason she ended up in prison is because she met some new friends. Her mother and father did not approve because of the way she started acting. She had changed a lot. She used to be a chilled young lady but since meeting her new friends, her mood and attitude changed. She started staying out all the time, not coming home and stopped doing the things she loved. When she would go home her mother could smell alcohol and drugs on her and she got in trouble for shoplifting which she had not done before.

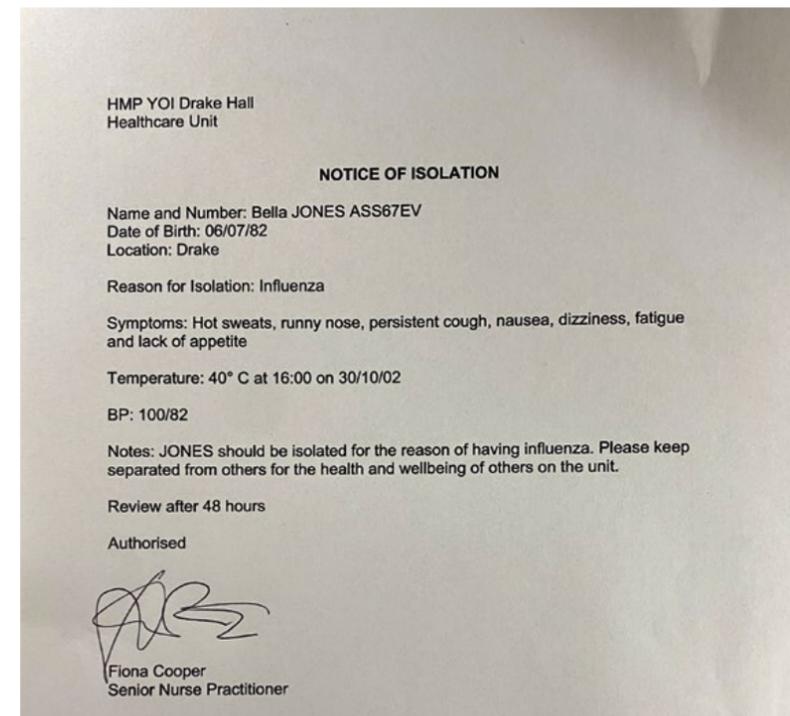
She made this piece of art in her cell. While she was painting she reflected on how she used to feel when she was doing art and on what she loved. She couldn't believe what she had got herself into. She had so much regret but it made her feel good inside when she was painting.



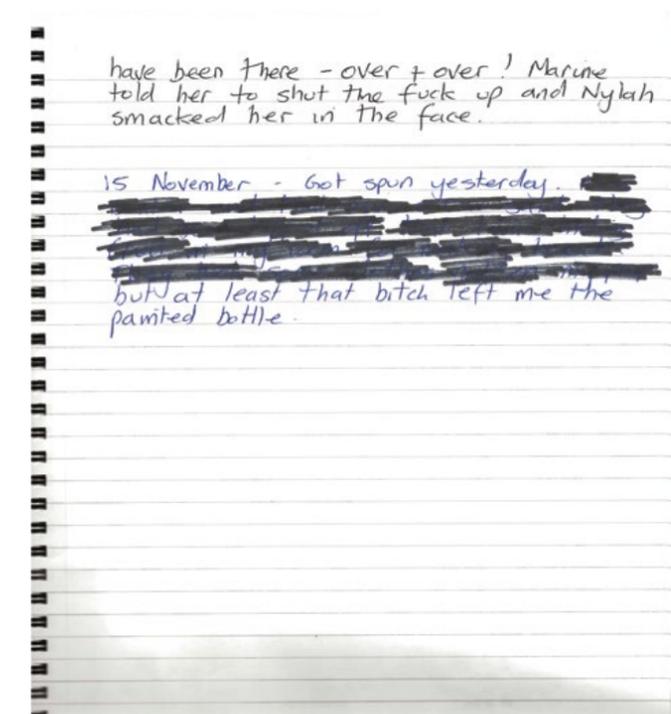
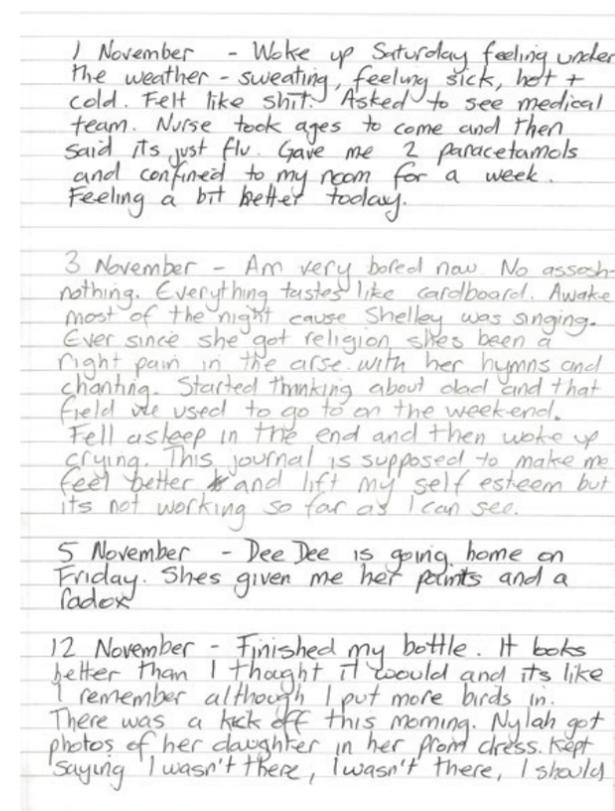
The reason she was doing this in her cell was because she was sick with the flu and couldn't be around other people for the sake of their health. She didn't mind being in her cell because she could think properly and clearly on her own. She would think about where she had gone wrong and how she could have stuck to what she loved doing but at the time it was hard. She missed everything she had and everyone she loved. Her new friends were all into stupid things like drugs and drinking and they made her feel like she had to be more like them.

When she was painting this bottle she was thinking of her family and made it for them. She wanted them to have it straight away but knew she had to wait until she went home. In the event though she actually gave it to the prison psychologist who had encouraged her to start journalling as a way to process her emotions. The psychologist donated it and other gifts from prisoners to the Museum in 2020 upon her retirement.

Jones is now forty years old and living the life she always wanted as a professional artist. She has her own little family of four children – two girls and two boys and they love her work. She paints landscapes and always has a story to tell her children about them. She has her own gallery and loves being there. It is her happy place.



Medical notice



Entries in Jones' journal

Photo Frame

Matchsticks and glue,
6" x 4" (15.5cm x 10cm)
21st Century

Researcher: Ashley



Kinjin Knight, a 38 year old man, born and raised in Nottingham, was in various prisons for 18 years. Finally, in 2018, he found himself in HMP Sudbury, an 'open prison'. Knight was a carpenter, and good at making furniture and other handicrafts. From a family of seven, he was the eldest brother. When not in prison he lived with his parents, two younger sisters and two younger brothers. He liked spending time with his family but they never visited him in prison. Missing his family very much, one day Knight decided to make a wooden photo frame with a cover. The cover was designed to hide a family photograph which would then be exclusive to him as a special part of his life.

The frame is made of wood with hinges, and there is a heart and arrow in the middle. This decorative element manifests his love to his family. The wooden cover

looks like doors, and it is believed Knight opened the doors to uncover the photo every day to sit with his family for 10 minutes before going to sleep. The door is a metaphor of hope to reunite with his family after his release.

Knight got out three years after he finished the photo frame. He went back to Nottingham and accidentally discovered an exhibition, *Power: Freedom to Create*, at the National Justice Museum. This exhibition, co-produced with the famous prison arts charity, Koestler Arts, was a celebration of art made in prison. Since he was once a prisoner, he decided to donate his artwork made in prison, as a way to show his appreciation for the work of the museum and the love of his home town.

Dear Nottingham Museum
I am writing to thank for holding such an amazing exhibition about life in prison. Also I would like to donate my artwork. To you I was a prisoner in various prisons for 18 years and. I made this wooden photo frame with match sticks in 2018 to remember my family. Who are living in Nottingham. This artwork also represents things people made in prisons. I hope it can be one of the collections in your current exhibition.

Regards
Kinjin Knight

Note from Knight

Objects with Contested Attributions

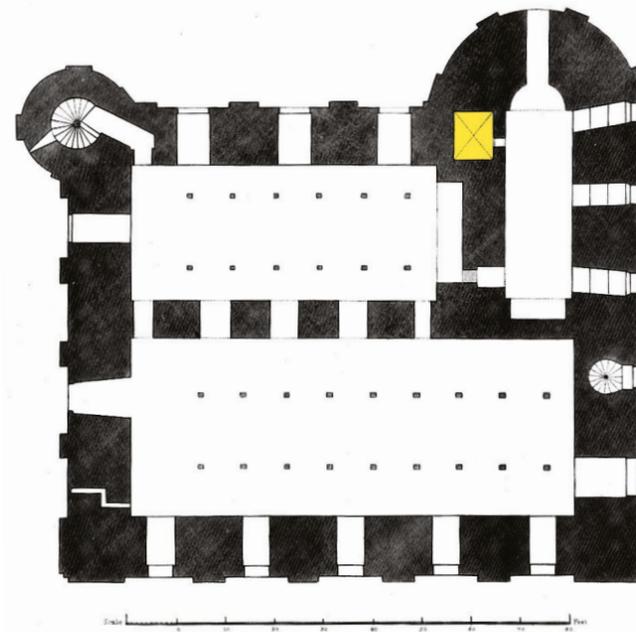
Letter Rack

Stone or Clay
 5¼" x 3" (13 cm x 7.5 cm)
 16th Century or 20th Century

Researchers: Rhys and Cal



Letter rack from other end



Tower of London plan showing location of fragments

Rhys argues:

Possibly the oldest item in the museum's archive, this item is a collection of wall fragments from the Tower of London, donated to the Prison Service archive following renovation of the Tower's dungeons in the early 1970s. I believe these markings reveal a secret.

Lady Greer was one of Queen Elizabeth I most loyal ladies in waiting (1572 – 1578). Over that six years, the Queen's love life was of everyone's interest. However, unbeknownst to others, Lady Greer and Elizabeth were in the midst of an affair, with Elizabeth declaring her undying love for Greer. However, in 1577, the Queen's spymaster caught wind of talk of this relationship in the court. In an attempt to protect the Crown, Walsingham and Elizabeth plotted against Greer, claiming she was behind an attempted assassination of the Monarch. Greer was imprisoned and beheaded by sword in 1578.

After her death, markings on the walls of Greer's cell exposed her resentment towards Elizabeth for her betrayal. These marks declared, in code, that Elizabeth will **Live Vacant In Salvation** for the remainder of her life – ELVIS

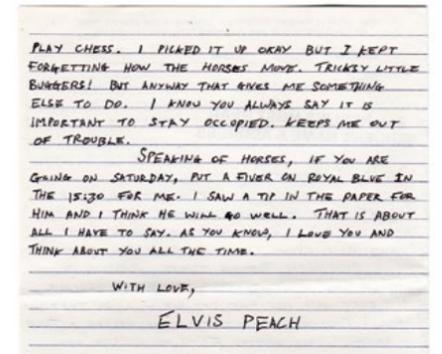
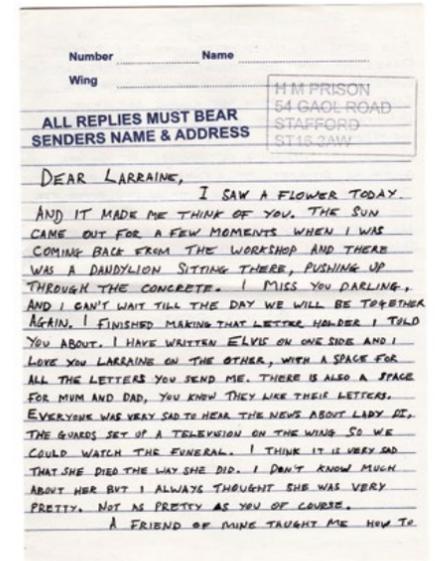
Cal argues:

This object is clay with a gloss glaze. It appears very functional and not particularly decorative. It seems not much care has been taken to ensure a pretty finish although the names of loved ones; Lorraine, Mum and Dad, have been engraved on different sections. It is believed this was made for personal use in prison rather than as a gift or paid for by another inmate.

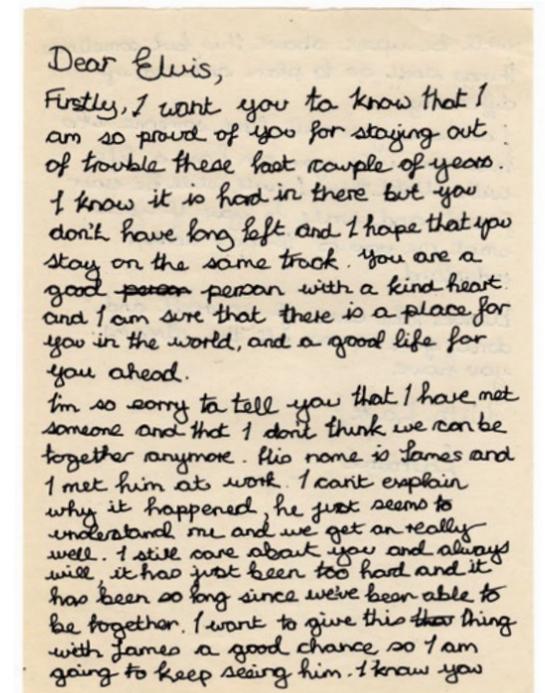
It was made by Elvis Peach, who loved the letters he received from his girlfriend and family. It was made in 1997 in a pottery class when Peach was serving time at HMP Stafford for a 'ram raid' on a post office in which Peach had unsuccessfully used a stolen JCB backhoe in an attempt to steal an ATM. At his trial, Peach claimed he had committed the crime because he owed money for debts he had accrued as a result of his gambling addiction.

Unfortunately, Peach's habit went unaddressed in prison and he soon racked up considerable debts to other prisoners. Shortly after Peach finished making the letter holder, (believed to be in August 1997 as he makes reference to the funeral of Princess Diana in his letter) he was transferred to another prison for his own safety, and the letter holder remained in the pottery class. At the end of the term, the pottery tutor was cleaning up unclaimed work and came upon Peach's piece, covered in dust and containing two letters. One, unsent from Peach to his girlfriend, and the other a letter from the girlfriend. It is surmised that Peach wrote the letter to his girlfriend but never sent it due to the content of the letter received from Lorraine on the same day.

Rather than disposing of the letter holder, the tutor submitted the object, and letters, to the Prison Service archive as an example of 'folk art' and a testament to the difficulties people can face in maintaining relationships during a prison sentence.



Peach's letter to Lorraine mentioning the letter rack



Lorraine's 'Dear John'

Chess Squares

Pen, poster paint and cardboard
4" x 4" (10 cm x 10cm)
Early or late 20th Century

Researchers: Paulo and Matt



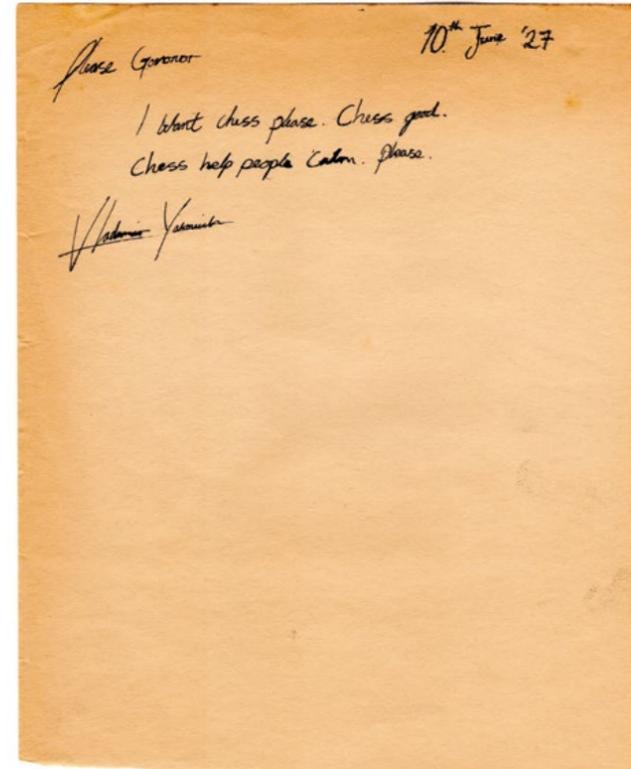
Paulo argues:

This set of chess pieces was made in HMP Wandsworth, South-West London, by a Russian émigré, Vladimir Yakovich. Yakovich was sentenced to a lengthy term behind bars in 1926 at the age of 31. Having no wife, children, or family in Great Britain, lacking the ability to speak much English, and thus finding it difficult to communicate with fellow prisoners, Yakovich turned to his old love; chess. He'd grown up playing chess in St Petersburg (renamed Leningrad during his incarceration), and even entered various tournaments as a young boy. Therefore, it was a game he was extremely familiar with. More than a game, it acted as a common language between himself and those he couldn't communicate with. You needn't speak the same language, you could just sit down and play.

However, frustrated with playing on a makeshift board with pieces of scrap paper, he repeatedly pled with the guards to grant the wing an actual set...Not to much success. One day, it was explained to Yakovich that the prison would grant him materials to make one himself, if he was so inclined, as a one-time attempt to appease him. He didn't hesitate in accepting the offer, and merely asked for some spare heavy paperboard, black and yellow paint, a straight edge, and he set out to create some decent chess pieces. Yakovich opted to create chess cards for two reasons: firstly in an attempt to expedite the process as quickly as possible, and secondly, you could draw a chess board on a wall and hang the cards on the board to allow more people to view the game – as done in traditional chess tournaments. It

took him eight weeks once he received the materials to plan it, sketch the pieces and board, cut out the squares and paint them. As aforementioned, he added small pinholes to allow the chess pieces to be hung and the chess matches made more social.

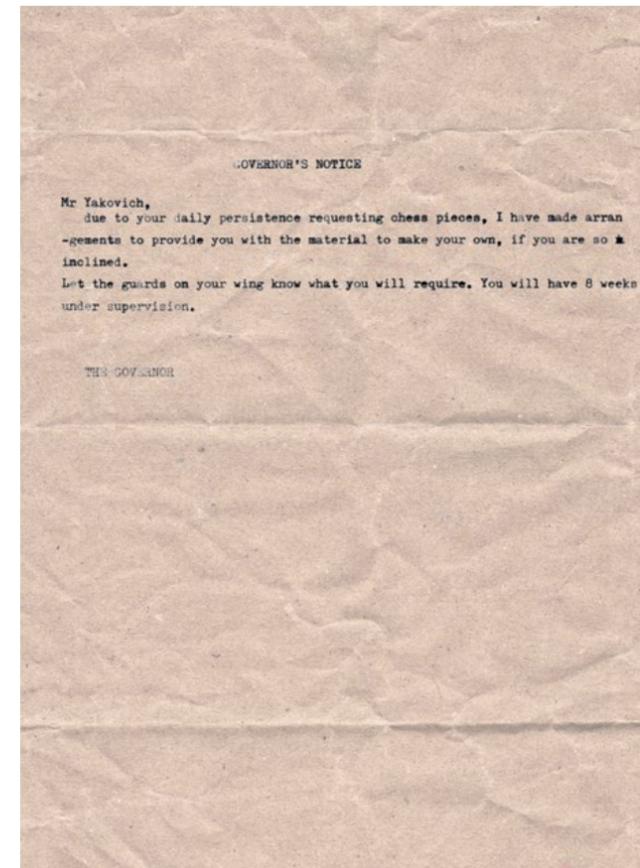
These pieces kept him company through his sentence until he was eventually released in 1945, and they were left to fellow inmates before being submitted to the Prison Service archive in the early 1950s. Upon his departure, Yakovich had learnt much more English and expressed his want and intentions to return to his homeland of Mother Russia. However, Yakovich had fled Russia in 1917, pre the Russian revolution, by himself, and since his imprisonment Russia had changed a great deal. At the time of his release, Russia was led by Josef Stalin and likely a completely different nation to the one he'd grown up in. Unfortunately, it is not known whether Yakovich ever made it back to his native Russia, but these pieces will always represent a time where simple things, such as a chess set, were incredibly difficult to obtain and where chess itself could act as an interpreter for two people who couldn't communicate.



Yakovich's letter to the Governor



Yakovich's photo in the prison's Record of Inmates



The Governor's reply

Chess Squares

Pen, poster paint and cardboard
 4" x 4" (10 cm x 10cm)
 Early or late 20th Century

Researchers: Paulo and Matt



Matt argues:

These pieces were created for the chess club competition games by Amir Hussain and Daniel Drinkwater in 1993. The popularity of the chess club on F Wing at HMP Full Sutton became so great that when competition days were held it became difficult for viewers to see what was happening. This led to a number of repeated requests from Drinkwater in particular, for resources to create a 'show board' to mimic the moves on a larger and more visible surface.

Wing staff wrote to the senior management of the prison, expressing concern about the number of prisoners crowding the upper floor banisters and stairways in an attempt to see what was happening in the games. Following an intervention from the prison's Head of Inmate Activities, it was agreed to make space to hang a display chessboard on the understanding that the prisoners would make a grid and cards representing

the different pieces to hang on it. As evidenced by a letter to Drinkwater's girlfriend, it was suggested that Drinkwater talk to Hussain as he was involved with art as a peer mentor in the education department. It is understood that the art tutor enabled Hussain and Drinkwater to have access to some card and paint along with space once a week in the art class to work on the project.

A sketch signed, 'D. Bow' shows the cards in use. The chess squares, which are made from thick card and so quite robust, remained on the wing for the rest of 1993. By 1996 however, the penchant for chess games had clearly been usurped by the growing number of PS1 game consoles in the top security estate, and the cards were donated to the Prison Service archive as a record of a particular moment in time.

APPLICATION FORM
 Use ballpoint pen and press firmly. Sections 2 and 3 to be completed by staff. Ref. Unique N°: 55474
 Your n°: F7394A Your name: DRINKWATER Location: F WING
 1. APPLICATION (form to be submitted via the wing applications box)
 Please tick the appropriate heading for the department that your application relates to:
 1 Catering 6 Library 11 Security/Operations (Reception, Visits etc)
 2 Chaplaincy 7 Visits 12 Work activity
 3 Education 8 Psychology/Programmes (state of current employment)
 4 Finance 9 Residential (wing enquiry) 13 Other (please specify WING ISSUE)
 5 Healthcare 10 Resettlement
 Please give details of your application:
 OVER THE LAST FEW WEEKS I HAVE PUT IN APPS FOR PERMISSION TO MAKE A CHESS BOARD SO WE CAN ALL SEE THE MOVES WHEN WE HAVE THE CHESS COMPETITIONS. WE'RE ALL GETTING PISSED OFF CAUSE WE CAN'T SEE WHATS HAPPENING WHEN ARE YOU GOING TO LET US KNOW?
 Signature: D DRINKWATER Date: 5/13/93
 2. RECIPIENT (to be completed by the landing officer receiving the application, resident to be given the yellow copy)
 Received by: [signature] (print name) [signature] (signature)
 Epaulette n°: On: (date) At: (time)
 Sent to: On:
 3. REPLY (to be completed by an appropriate member of staff)
 I have forwarded your question to Governor Edwards. He will come and see you when he decides what to do.
 Completed by: (print name) (signature)
 On: (date) At: (time)
 If you are dissatisfied with the reply you may appeal by using a complaint form (form Comp 1)

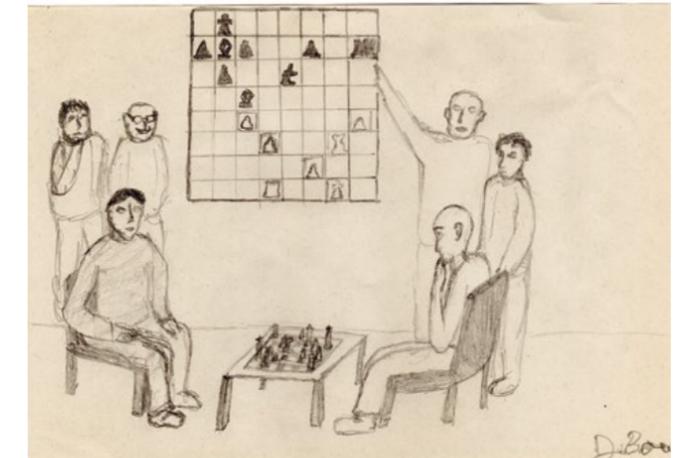
One of Drinkwater's several applications

MEMO
 To: Governor Edwards, Head of Inmate Activities
 From: Officer Colin Pinkerton
 Ext: 1564
 Date: 10 April 1993
 Re: F Wing Chess Competition
 As you will be aware we had the quarter finals of the chess competition last weekend. Myself and a number of other wing staff are concerned about the impact of this on the good order and discipline of the wing. In particular, there was some tension during one of the matches because prisoners were crowding over the number 1 landing balcony, and all down the stairwell in an attempt to see the moves.
 Whilst we do not want to stop what has become an important part of the culture on this wing, we really need to find some way of enabling prisoners to be able to see what is happening.
 Can I remind you of the application I forwarded to you from Drinkwater F7394A concerning the creation of a large scale chess board where we can replicate the moves in a game? I am sure this would help quell tensions and lead to a calmer atmosphere.
 I am on day shift all next week if you want to come over and discuss this?

Memo showing staff concerns

24 April 93
 My Darling Kaz,
 How are you? I hope you got back home without any problems after our visit last week? It was great to see you and I'm already looking forward to you coming up next month as I miss you soooooo much.
 You remember I was telling you how mad it is on our wing with those chess games? Well, I finally got the prison to agree to giving us a board so the rest of the men can see the moves in a game. Catch is, they've said me and this other bloke, Amir, have got to make it! We're starting work on it tomorrow down in the art room. According to Amir the teacher there is sound, so it should be a laugh to do.
 Did you manage to talk to Steve?
 DT

Drinkwater's letter to his girlfriend



The cards in use

Tin

Acrylic paint on tin
4" x 2½" (10cm x 6cm)
20th Century

Researchers: Angelique and Gareth

Angelique argues:

This tin was painted sometime between 1962 and 1966 by Frederick Smith. Smith was arrested in 1962 for multiple counts of theft (poaching) and possession of an unlicensed firearm.

Smith was born in 1920, and grew up in rural Cornwall. As a boy he would pass his time playing in the woods and fields, and scrumping. At the outbreak of World War II, Smith joined the army. During his initial training it became clear that Smith was able to shoot to a very high standard. As a result he was sent to join the King's Royal Rifle Corps. It was here he was awarded his Skill at Arms (Marksman) badge.

At the end of the war, Smith decided he no longer wished to be part of the army so was demobbed and relegated to the Unemployed List. He returned to Cornwall and found work on a small farm.

Smith struggled to adjust to life on "civvy street", and became a recluse. He was happiest when on his own in the woods shooting game. Unfortunately, it was this pastime that led to Smith getting into trouble. It wasn't long before his skill as a poacher came to the notice of the local police. Over a period of 15 years, Smith was arrested and charged on multiple occasions for theft, mainly pheasants, rabbit, deer and grouse, which were all the property of a much larger neighbouring farm. Despite the police removing his license to own a gun, Smith persisted, and it was for this reason he received a three year sentence in 1962.

Smith was sent to HMP Dartmoor and it was there he discovered his talent for painting. He was particularly fond of painting the trees and rivers he remembered from his childhood, as shown on this tin.

Towards the end of Smith's sentence he met a new prisoner, Teddy Baker. Baker was a young man who had recently been sentenced to life in prison. Smith recognised something of himself in Baker and took him under his wing to help him adjust to prison life.

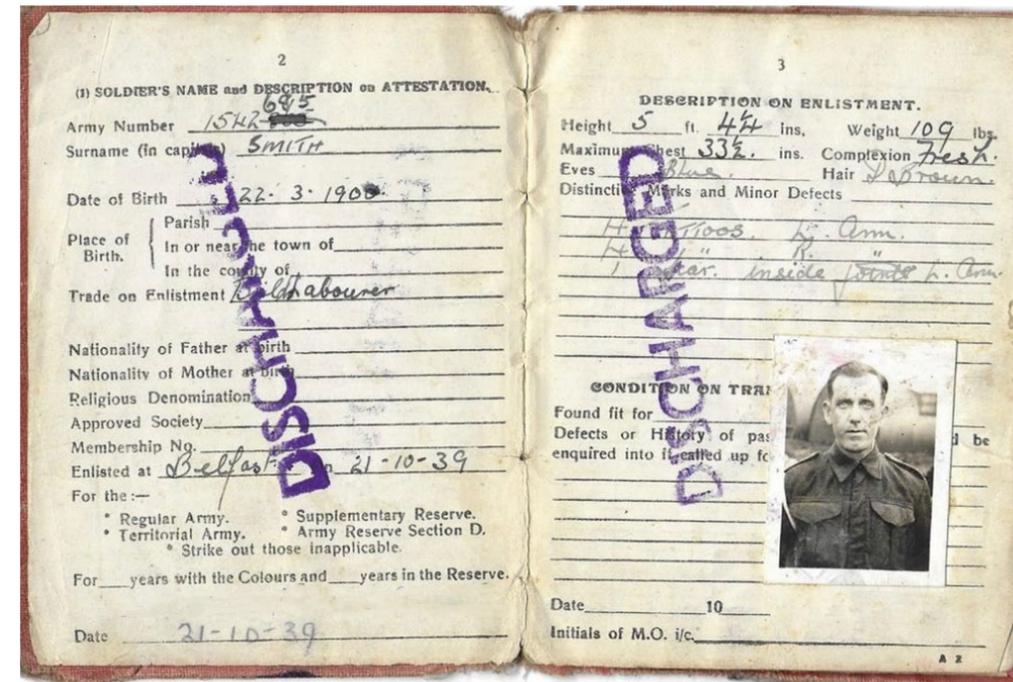


Shortly before Smith's release in early 1966, as is traditional in prison, he gave away some personal possessions to other prisoners. Smith decided to give the tin to Baker.

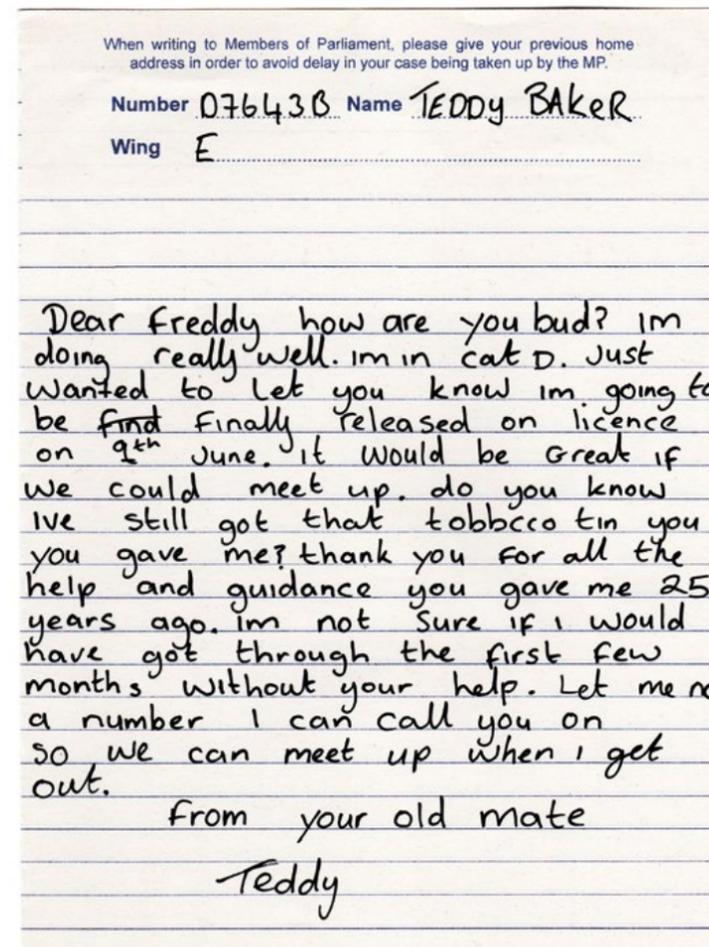
Baker then spent the next 25 years in jail, serving his time and working his way through the system until in 1991 he was in a Cat D and getting ready for release on his life license. Baker had kept in touch with Smith throughout his sentence, and wrote to him sharing news of his imminent release.

Shortly after, Baker received news from Smith's son, Lewis, that Frederick had received Baker's letter but had suddenly taken ill and passed away. Whilst Baker was very sad about this news, he was comforted by the knowledge that Smith had received his letter and was now at peace.

Baker felt very strongly that he wanted to honour the memory of the man who helped him early on in his sentence. After speaking to the Governor of his prison, it was suggested the tin, and Smith's story, could be donated to the Prison Service archive.



Smith's Soldier Service and Pay Book



Baker's letter to Smith

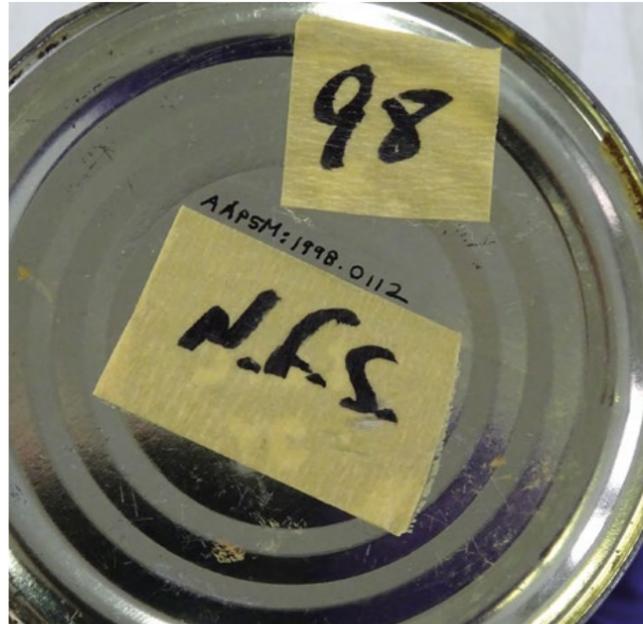


Smith's Skill at Arms Badge

Tin

Acrylic paint on tin
4" x 2½" (10cm x 6cm)
20th Century

Researchers: Angelique and Gareth



Bottom of tin

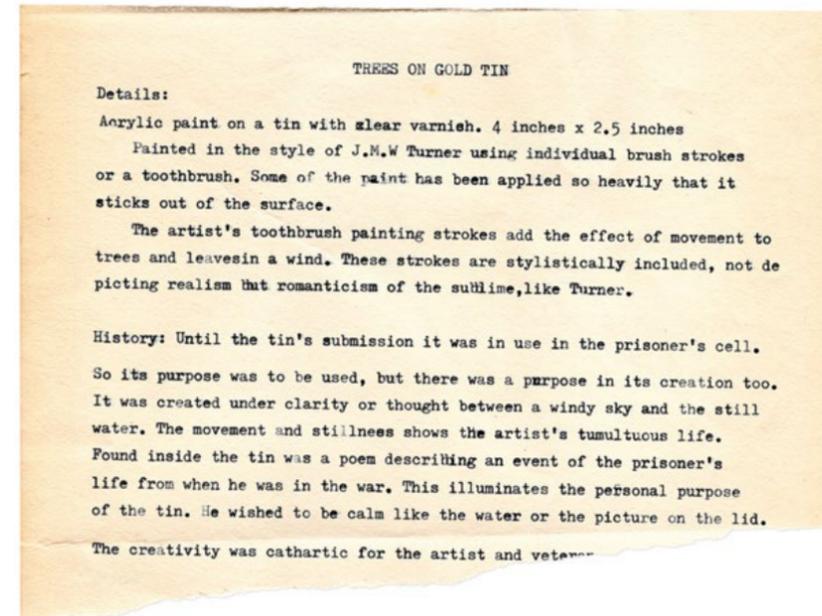
Gareth argues:

Hard facts about the origins of this object have been difficult to find. However, it is unusual within the museum's collection because it arrived with some provenance that hints to the object's past.

