

CONVERSATIONS IN BLACK HISTORY

MAHALIA FRANCE-MIR, SAI MURRAY & MAX FARRAR

AT THE LEEDS WEST INDIAN CENTRE, 1.2.17

DAVID OLUWALE

1930 (?) - 1949

'SUBJECT IS NOT RECORDED IN THIS COUNTRY' (NIGERIAN POLICE, 1970)

DAVID IN THE WEST AFRICAN COLONY

- ▶ Born 1926,1929,1930 or 1931 in Lagos, Nigeria
- ▶ Lived in the Brazilian Quarter
- ▶ Father was a fisherman
- ▶ Left school at 14
- ▶ Apprentice tailor
- ▶ Christian
- ▶ Stowed away on the Motor Vessel Temple Bar on 16th August 1949



DAVID IN YORKSHIRE 1949-1953

HARD LABOUR AND SOME DANCING

- ▶ Arrived in Hull on 3rd Sept 1949
- ▶ First **incarceration**: one month in Armley Jail, Leeds
- ▶ Lived with other West Africans in inner north Leeds
- ▶ Six months work at Croft Engineering in Bradford
- ▶ Worked as a hod carrier, in the abattoir and at the meat market in Leeds
- ▶ 1951: Sheffield Gas Company & Leeds abattoir
- ▶ Drinking at the King Edward Hotel & dancing at the Mecca Ballroom in Leeds
- ▶ Known as 'Yankee' (he loved US popular culture)

DAVID'S 2nd INCARCERATION: 2 months in HMP Leeds

- ▶ 25 April 1953
- ▶ Arrested after an altercation at King Edward Hotel over an unpaid bill
- ▶ Sentenced to two months in Armley Jail
- ▶ Referred to psychiatric hospital in Leeds



INCARCERATION (3):

Almost 8 years in Mention Asylum

- ▶ Psychiatrist Michael Leahy recorded that David appeared 'apprehensive, noisy and frightened without cause'.
- ▶ Five days later described him as loud, excitable and terrified: 'Childish and wept when talking of his fears'
- ▶ 'Treatment': Largactyl & Electro Convulsive Therapy

But was he ill or was he a victim of ethnocentric diagnosis?

6 JUNE 1953 - 19 APRIL 1961

MENSTON ASYLUM

INCARCERATION & DESTITUTION

- ▶ Lived at 209 Belle Vue Rd and works at Storey Evans & Co, printer supplier
- ▶ Sacked from West Yorkshire Foundry in Leeds for fighting with a Jamaican worker
- ▶ 1962 signed on in London & Sheffield
- ▶ September: 6 months in Hull prison for malicious wounding (4th incarceration)
- ▶ 1963 lived in Chapeltown, Leeds
- ▶ October 1964 taken into Faith Lodge in Leeds (alcoholic homeless facility)
- ▶ November '65 squatted at 12 St Alban's Place, Leeds
- ▶ Arrested for wounding two policemen



11th November 1965

DAVID'S 5th INCARCERATION

Sectioned under the 1959 Mental Health Act

- ▶ Psychiatrist Dr Carty said he was overactive, garrulous, aggressive, 'very paranoid about the police' & was hearing threatening voices, sometimes in Yoruba, sometimes in English
- ▶ Carty concluded he was a 'dullard'
- ▶ Reported that David said he was a heavy drinker of sherry and rum
- ▶ Discharged 27 April 1967. Described as 'quiet and co-operative'

High Royd's Hospital

Formerly Menston Asylum

Originally (1888) West Yorkshire Pauper Lunatic Asylum

ELLERKER & KITCHING: HOUNDING DAVID OLUWALE

- ▶ 4 May 1969 David's body found at Knostrop Weir
- ▶ Police Cadet Gary Galvin said he suspected Inspector Ellerker & Sgt Kitching
- ▶ Chief Supt Perkins (London) conducted a two year investigation
- ▶ Humanity is indebted to Gary Galvin & the other police officers who broke ranks, obeyed their conscience & gave evidence
- ▶ From 1967, Insp Ellerker & Sgt Kitching demanded that they were called each time 'Uggy' was seen sleeping in doorways in the city centre
- ▶ They drove David to Bramhope & Middleton woods, dumped him & told him to stay in the jungle'
- ▶ Put him in a dustbin & rolled it down an arcade

THE HOUNDING CONTINUED

- ▶ Ellerker & Kitching urinated on David
- ▶ Set fire to his newspaper bedding
- ▶ Banged his head repeatedly on the floor of the police van
- ▶ In December '69 David was arrested & sentenced to three months in Preston Prison for indecent exposure (6th incarceration)
- ▶ In January '69 E&K arrested David; kicked him so hard in the groin that he was lifted off the ground
- ