

# United States Penitentiary: Leavenworth Inmate Case Files 1895-1952



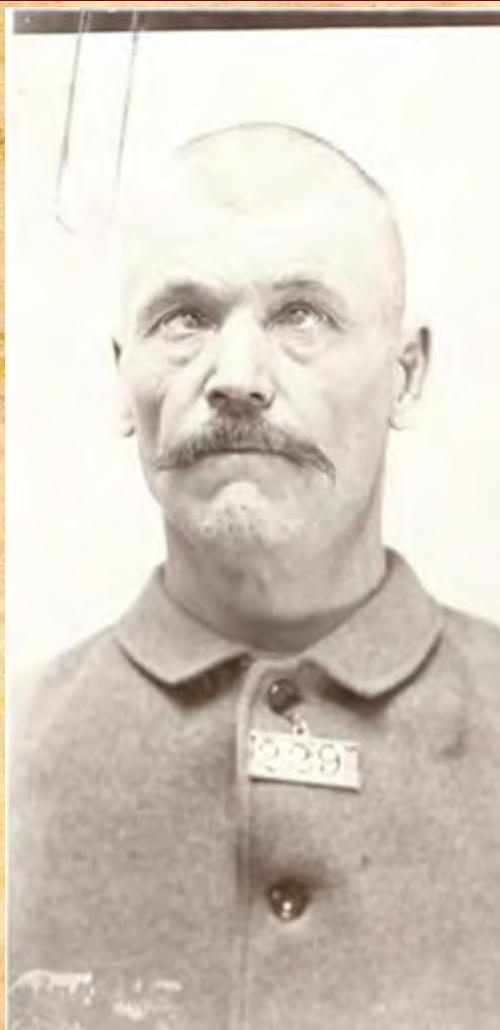
Jake Ersland



# The Paradox of the Inmate File



# **“69,937 and Counting”**





*"Leavenworth is Hell and I guess I'm the chief devil."  
-Warden Robert W. McLaughry, 1901*





# What is in the files?



THIS FOLDER IS NOT TO BE FINISHED

MALE  
15  
10

Name Jack Shellen  
Alias Jack Terden  
Lawrence E. Allen

Classification No. 1 R 4  
19 14

PRIN7

Prison Register No. 6770

RIGHT HAND

1 - Right Thumb 2 - R. Fore Finger 3 - R. Middle Finger 4 - R. Ring Finger 5 - R. Little Finger

LEFT HAND

6 - L. Thumb 7 - L. Fore Finger 8 - L. Middle Finger 9 - L. Ring Finger 10 - L. Little Finger

PRIN7

LEFT HAND RIGHT HAND

Jack Shellen is present in the United States Penitentiary at Leavenworth, Kansas, do hereby authorize the Warden of said Penitentiary to forward to the authorized representatives of you and transmit all letters, papers and other mail matters and all response postcards which may be directed to my address so long as I am a prisoner in said Penitentiary.

Signed at the United States Penitentiary, Leavenworth, Kansas, this 20 day of Nov 1941

Jack Shellen

[illegible][illegible]

UNITED STATES PENITENTIARY  
LEAVENWORTH, KANSAS  
No. (7-7-2)

Name *Jack Lester*  
Alias *Jack Lester, Lawrence & Arthur* Color *White*

Race *White*  
Meters or Civil Power *None*  
From *St. Louis, Mo.*  
Class *Prison, Convict*  
Sentence *Life*  
Date of Sentence *April 1918*  
Sentence Expires *None*  
Full Sentence Expires *None*  
Good Time Sentence Expires *None*  
Trust *None*  
Elevation *None*  
Religion *Protestant*  
When Born *1901*  
Nationality *None*  
Place *None*  
Place Living *None*  
Left Place at what Age *None*  
Married *No*  
Fellow Born Where *England*  
Mother Born Where *England*  
Residence *St. Louis, Mo.*  
*St. Louis, Mo.*

Height *5' 10"*  
Weight *140*  
Color of Hair *Black*  
Color of Eyes *Blue*  
Complexion *Fair*  
Teeth *Good*  
Build *Good*

APPROXIMATE AGE  
5' 10" 140

RETELIN MEASUREMENTS

Height *5' 10"*  
Chest A. *41"*  
Chest B. *41"*  
Chest C. *41"*  
Chest D. *41"*  
Chest E. *41"*  
Chest F. *41"*  
Chest G. *41"*  
Chest H. *41"*  
Chest I. *41"*  
Chest J. *41"*  
Chest K. *41"*  
Chest L. *41"*  
Chest M. *41"*  
Chest N. *41"*  
Chest O. *41"*  
Chest P. *41"*  
Chest Q. *41"*  
Chest R. *41"*  
Chest S. *41"*  
Chest T. *41"*  
Chest U. *41"*  
Chest V. *41"*  
Chest W. *41"*  
Chest X. *41"*  
Chest Y. *41"*  
Chest Z. *41"*  
Chest AA. *41"*  
Chest AB. *41"*  
Chest AC. *41"*  
Chest AD. *41"*  
Chest AE. *41"*  
Chest AF. *41"*  
Chest AG. *41"*  
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Chest AI. *41"*  
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Chest CF. *41"*  
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Chest CH. *41"*  
Chest CI. *41"*  
Chest CJ. *41"*  
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Chest GQ. *41"*  
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Chest GT. *41"*  
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Chest GV. *41"*  
Chest GW. *41"*  
Chest GX. *41"*  
Chest GY. *41"*  
Chest GZ. *41"*  
Chest HA. *41"*  
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Chest HP. *41"*  
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Chest HU. *41"*  
Chest HV. *41"*  
Chest HW. *41"*  
Chest HX. *41"*  
Chest HY. *41"*  
Chest HZ. *41"*  
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Chest IC. *41"*  
Chest ID. *41"*  
Chest IE. *41"*  
Chest IF. *41"*  
Chest IG. *41"*  
Chest IH. *41"*  
Chest II. *41"*  
Chest IJ. *41"*  
Chest IK. *41"*  
Chest IL. *41"*  
Chest IM. *41"*  
Chest IN. *41"*  
Chest IO. *41"*  
Chest IP. *41"*  
Chest IQ. *41"*  
Chest IR. *41"*  
Chest IS. *41"*  
Chest IT. *41"*  
Chest IU. *41"*  
Chest IV. *41"*  
Chest IW. *41"*  
Chest IX



# Inmate Photograph



## Mug Shot

# Record Sheet

## UNITED STATES PENITENTIARY, Leavenworth, Kansas.

Record of Frank Greigware No. 6768  
 Alias, James Gordon, E. E. Hollingshead Color, White  
 Crime, Robbing U.S. Mail Train  
 Sentence: Life Years, \_\_\_\_\_ Months, \_\_\_\_\_ Days. Fine, \$ \_\_\_\_\_ : Cost, \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Execution  
 Committed

To date from Apr 19, 1909 Convicted, As of Arch Omaha  
 Maximum Term, \_\_\_\_\_ Minimum Term, \_\_\_\_\_  
 Received at Penitentiary, Apr 19, 1909 Occupation, Carpenter Age, 23

Escaped Apr 21, 1910, - apprehended in Canada - see letters 5-24-34, Director & 5-12-34 in re withdrawing request for extradition.

DATE	VIOLETIONS.	No. Days in Solitary.	Loss of Days
1910 Jan 4	Malingering. This man came on sick call this morning claiming diarrhoea. He was placed in quarters for observation with the result that I find he has no dysentery or diarrhoea; but has had only one ordinary passage of bowels since then (D. Joke) P. 203. <u>Solitary 2.30 P.M. Released Jan 6, 1910. 11. A.M.</u>		2 3



# Personal Data Sheet

## UNITED STATES PENITENTIARY LEAVENWORTH, KANSAS

Name Ralph H. Chaplin Reg. No. 13104 Color White

Alias

Crime Seditious consp. Consp to injure civ rights. Conspiracy. Obstr the military service.

Received September 7, 1918 From N.D. Ill. Chicago.

Sentence 1-6yr, 1-10yr, 1-2yr, 1-20 yr concurrent sentences & 4-\$5000 fines  
20 years Fine, costs, etc. \$20000.00 and costs

Date of sentence August 30, 1918 Sentence begins Sept 7, 1918

Maximum term expires June 2, 1940 Minimum term expires Nov. 6, 1933

Good time allowed 2400 days Eligible for parole May 6, 1925 Jan. 31, 1927

Civil or military Civil Occupation Artist Age 31

Released on Bond July, 30, 1919 Out of Prison 635 Days

Returned from Bond Apr. 25, 1921.

Where arrested Chicago, Ill When Sept 1917

How long in jail before trial bond Nativity Kansas

How long in U. S. Citizen of U. S.

Father living Yes Mother living No

Name of father Edgar Louis Chaplin Name of mother

Present address of parents 724 W. 72nd St. Chicago, Ill

Nativity of father Vermont Nativity of mother

Married Yes Wife living yes Children 1 Boys 1 Girls

Wife's name and present address Mrs Edith Medin Chaplin  
6459 University Ave, Chicago, Ill

Your residence Chicago, Ill

In case of sickness or death, who notify Father and wife

Education: Read yes Write yes Common school High school yes College

Religion no Preference Methodist

Chew tobacco yes Smoke yes Drink no Use opium or morphine no

[OVER]

- Place of birth
- Names of parents
- Permanent address
- Religion
- Education
- Vices
- And More



# Fingerprints

THIS FORM IS NOT TO BE PINNED.

Name Jack Shelton MALE  
 Aliases Jack Gordon  
Lawrence F. Golden  
 Classification No. 1 R 15  
5997 (17) 14 10  
 Prison Register No. 6770 RIGHT HAND.

1.—Right Thumb.	2.—R. Fore Finger.	3.—R. Middle Finger.	4.—R. Ring Finger.	5.—R. Little Finger.
17	21	27	9	15

LEFT HAND.				
6.—L. Thumb	7.—L. Fore Finger.	8.—L. Middle Finger.	9.—L. Ring Finger.	10.—L. Little Finger.
4	8	8	17	10

LEFT HAND.					RIGHT HAND.				

I, Jack Shelton, a prisoner in the United States Penitentiary at Leavenworth, Kansas, do hereby authorize the Warden of said Penitentiary by himself or his authorized representative to open and examine all letters, papers and other mail matters and all express packages which may be directed to my address so long as I am a prisoner in said Penitentiary.

Dated at the United States Penitentiary, Leavenworth, Kansas, this 20 day of Nov 19 07  
Jack Shelton

UNITED STATES PENITENTIARY  
 LEAVENWORTH, KANSAS

Name Jack Shelton No. 6770 Color White  
 Alias Jack Gordon, Lawrence F. Golden P. N.

Received Nov 19 19 07 Age 27 Apparent Age  
 Military or Civil Prisoner Levit Height 5'6 3/4" Weight 146  
 From Prof. Sub. Omaha Color of Hair Ches. dp Beard Ches. deep  
 Crime Robbing U.S. Mail train Color of Eyes Ches. gray Chin yes  
 Sentence Life Years — Months — Days Complexion fair Teeth good  
 Date of Sentence Nov 18 19 07 Sentence Begins Nov 19 19 07 Build M  
 Full Sentence Expires 19  
 Good-Time Sentence Expires 19  
 Trade laborer  
 Education Common School  
 Religion Protestant  
 Where Born Pa.  
 Nationality Am.  
 Habits —  
 Parents Living yes  
 Left Home at what Age at home  
 Married no Children —  
 Father Born Where England  
 Mother Born Where Pa.  
 Residence Spokane, Wash.  
Brother C. O. Golden  
3709 Kuna Ave, Everett, Wash.

BERTILLON MEASUREMENTS

	Forehead	Inclin
Height	<u>70</u>	<u>vert</u>
Cuts A.	<u>67</u>	Height <u>M</u>
Trunk	<u>91.5</u>	Width <u>M</u>
Head Length	<u>16.4</u>	Ridge <u>(Cave)</u>
Head Width	<u>15.2</u>	Base <u>hor</u>
Check Width	<u>13.2</u>	Root <u>M</u>
R. Ear	<u>6.5</u>	Length <u>M</u>
L. Foot	<u>26.47</u>	Project <u>M</u>
L. Mid. F.	<u>11.4</u>	Width <u>M</u>
L. Lit. F.	<u>8.8</u>	Pecul <u>(tip bends to right)</u>
L. Fore A.	<u>43.9</u>	

Remarks concerning measurements

MARKS, SCARS AND MOLES.

III. Small sc. at 1/2" below lower lip, at 1/2" to left of m line  
Tip of nose slightly bends to right

Remarks

Prisoner's signature witnessed, Finger Prints and Measurements taken by A. J. Rine  
 at the United States Penitentiary, Leavenworth, Kansas, on Nov 20 19 07



# Daily Work Record

UNITED STATES PENITENTIARY  
LEAVENWORTH, KANSAS

6"/69

INDIVIDUAL DAILY LABOR RECORD, WITH KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS, FOR YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 1917

**Name** William Mathews

**Received** November 19-1909

**Sentence:** Life

**Number of days sick in Hospital** 25

**Number of days in Cell** 6

**Number of days life on working days** 1

**Number of days in solitary confinement** 5

**Number of days in Isolation Ward** 4

MONTH	DAYS OF MONTH																															Number of days sick in Hospital	Number of days in Cell	Number of days life on working days	Number of days in solitary confinement	Number of days in Isolation Ward	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31						
July	41	5	41	2	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	25						
Aug.	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	27					
Sept.	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	28					
Oct.	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	26					
Nov.	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	26					
Dec.	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	26					
Jan.	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	27					
Feb.	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	24					
March	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	27					
April	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	25					
May	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	26					
June	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	26					
<b>Totals for Year</b>																															<b>310</b>	<b>92</b>					

1 Warden's Office

2 Deputy Warden's Office

3 Chief Clerk's Office

4 Record Clerk's Office and Photographic Gallery

5 Custodian's Dep't.

6 Storekeeper's Office

7 Chaplain's Office and Library

8 Mail Department

9 Physician's Office

10 Supt. of Construction Office

11 Printing Office

12 Warden's Residence

13 Warden's Stables

14 Deputy Warden's Residence

15 Employed at Hosp.

16 Employed at



10



Send This Copy to Warden.

United States Penitentiary,  
Leavenworth, Kansas.

PHYSICIAN'S EXAMINATION OF CONVICT.

Reg. No. 6922 Rec'd Nov. 25 1909.  
From Marion S.A.  
Name, Robert Gulland  
Age, 26  
Race, Indian  
Nationality, American  
Height, 5 ft 10 1/2 in  
Occupation, Laborer  
Weight, 170 #  
Heart—Action, Normal  
Sound, "  
Rhythm, "  
Pulse—Sitting, "  
Standing, "  
Respiration—Sitting, "  
Standing, "  
Chest—Quiet, 26 in  
Inspiration, 38 "  
Expiration, 34 "  
Range, 4 "  
Inguinal Canal—Right, Normal  
Left, "  
Uses Tobacco, Yes Liquors, Yes  
Alimentary Canal, Normal  
When Last Vaccinated, Nov. 19, 09.

(OVER)

- **Physician's**
- Exam of Inmate



# Correspondence Log

[illegible]



# Personal Correspondence

Leavenworth, Kan.  
Mar. 31<sup>st</sup> 1915.

Mr. Harden,  
U. S. Penitentiary  
Leavenworth, Kan.

Sir:

I respectfully submit this statement in regard to prisoner Donald Woods No. 6772. He interfered in two fights that took place in the kitchen and dining hall and prevented, what might have been serious cutting affairs.

On May 7<sup>th</sup> 1910, prisoners No. 6373 and "6910 engaged in fight in kitchen. No. 6373 a desperate negro, jerked out a sharp pointed knife, he had concealed on his person and struck at 6910, barely missing his throat but before he could use the knife again prisoner Woods interfered, having to use force to secure the knife. By his prompt action he prevented a serious affair. I was across the room when the trouble started and could not possibly have reached them in time to prevent the cutting.

In June 1910, I was detailed to take place of Head Cook, who was on vacation, and Guard Agli was on duty in dining hall. My attention was attracted to the dining hall and upon entering same, I found that prisoner 6373, while marching from late breakfast had jumped out of line and attacked prisoner 6910 with a sharp knife cutting through his coat and underclothing and probably would have been successful in cutting him severely had it not been for the prompt interference of Woods, 6772.



# Trusty Prisoner's Agreement

## TRUSTY PRISONER'S AGREEMENT

Name William Mathews, Number 6769, Color White  
Crime Robbing U. S. Mail Train  
Sentence Life years, -- months, -- days  
Date of Sentence ..... Sent from D. of Nebraska, Omaha  
Full term expires ..... Short term expires .....  
Received at Penitentiary Nov. 19, 1909 Occupation Farmer Age 43  
Reasons for being made a Trusty prisoner Chicken Farm

Is the above-stated name your right name? Yes  
If not, what is your right name? .....  
Give a full history of the crime for which you were sent here. It is alleged that I robbed a  
State fully the nature of the crime. Persons injured physically, financially or otherwise. State when and where the crime was committed. Names of  
U. S. Mail Train. I pleaded Not Guilty.  
persons with you when the crime was committed and what was done with him or them. State the reasons why the crime was committed and whether or not you plead guilty at the  
trial]

With whom do you correspond? Cousin, J. M. Cook, Junction City, Oregon.  
C. A. Wilson, 2317 Cadaldo Ave., Spokane, Wash.

Where and by whom were you arrested? Buhl, Idaho, Deputy Sherriff

Are you married? No Number of children? None

Name and P. O. address of parents Both Dead

Name and address of wife None

Have you ever served sentence in Penitentiary, Reformatory, Work House or Jail before? Four Years in Penitent-  
tiary at Walla Walla, Wash. 1893-1896, under same name, for assault to  
commit murder. [State under what name, when and where.]

Do you own any real estate? No  
[State where located and the value of it.]

In consideration of being made a Trusty prisoner, I, William Mathews  
a prisoner in the United States Penitentiary, Leavenworth, Kansas, do hereby pledge my word that I will not attempt to escape from said Penitentiary  
or Penitentiary Reservation, and will serve faithfully the unexpired part of my sentence.

Signature William Mathews No. 6769

References: Frank Jones, Waiteburg, Wash.  
John Patterson, Enterprise, Oregon.



# Sentence of Court

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, DISTRICT OF NEBRASKA,  
OMAHA DIVISION.

The President of the United States of America:  
To the Marshal of the United States for the District of  
Nebraska, and to the Warden of the United States Penitentiary, at  
Leavenworth, Kansas. GREETING:-

Whereas, on the 11th day of November, A.D.1909, at a term of  
the District Court of the United States for the District of Nebraska,  
held at Omaha, in said District, Frank Grigware, otherwise called  
James Gordon, otherwise called E.E.Hollingshead, was convicted of  
the crime of robbing the United States Mail, and placing the lives  
of the railway postal clerks in jeopardy, by the use of dangerous  
weapons, contrary to the laws of the United States, and

SENTENCED to be imprisoned in the United States Penitentiary  
situated at Leavenworth, Kansas, at hard labor, for the term of his  
natural life.

Now, therefore, you, the said Marshal, are hereby commanded  
to deliver to said Warden of the said United States Penitentiary,  
situated at Leavenworth, Kansas, the body of Frank Grigware, other-  
wise called James Gordon, otherwise called E.E.Hollingshead, who is  
now in your custody.

And you, the said Warden of said United States Penitentiary  
are hereby commanded to receive the body of the said Frank Grigware,  
otherwise called James Gordon, otherwise called E.E.Hollingshead,  
and safely keep him in said Penitentiary until said sentence of im-  
prisonment shall have been fully complied with, or until he shall  
have been discharged therefrom by due course of law.

( SEAL )

Witness, the Honorable Thomas C.Munger,  
Judge of the District Court of the United States  
for the District of Nebraska, at Omaha, this 18th  
day of November, A.D.1909.

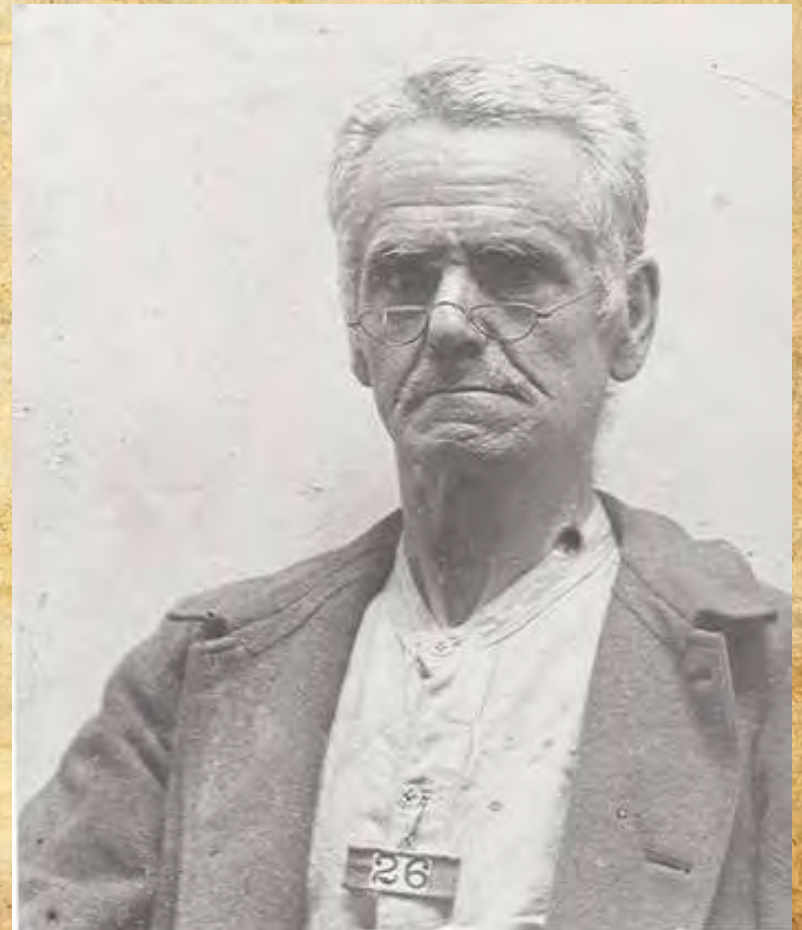
R.C.Hoyt,

Clerk.



What was I convicted of?

Mailing  
Obscene  
Material





What was I convicted of?



Murder



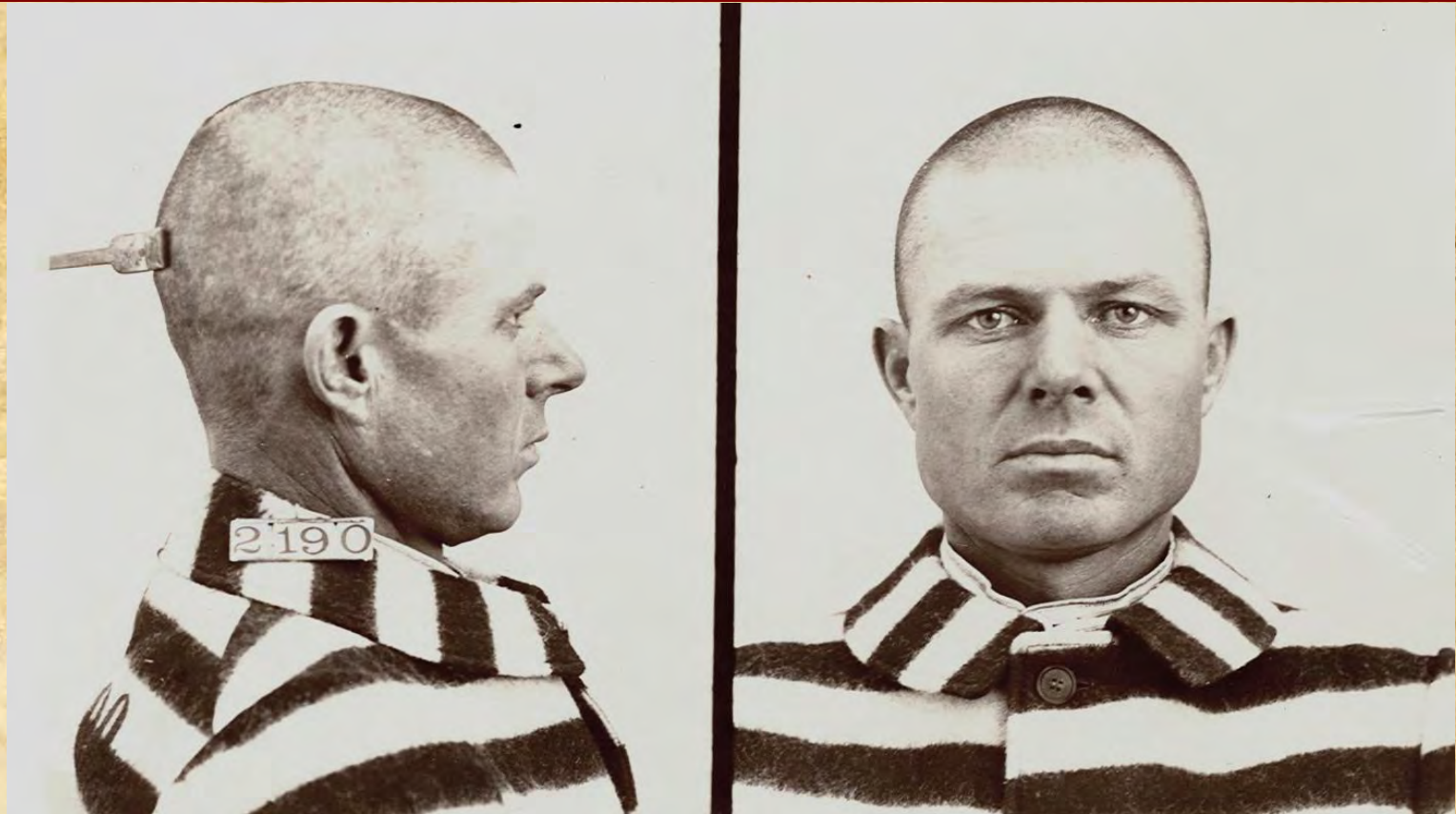
What was I convicted of?



Robbing a Post Office



What was I convicted of?



Robbing a Post Office



What was I convicted of?



Larceny



# What was I convicted of?



## Larceny



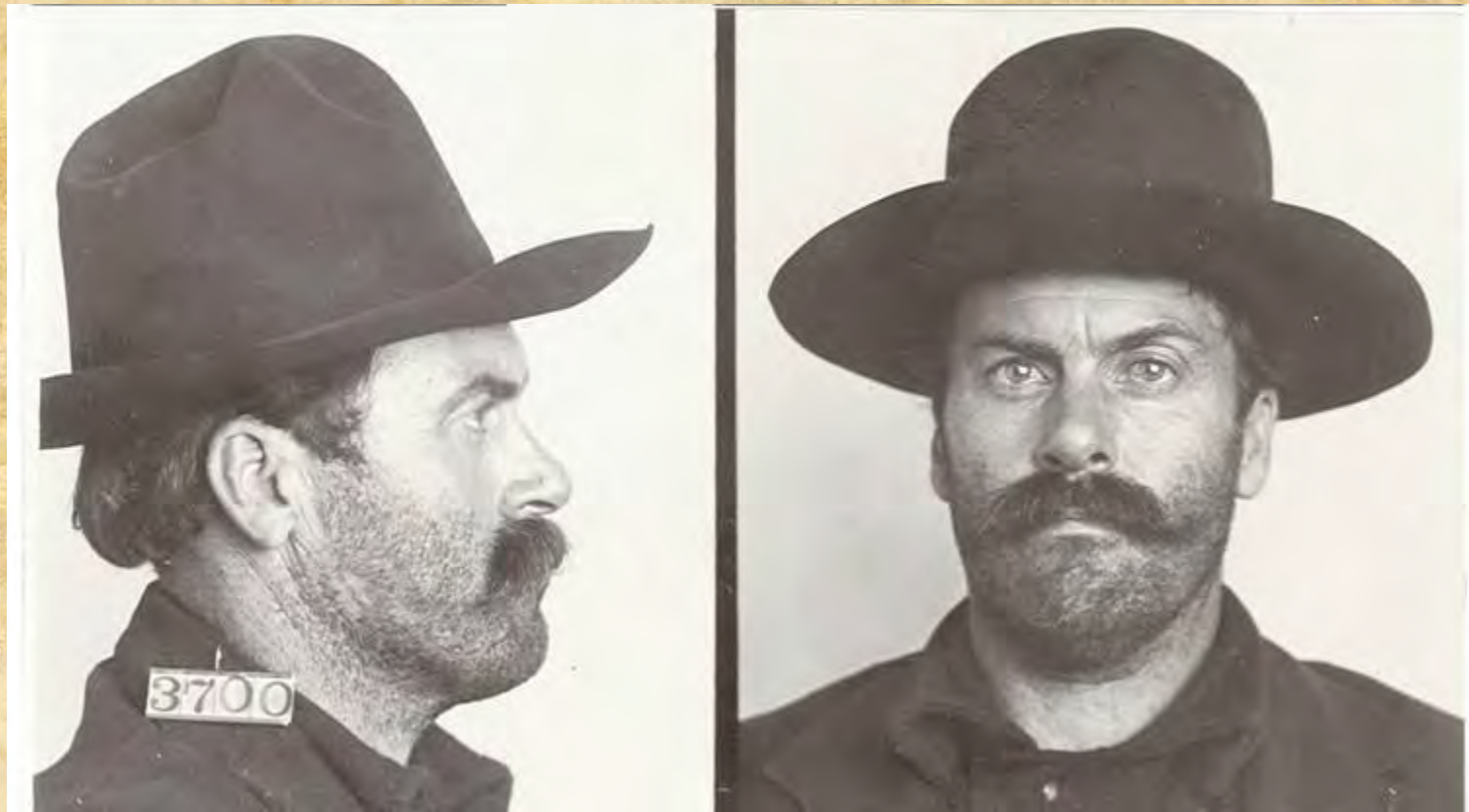
What was I convicted of?