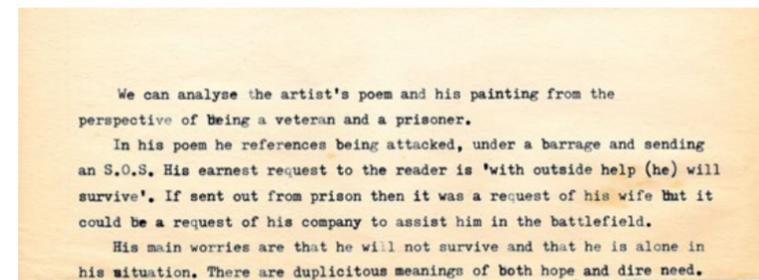
The documentation, found inside the tin, consists of a short handwritten poem and the partial remains of a letter, which I believe to be from an art historian. This offers a partial interpretation of the work and suggests some insights into the mind of the person who made the work. There is no reference to where or when the piece was made, or indeed who carried out the review. However, as seen here in the photos of the letter fragments, the typewritten nature of the comments suggest it was certainly done before the advent of the word processor or home/office computer. I estimate it was written sometime in the late 1970s or early 1980s.

Along with the comments about the work, there is the poem referred to in the art historian's comments.

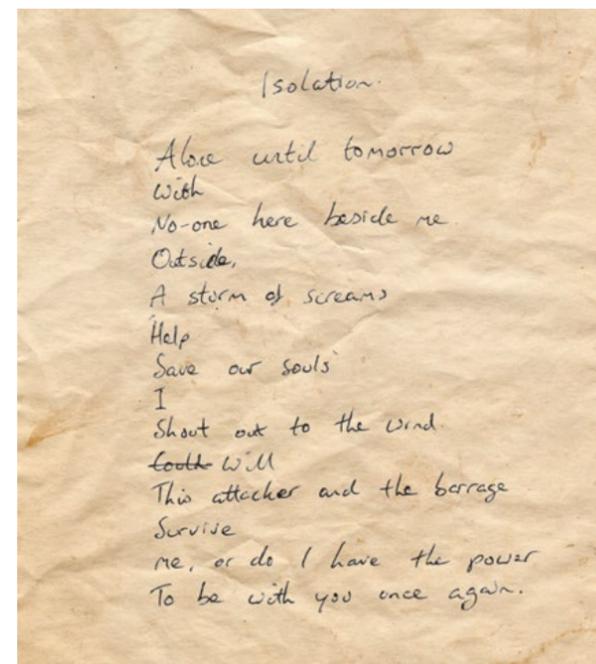
On the bottom of the tin is a piece of masking tape marked 'NFS' (Not For Sale), so I assume it was displayed in an exhibition at some point. It was entered into the Prison Service archive in 1998, as indicated by the archive number AAPSM:1998.0112, but I can find nothing to indicate who painted the object and so, sadly, the artist remains anonymous.



Fragment 1 of expert opinion



Fragment 2 of expert opinion



Poem

Caged Heart

Wood & ceramic
4" x 4" (10cm x 10cm)
20th Century

Researchers: Hayley, Poppy and Alex



Hayley argues:

A Liverpool man called Michael Jones was aged 27 in 1968 and serving a sentence of seven years for a crime that the researcher has been unable to ascertain the exact nature of. He was so unhappy and down about his time. He thought it was unfair. Furthermore he felt he had really let his girlfriend and family down. He was so ashamed, he wanted to prove to them he would change.

He gathered some bits of matchsticks, pencils and bits of wood from his prison workplace to make something special. He made a square wooden box with open bars as sides, with a love heart in it. The box and bars were made with wood and matchsticks, which he painted black and the love heart was made with clay and painted red. It showed what he was living in and how he was feeling. It was a lovely piece of work. He said he wanted his girlfriend to know that while his heart was broken, it was locked with her forever. He was concerned because he had been in for a couple of years and didn't want her to leave him. He worried she was getting fed up of the waiting and the constant travelling to see him.

He was hoping to give her this piece as a present to her next visit. He had worked hard to get it finished on time and was really pleased with it. When it came to the visit, the prison staff let him show her the piece but wouldn't let him give it to her to take home. This led to Jones "kicking off" and being removed from the visit. He was so upset and angry he was taken down to the block and staff confiscated the artwork.

This incident put him in a really dark and bad place. He had put all his time and effort into trying so hard with his work. This was supposed to be one of the ways to prove to himself and his family that he was changing and yet it had all gone wrong. All he wanted to do was show he was trying to follow in his father's footsteps. His father was really good with wood and was a joiner.

We know all this about Jones as I have been able to find a security report in the archive of Walton Jail, and his girlfriend (now wife) was able to send me one of his letters.

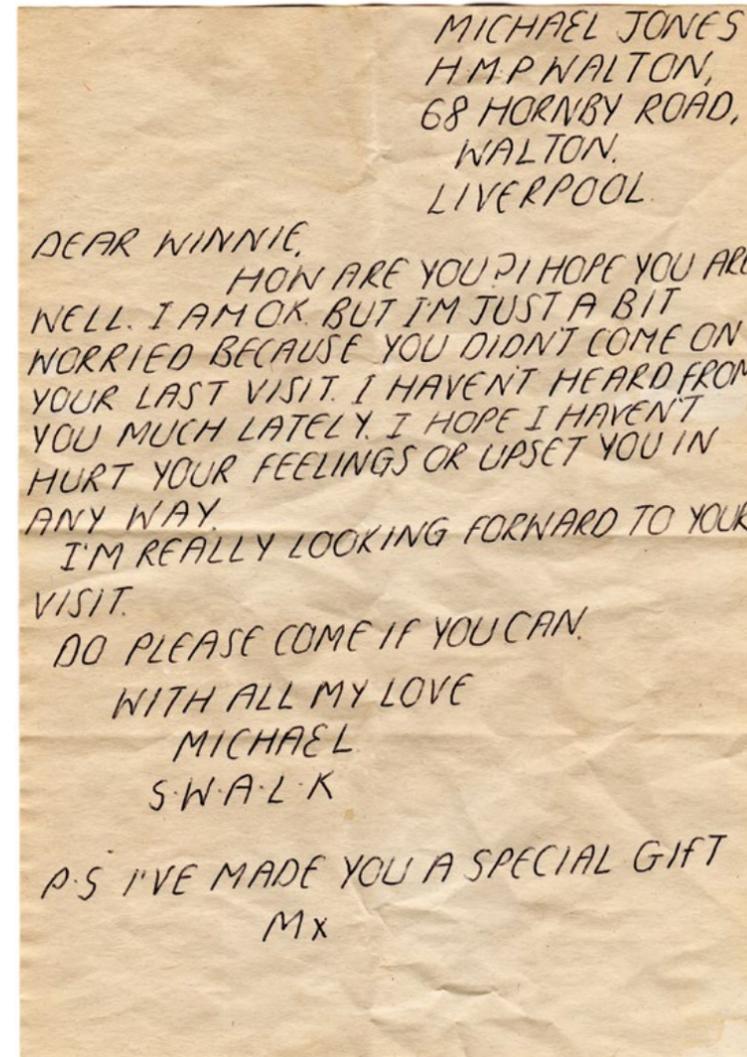
SECURITY REPORT

DATE 04 Sept 1968
PRISONER Michael Jones (Jonesy)
NUMBER C0525BG
INCIDENT NUMBER W3691

DETAILS

Prisoner refused permission to hand object to visitor.
Verbal abuse including profanities .
Failure to obey instructions .
Restrained and led out of visiting room.
Taken down the block - 7 days.

Security Report



Jones' letter to his girlfriend

Caged Heart

Wood & ceramic
4" x 4" (10cm x 10cm)
20th Century

Researchers: Hayley, Poppy and Alex



Poppy argues:

Made by Jeff Smith when he was in HMP Stafford in the early 1990s. Smith struggled with his time in prison and often felt homesick, missing his wife and children very much. This piece was made over the period of about a year, using tools Smith improvised in his cell. There were times when blisters formed on his fingers from trying to sculpt the heart by rubbing it against the bricks of his cell.

It was completed by early June 1990 as it is mentioned in a letter from Smith to his wife. In this letter he makes reference to having an accident in his cell and cutting his hand. Unfortunately, this accident led to Smith catching Septicaemia (also known as Sepsis), from which he died some ten days later. It is for this reason that he was never able to give the piece to his family.



