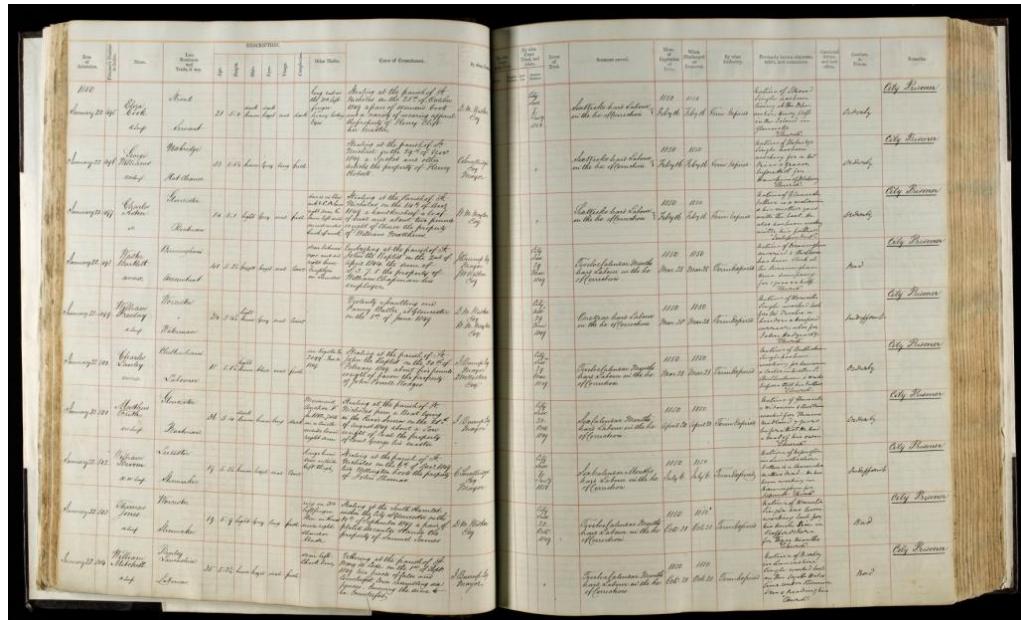


Gloucestershire Archives

# Take One Prisoner

# GLOUCESTERSHIRE ARCHIVES TAKE ONE PRISONER - PRIMARY TEACHERS' NOTES

## INTRODUCTION



Gloucester Gaol Register Q/GC6/2

This resource is intended to allow teachers to use a Victorian gaol register in an inspiring, cross-curricular way. It is based on the National Gallery's Take One Picture programme (see: [www.takeonepicture.org.uk](http://www.takeonepicture.org.uk)), which promotes the use of one picture as a rich and accessible source for cross-curricular learning. The Take One approach follows three stages: imagination, evidence and pupil-led learning. The Take One model was adopted for the use of archive documents by Gloucestershire Archives after the Take One Prisoner project funded by the MLA (Museums, Libraries & Archives) Council.

## ABOUT THE DOCUMENT

From the 12th century, Gloucester castle (see Gloucester Archives Take One Castle education resource on Gloucestershire Archives website) was used as the county gaol. The records of the gaol survive from 1785 and comprise a series of books that were kept by visiting justices, governors, chaplains and surgeons, according to rules approved by the county Quarter Sessions.

Among these records were a register of prisoners, which recorded details of prisoners remanded in custody in Gloucester gaol while awaiting trial, entered into the register in chronological order of committal. The registers are very detailed, giving basic biographical information on each prisoner as well as details of the crime(s), sentences and subsequent release. The register selected for Take One Prisoner – GA Ref: Q/GC6/2 - is typical of the main series of prisoner registers. In the 1850s, prison governors began to unofficially take photographs of prisoners for these records and in 1871

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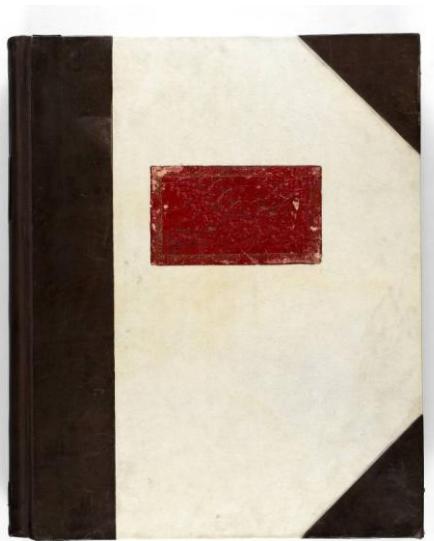
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photographing prisoners became a regular part of prison routine. In Gloucester prison, photographs survive from the 1880s.

In 1877 prisons ceased to be the responsibility of the Quarter Sessions and were transferred to the Prison Commission, a public body of the Government of the United Kingdom responsible for overseeing the operation of HM Prison Service. It was merged into the Home Office on 1 April 1963 to become the Prisons Department. The responsibility of record keeping was initially the responsibility of individual prisons and the records of Gloucester prison were first kept in a small museum onsite. However from the 1930s most began to deposit records at local county archives and in 1936 the records of Gloucester prison began to be routinely at Gloucestershire Archives.

### THE PHYSICAL DOCUMENT

The register is a large volume that measures 43cm high, 36cm wide and 7cm thick. It weighs 5.8kgs. It is made of paper, bound with thread and externally with leather covered cardboard. The pages are printed in a proforma layout that recorded the information of each prisoner running horizontally across both pages.



Front cover of Gloucester Gaol Register Q/GC6/2

### WHAT THE DOCUMENT CONTAINS

Each page in the register has provision for 10 individual entries, running horizontally across both pages. For each entry the register contains the following information that runs from left to right in columns. :

- *Date of admission*
- *Prisoners number in index*
- *Name*
- *Late residence and trade if any*
- *Description of prisoner* – sub-divided into: *Age, Height, (in Imperial measurements), Hair, Eyes, Visage, Complexion & Other Marks*

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- *Cause of Commitment*
- *By Whom committed*
- *By What Court to be tried*
- *By What Court tried and When*
- *Event of Trial* – this is the result of the trial.
- *Sentence Passed*
- *Mem. Of expiration of Term*
- *When Discharged or Removed*
- *By What Authority*
- *Previously known character, habits and connexions*
- *Convicted before and how often*
- *Conduct in Prison*
- *Remarks*

The registers were compiled by clerks working for the Governor of the gaol. Entries were written with dipping pens and ink. The handwriting is usually fair to good and there are few mistakes.

## Suggested Activities

The suggested activities to do in class can be used as the basis for a class project to introduce the subject. They comprise the following activities:

- **Gotcha!\*** - This activity involves using the register as a source of information to see what it contains and what information it can provide about the people listed in the gaol registers. It specifically uses the prisoner Charles Aston as an example.
- **Let's make a plan\*** - This creative activity looks at the physical aspects of a prison and invites pupils to create a plan of a prison or House of Correction. What do they think it needs?
- **Press!\*** - This activity asks the pupils to think about how the information on the Charles Aston incident that is represented in the gaol register would be reported in today's media. This can be presented in a number of ways for a drama piece (i.e. a TV or radio report) or as an IT lesson (create a newspaper or web news report).
- **Who? Me?\*** - This art activity asks the pupils to use the information in the gaol register to draw Charles Aston.
- **Whodunnit?\*** - This activity asks the pupils to look at the type of crimes that are presented on the same page as the Charles Aston entry. What are the crimes? Are there any patterns? If there are – what might the reasons be?

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- **Eat up!** – This investigates food in a Victorian prison and uses material on prison food from the ‘In Prison’ and ‘image Bank’ downloads.
- **Letter Home** – This is a PSHE lesson that asks pupils to imagine that they are in gaol - either as Charles Aston or another prisoner – and write a letter home. Resources can be taken from any of the downloads.
- **Wanted!** – This investigates how information was communicated in Victorian times and asks pupils to design and create a ‘wanted’ poster.
- **Well Dressed!** – This uses the image of Kidd Wake in the ‘Image Bank’ and looks at prison dress and uniform.

Each activity is focuses on one particular line of inquiry and has various things that children could do to or work on answer the question. Each activity also has Learning Outcomes and Curriculum Links. Activities marked with an \* can be delivered by Gloucestershire Archives as a taught session (this is chargeable - please contact us for details).

### **Lines of Enquiry for pupil-led learning**

The idea of the Take One scheme is that after introductory topics, it is the pupils that should suggest subsequent lines of inquiry that can come from the document. They are intended to allow teachers to use this local resource to undertake broad learning experiences both inside and outside the classroom. The nature of the document, the subject and the material it contains can be used to enrich a number of lessons and could easily become the central source for cross-curricular learning.

### **On the Prison:**

**Geographical studies** – Importance of location, relationship to town. Affect on local economy/ecology/prisoners.

**Building the prison** – Financial cost, sourcing and transporting the materials (stone, iron, lime, and timber), finding a workforce, construction techniques.

### **Life inside the Prison:**

**Prison stories** – Create a prison game, creative writing and storytelling, escapes.

**Prisoner activities** – The Treadmill, Hard-labour, breaking rocks, sewing sacks, etc.

**Sport & Leisure** – Gardening, sports, plays, poetry, dance.

**Living & eating** – Food in the prison (growing food, making bread,), lighting & heating, water, toilets & washing.

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**Medical care** – Health & hygiene in the prison. Medical treatments for sickness and disease – common illnesses in the prison were plague, typhoid, cholera, dysentery and infestations such as fleas and lice.

### Society

**Crimes & punishments** – Why do people become criminals? Young and old age, education, life in the town/country - compare/contrast exercises. Religion inside the prison.

## Background Information

These downloads comprise the following:

- **Gloucestershire Gaols, Prisons & Bridewells** – This is a list of the main prison establishments in Gloucestershire together with brief histories.
- **In prison** – This provides information as to what happened inside a prison on a typical day-to-day basis.
- **The Judicial system** – This is a brief guide to how prisoners were arrested, committed and tried.
- **Useful websites**
- **Reading list** – contains details of useful books relating to the subject.

• **Image Bank** - This is a PowerPoint presentation that contains images for supporting the resource. They can be printed out or projected onto whiteboards if required. Please note that the images are quite large, i.e. around 10MB, but this enables you to zoom in and not lose resolution. It contains sections with the following:

1. Gaol Register Q-GC-6-2 Images
2. Prison rules & Diets
3. Prisoner Pictures
4. Other images

## Notes on the Images in the Image Bank

### 1. Gaol Register Q-GC-6-2 Images

This contains images of the front cover of the gaol register and the open book, showing 2 pages. Individual entries for prisoners run horizontally across both pages and contain the following information categories (from left to right):

- *Date of admission*
- *Prisoners number in index*
- *Name*

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- *Late residence and trade if any*
- *Description – sub-divided into: Age, Height, (in Imperial measurements), Hair, Eyes, Visage, Complexion & Other Marks*
- *Cause of Commitment*
- *By Whom committed*
- *By What Court to be tried*
- *By What Court tried and When*
- *Event of Trial*
- *Sentence Passed*
- *Mem. Of expiration of Term*
- *When Discharged or Removed*
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- *Previously known character, habits and connexions*
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- *Remarks*

It contains two other folders: The folder **Charles Aston Details** contains close-up images of the whole line entry for Charles Aston, but also separate images of the main categories (Name & Late residence and trade; Physical description; Crime; Sentence Conduct & previously known character). The folder **Other Crimes on Page** contains close-up images of the crimes committed by the other prisoners on the register page.

### 2. Prison Rules & Diets

This contains 4 images:

- Prison Diets 1873
- Q-AG-18 Prison Regulations
- Q-AG-18 Prison Regulations small (compressed file)
- Q-AG-27 Prison Dietaries 1864
- Q-AG-27 Prison Dietaries 1864 (compressed file)

These records are taken from Gloucestershire Quarter-Sessions records relating to the administration of Gloucestershire prisons.

### 3. Prisoner Pictures

This contains images of the following:

- Oldest adult female prisoner
- Oldest adult male prisoner
- Youngest child female prisoner
- Youngest child male prisoner
- Kidd Wake in Gloucester Gaol uniform

The folder also has a Word and PDF file containing basic information on these prisoners from the registers.

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### 4. Other images

This contains the following images:

- D8746-1 Photograph of Sergeant Morris at Lydney Police Station.
- GL30-6 Gloucester Gaol, about April 1795
- GL30-4 Interior of Gloucester Gaol
- TS230 Reward for Robbery poster
- GBR-G3-AG1 Plan of Gloucester city Gaol and Bridewell, 1844.
- GPS231-4 Northleach House of Correction, 1936
- GPS231-4 Littledean house of Correction, 1963

The folder also has a Word and PDF file containing basic information on these images.

## Places to Visit in Gloucestershire & immediate area

**Littledean Gaol** – This was designed and built by the pioneer of Prison Reform, Sir George Onesiphorous Paul and the leading prison architect of his day, William Blackburn. It was one of the four new prisons built in Gloucestershire (the others being at Northleach, Gloucester, and Lawford's Gate near Bristol and opened in 1791. It closed in the 1920s and is now a museum dedicated to criminal activities through time. See: [www.littledeanjail.com](http://www.littledeanjail.com).

**Northleach Gaol** – Another of Sir George Onesiphorous Paul's prisons, although now only the front range is original. See: [http://www.cotswold.gov.uk/nqcontent.cfm?a\\_id=5732](http://www.cotswold.gov.uk/nqcontent.cfm?a_id=5732) and <http://www.britishlistedbuildings.co.uk/en-130502-the-old-prison-formerly-northleach-house>