Counterfeiting



What crime was I convicted of?



Adultery



What was I convicted of?



Selling Liquor to Indians



What was I convicted of?



Violation of Banking Laws



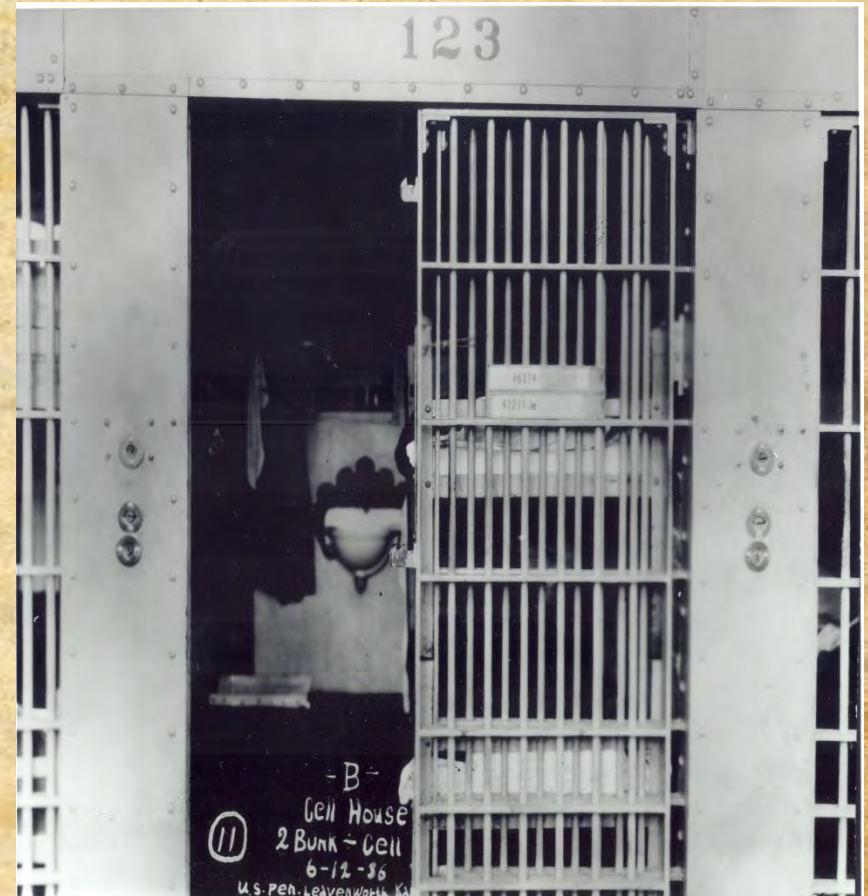
# What was I convicted of?



- Murder

# The Size of Inmate Files

- Early files are fairly sparse
- Grew as the bureaucracy grew
- Social Interview





# Privacy Act Restrictions



- Inmate entered at least 72 years ago
- Born at least 100 years ago
- Inmate is deceased and researcher can prove it



# The Women





# Common Mistakes

- Kansas State Penitentiary
- US Disciplinary Barracks
- Soldiers Home



# Contact Information

- National Archives @ Kansas City
- 400 West Pershing
- Kansas City, Mo 64108
- [Kansascity.archives@nara.gov](mailto:Kansascity.archives@nara.gov)
- 816-268-8000



# BOP-Contact Information

- Bureau of Prisons
- 320 First St., NW
- Washington, DC 20534
- 202-307-3198
- [www.bop.gov](http://www.bop.gov)
- [webmaster@bop.gov](mailto:webmaster@bop.gov)

# “The Horse Whisperer”