Newspaper clipping from Portsmouth's The News

ART CLASS GRADING REPORT TERM 3 YEAR 1997

NAME	ART PIECE	GRADE
Billy Butcher		Fail
Ivan McKenzie	Stain Glass Mary	Pass
Thomas Lark	Match Stick Photo Frame	Pass
Ashley McFadden	Caged Heart - Self	Pass
Charlie Brookes	Soap Man Sculpture	Pass
Shane Longden		Fail
Darren Williams		Fail
Robert Johnson	Glazed Medal	Pass
Wayne Vickers	Van Gogh Jar	Pass
Johnathan Patterson	Wooden Carved Trophy	Pass

ART CLASS TERM 3 YEAR 1997

NAME	ATTENDANCE	COURSE COMPLETE
Billy Butcher	/ / / / / / / / / / / /	Fail
Ivan McKenzie	/ / / / / / / / / / / /	Pass
Thomas Lark	/ / / / / / / / / / / /	Pass
Ashley McFadden	/ / / / / / / / / / / /	Deceased
Charlie Brookes	/ / / / / / / / / / / /	Pass
Shane Longden	/ / / / / / / / / / / /	Fail
Darren Williams	/ / / / / / / / / / / /	Ship AWC
Robert Johnson	/ / / / / / / / / / / /	Ship AWC - Pass
Wayne Vickers	/ / / / / / / / / / / /	Pass
Johnathan Patterson	/ / / / / / / / / / / /	Pass

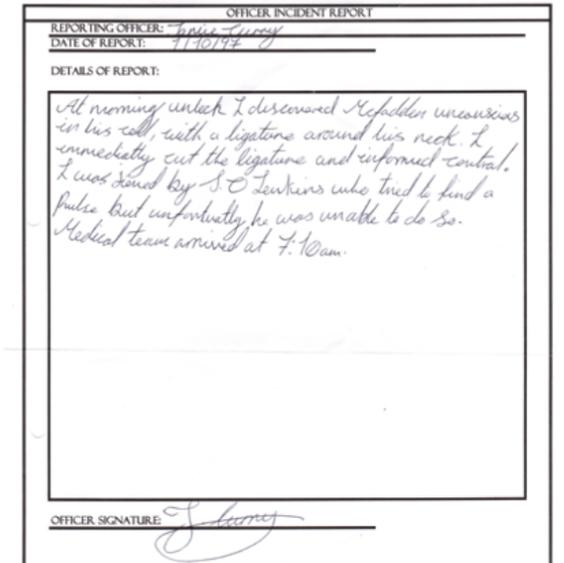
Evidence of McFadden's involvement in the art class

Alex argues:

Contrary to other suggested histories, this piece was made in HMP Stocken by a reforming prisoner, Ashley McFadden, in the late 1990s. It was done for their final project of a prison art course, as a way to present all they had learnt over their time in the class. McFadden decided to do a piece of self expression to help best show the thing they struggled with the most. The expression of one's self was no longer blocked in their life. Through the effort of hard craftsmanship, the medium of wood, and the practice of carpentry, McFadden sought to sculpt their piece to best fit their idea of emotional expression.

The colour of the piece speaks volumes. It shows the prisoner's feelings of being in the prison system. The refined shape and rich red of the heart imply the maker still has lots to give, that they are a caring person with a big heart, and keeping them in prison won't stop that. The cruel black paint of the cage expresses the darkness of prison and how it drains people of feeling. McFadden is saying they are a trapped soul.

Upon completion of the course, McFadden left the piece to be assessed. Sadly, when the art tutor tried to reunite the item with its maker on the last day of the course, it emerged that McFadden had taken his own life as a result of ongoing, undiagnosed mental illness. The art tutor, not wanting the art piece to go to waste as they knew what it had meant to McFadden, put it into storage and then sometime later it was donated to the museum by the prison.



Security report on day of McFadden's death

Dear Governor Ellis,
Please can you send my regards to McFadden family. He was a pleasure to teach and I was saddened to hear what happened to him. He had a kind and caring nature and there was no sign of anything wrong.
Yours Sincerely,
David Wright
D. Wright
Art Department

Note to prison governor from the art tutor

Prison Mirror

Acrylic
8" x 8" (20 cm x 20cm)
20th Century

Researchers: Jamie and Ryan K



Jamie argues:

The following story was told to me by a prisoner who wished to remain anonymous.

This mirror was made by Tim Stafford, born in 1952 and in prison from 1979. Father to Glenn and Tina, married to Rose and nicknamed, "Blue".

Blue was an avid guitar player and song writer, often coming up with little ditties for the entertainment of other inmates. He spent a lot of his time in the prison gardens, pursuing his other passion, gardening, where his love for nature and flowers inspired his creative mind. Also a talented amateur artist, he would often sketch flowers and still life in the gardens.

His more challenging passion, on the inside, was to create art in new and surprising ways. This mirror is one of his early attempts at creating art on prison issue mirrors by etching in reverse onto the back of them. Finding something sharp enough to work whilst being comfortable to hold was difficult to find, but after toying with a few prototypes, he found a loose screw from an in-cell safety box with some tape around the thread made a perfect etcher.

The hardest part was learning to write words and musical notes in reverse so they made sense when looking in the mirror front on. His early work took many hours to do simple work but this piece took him a few days where he would keep adding and adding to it until it was finished.

He hung this in his pad to remind him of his joys in his life but left it when he was released.



Prison Mirror

Acrylic
8" x 8" (20 cm x 20cm)
20th Century

Researchers: Jamie and Ryan K



Ryan K argues:

A standard prison issue mirror engraved using a cell key, made at HMP Walton, Liverpool in 1986, donated to the museum in 2021 by the artist.

While serving time at Her Majesty's Pleasure for a charge of arson, Glenn 'Bulb' Dobson, born 13 December 1959, spent 18 months honing his arts and crafts abilities to memorialise his childhood and young adult life growing up in 70s and 80s Liverpool. This piece, along with another of his creations, the now lost "Mirror Mask", tells the story of Dobson's tumultuous relationship with his childhood sweetheart, Tina. The constant breaking and restoration of their juvenile romance ultimately led to Dobson starting a fire in the pick 'n' mix section of Woolworths, Old Swan, Tina's place of work. The fire spread throughout the store causing a lot of damage. Fortunately, there were no casualties in the incident, and after a short period on remand, Dobson pleaded guilty to the attack and was sentenced to three years in prison.

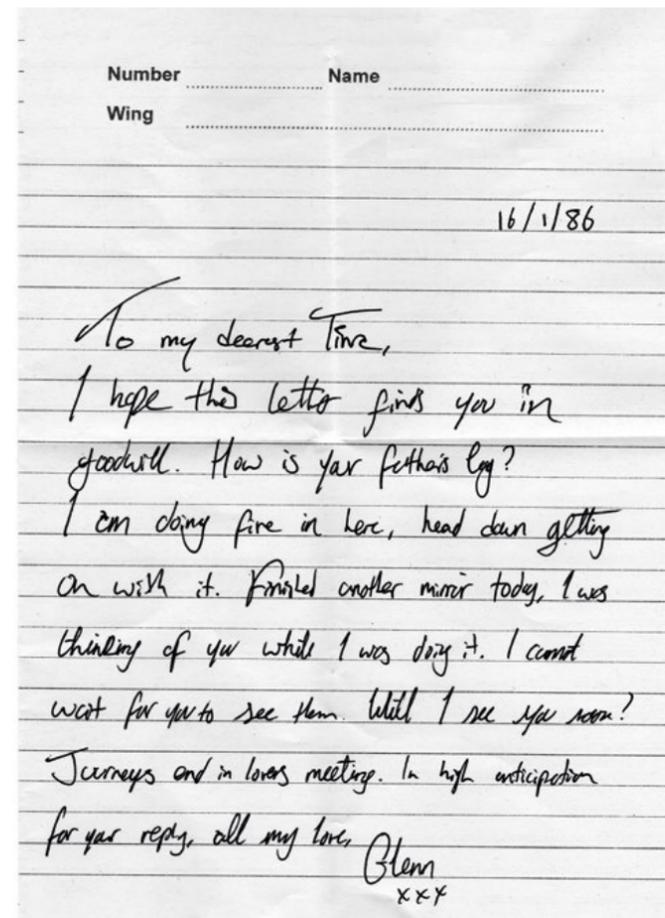
Dobson focused his energy into creativity and turned his life around in prison. His artistic work was immensely well received by prisoners and staff alike, and before his release in late 1986, Dobson created an installation of 13 etched prison issue mirrors. The collection, titled "The Cracked Mirrors", is widely recognised as Dobson's first significant piece of work. These mirrors are currently part of a touring exhibit travelling to British museums and galleries.

Following release from prison, Dobson rose through the ranks of the art world; his unconventional use of materials, and consciousness expanding kaleidoscopic style, captured the eye of critics and public alike. Dobson is credited as being a pioneer of the 'neo-psychobabble' movement in modern art. He has received multiple commissions, and made a range of work for many years from fine art to architecture.

In more recent years, Dobson has developed the world renowned fashion line, 'BULB'. In 2020, Dobson's contribution to the world of art and design was honoured with his body of work becoming the theme for that year's Met Gala.

Dobson's latest piece, 'Boadicea', is currently touring museums worldwide, visiting establishments such as Amsterdam's Rijksmuseum, London's National Gallery, New York's Metropolitan Museum of Arts, and Paris' The Louvre.

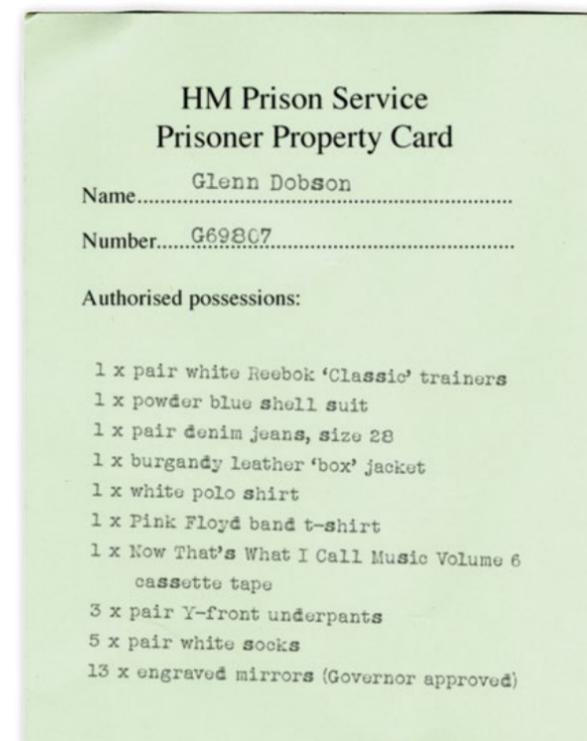
Throughout his incarceration, Tina forgave Dobson for his past behaviour, and the two kept in contact. They fell deeply in love with one another, and upon his release, they married in Liverpool within the year. The couple are still married and living in Liverpool, with their two daughters, Michelle and Victoria.



Letter to girlfriend



BULB fashion show



Dobson's 'Prop Card'

Set of Pipes

Wood, acrylic paint, cotton, varnish, alloy
Assorted sizes all in the region of 3" x ½" (7.5cm x 1.25cm)
20th Century

Researchers: Ashley and Natalie



Ashley argues:

Discovered in various cells during a full search of B wing at HMP/YOI Swinfen Hall in 1994, it is suspected these were all made by Nigel Bigginson who was in prison for a string of motoring offences including TWOC, dangerous driving, driving without a license, and driving without insurance. He had a long history of such behaviour and as a result was sentenced to four years in custody.

It is believed he made these in the prison's wood workshop. According to a fellow inmate, who is known to the researcher, Bigginson was well known for making pipes which he would sell in prison. Prices varied depending on design as well as who it was that wanted one.

Bigginson was a big fan of cricket, especially the West Indies team. Bigginson was never caught making a pipe, or indeed, ever found to be in possession of one.

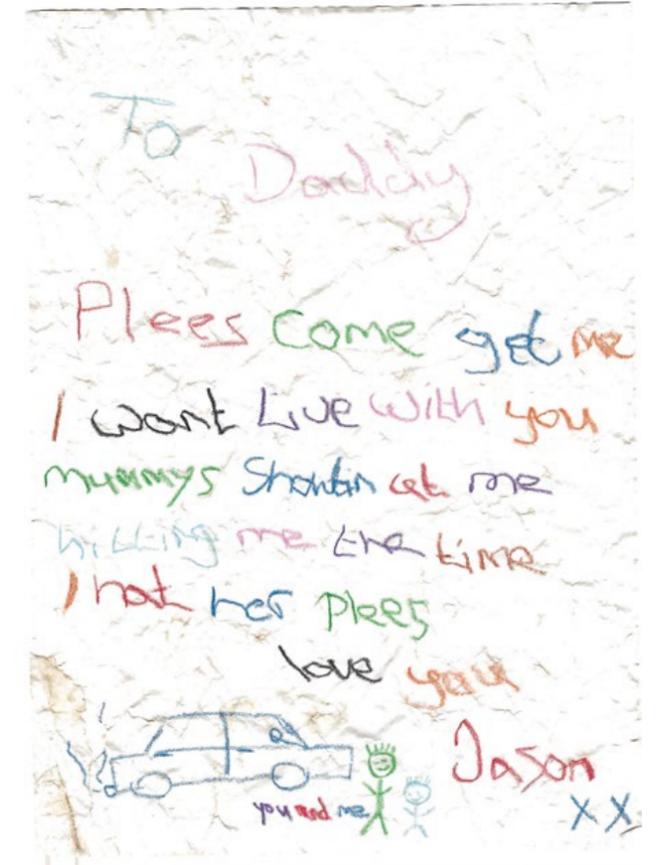
The reason I believe this story to be true is that the 'fellow prisoner' cited above is my elder brother. He hasn't returned to prison since the mid 1990s but when I showed him a photograph of the pipes, he was absolutely convinced they were "Biggo's".

Natalie argues:

These pipes were made in 1998 by Jason 'Smokey' Jones for personal use and to sell to friends. They were discovered and confiscated when Jones' cell was spun one weekend. His punishment involved 14 days in the seg, loss of canteen and demotion to basic privileges. He loved music, cricket and women. He was a bit of a 'Jack the lad' and a very big character in the prison. He was also one of the key players involved in smuggling class A drugs into HMP Frankland.

When Jones was a little boy, he used to make models with his dad, Bob. It was their special time together. At the age of six, Jones' mum and dad split up. Bob left, with the promise he would return to see Jones the following week. Jones' mum, Mandy, already an alcoholic, started drinking even more to cope, but it made things extremely volatile in the home. Jones and his mum would argue about everything and Mandy would hit Jones with her shoe or belt. Jones dreamed about going to live with his dad and hoped that when his dad arrived and saw the state of things, his dad would take him away with him. Sadly, Jones' dad never returned and Jones never got over this.

Things at home became so bad that Jones was taken into care. He found this extremely difficult to deal with and began rebelling against the system. His only way of escaping from his feelings - his safe place - was listening to music and watching cricket as it reminded him of his dad. Before long, Jones got involved with a group of older lads who were into drug taking, and he soon developed a habit. Jones and his friends would commit crime to fund their drug use and inevitably this led Jones to prison. This was the first of many sentences in which his issues remained unresolved.



Jones letter to his father, aged 6

Set of Pipes

Wood, acrylic paint, cotton, varnish, alloy
 Assorted sizes all in the region of 3" x 1/2"
 (7.5cm x 1.25cm)
 20th Century

Researchers: Natalie continued



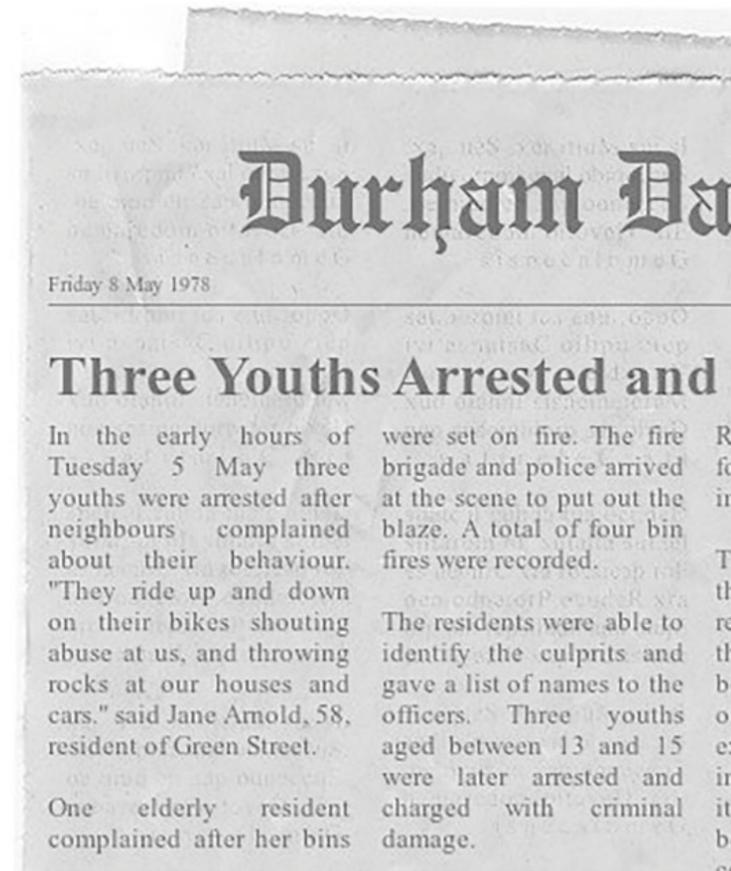
When Jones was 29, he learned his dad had died and this sent him on even more of a downward spiral. One night when he was out with his friends drinking and smoking, they were set upon by another group of lads.

In the fight, Jones committed a serious assault hitting one of them so hard he fell to the floor before kicking him in the head. The following day, Jones was woken by the sound of his front door being knocked in and being surrounded by armed police.

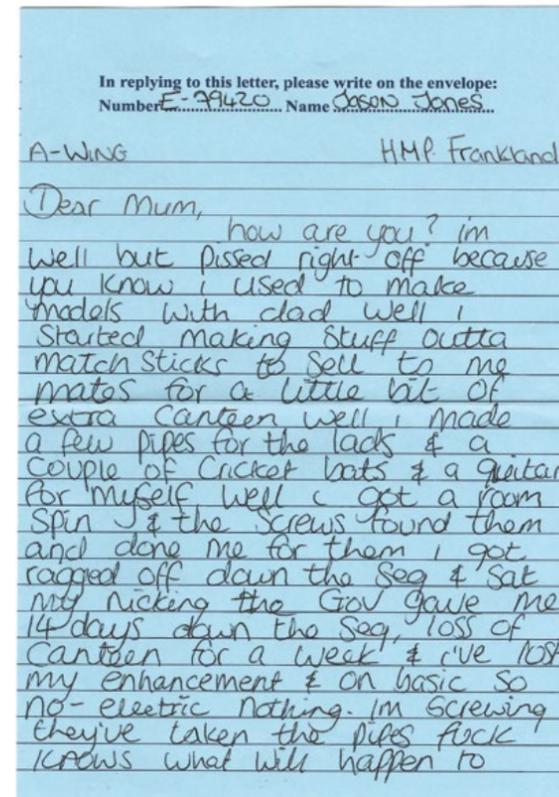
He then heard the words no man wants to hear, "Jason Jones, I am arresting you on suspicion of murder. You do not have to say anything. But, it

may harm your defence if you do not mention when questioned something which you later rely on in court. Anything you do say may be given in evidence." Jones went with the police without incident.

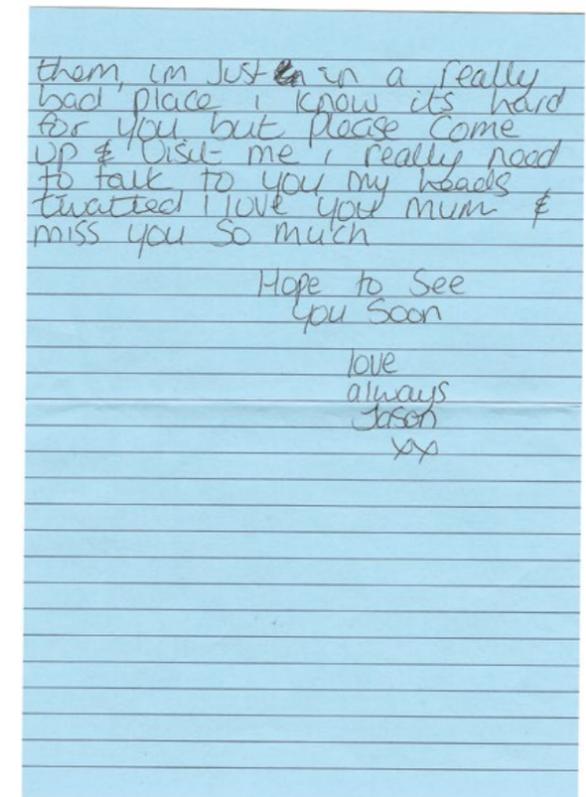
Jones was eventually charged and found guilty of manslaughter, and sentenced to 10 years in prison. During this time, Jones reached out to his mum and the two repaired their relationship.



Durham Daily 8 May 1978. Jones was one of the three youths



Jones' letter to his mother



Addendum

Since the original publication of this catalogue, and the opening of the Ingenuity exhibition at the National Justice Museum, a potential interesting connection to the object on Page 43 (Chess Squares) has come to light. A member of the public, who wishes to remain anonymous, has come forward with a Russian medal that was given to members of the ranks by the Tsar himself. The award medal is pure silver and dates back to 1898. Emblazoned in Cyrillic it states, "For service in their own convoy Emperor Nicholas Alexandrovich". This particular recognition was only awarded to a few hundred Cossacks (the Tsar's personal guards), is considered very rare, and currently valued at £90,000.

The member of the public has stated that in his family's history, the medal was awarded to his great grandfather, who subsequently gave it to his son (the member of the public's grandfather). This person remembers his grandmother's tale of the person whom was gifted this medal fleeing Russia to Western Europe, eventually spending some time imprisoned during which time he kept the medal hidden in the lining of his coat. The museum has been asked to verify a connection between this person's grandfather and the original maker of the chess pieces.

Unfortunately, due to a lack of historical substantiation and certificates, we could not categorically confirm that the grandfather of this person and Vladimir Yakovich are the same person. However, if true, it would mean Yakovich managed to settle somewhere, if not returning to Russia, have a family and pass his story down to his descendants whom found their way back to the United Kingdom.

Afterword

This catalogue centres stories and imagined histories connected to a special collection of prison made artefacts, cared for by the National Justice Museum. The artefacts are very real but their makers' stories have faded or were never recorded. Here we have crafted an intriguing new context, working closely and kindly beside people living in prison today to craft new histories that celebrate the ingenuity of the artefacts and the people who made them.

Under the Public Records Acts of 1958 and 1967, HM Prison Service was required to keep selected records and historical objects for permanent preservation, with a view to making them available to members of the public. Whilst most paper records are held in The National Archive, up until the mid noughties, objects including uniforms, and various prison fixtures and fittings, were held in a Prison Service Archive at the Prison Service Training College in Warwickshire. When the Freedom of Information Act came into effect in 2005, it gave people significant rights of access to information held by public authorities. As a consequence, the Prison Service felt the contents of their archive would be more accessible in a public museum, and so it was donated in its entirety to the National Justice Museum.

The donated collection included artefacts made by men and women in prison, ranging from soap sculptures and matchstick art to improvised chess pieces and headphones. We know very little about the genesis of these objects except in a few instances where pieces were signed by the artist, had additional information citing the prison they

had come from or the date they were accessioned by the Prison Service Archive. This gap in knowledge sparked an idea to invite people living in prison today to create new histories for some of the collection.

People in three Staffordshire prisons were guided through a week-long process of drama, writing and prop making, to 'research' chosen objects and develop an imagined history with associated provenance to 'prove' the authenticity of their research.

The questions that guided this process:

- What is the function of a museum?
- What makes something precious?
- Who writes history?
- Why should we care about undocumented lives?
- Who made these objects and why?
- What kind of evidence counts as provenance?

The catalogue is arranged in two sections to reflect the range of stories created. The first contains objects with a single story. The second presents objects that were chosen more than once across the three prisons, and are presented as 'contested' histories.

As we said at the very start, we'd like you to believe that everything you have read is true!

Saul Hewish and Andrea Hadley-Johnson

Glossary

Basic – Basic refers to one of the levels normally used as part of the Prison Service’s Incentives and Earned Privileges scheme (also known as IEP). This is a system of rewarding good behaviour and punishing bad behaviour through the awarding of merits or demerits. Depending on the number of points a prisoner accrues, they are classed in one of three levels; Basic, Standard or Enhanced. Different amounts of privileges apply to each level. Privileges include the number and type of items a prisoner can have in their cell, the amount of money they are permitted to spend each week, and the amount of visiting time they can request with family and/or friends.

Canteen – Canteen is the term used within modern prisons for the weekly delivery of items prisoners can buy themselves. It is administered via a canteen sheet which shows all the items available for purchase and prisoners tick which items they want to order.

Cat D – Category D, the lowest security prison in England and Wales, also known as an ‘open’ prison as there is no secure perimeter wall or fence.

Dark Cell – A cell used for punishing prisoners in the Victorian era. As the name suggests, these cells had no windows or other source of light. Prisoners in the dark cell would also have been fed a punishment diet consisting of just bread and water.

Hyperspectral Imaging – A scientific technique that analyses a wider spectrum of light instead of just primary colours. It can be used to show up detail that is not normally visible.

Life License – When someone is given a life sentence, the sentencing judge will also normally set a minimum number of years that must be served in custody. This is known as the tariff. When someone’s tariff has expired, they become eligible for release on license, although release is by no means guaranteed.

Only when the Parole Board deems someone is of sufficiently low risk will they be released on a life license. This license sets out specific conditions that the lifer must adhere to for the rest of their natural life. If at anytime they break those conditions, they can be instantly ‘recalled’ to prison.

Nicking – Prison slang for punishment following the breaking of one or more prison rules.

PIN system – In modern prisons, especially since the pandemic, many prisoners have access to a phone in their cell which, assuming they have enough credit in their prison account, allows them to call family and friends. Each prisoner has their own personal identification number (PIN) which they enter when making a call.

Prop Card – This is a document that lists a prisoner’s legitimate property. It is started when prisoners first arrive in custody and can be updated throughout a sentence.

PS1 – Sony Play Station, version 1.

Screw – Prison slang for prison officer.

Screwing – Prison slang for feeling angry and upset.

Scrumpling – Stealing apples from trees.

Seg – The prison’s segregation unit, normally used to house prisoners in solitary confinement as part of a punishment for breaking prison rules. Also known by prisoners as ‘The Block’.

Spun – The past tense of ‘spin’. Prison slang for having one’s cell searched by prison officers.

TWOC – Taken Without Owner’s Consent. This is the charge normally given to people who are caught driving stolen cars.

Credits

The Catalogue of Imagined Provenances was commissioned by the National Justice Museum and cocreated with Rideout (Creative Arts for Rehabilitation), HMP Stafford, Swinfen Hall, and Drake Hall.

A heartfelt thank you to everyone who contributed something special towards this extraordinary strand of the ‘Ingenuity’ project. A special thank you to the men and women living in prison who are at the heart of this catalogue.

Saul Hewish and Gwenda Hughes from Rideout for facilitating amazing creative workshops supported by Aoife Collins Maynard, Laura Hayward, Alisha Ibkar, Angelo Ko, Lucy Pitman-Wallace and Emily Townsend from MA Applied Theatre at University of Warwick.

Andrea Hadley Johnson, Michelle Hubbard and Bev Baker from National Justice Museum

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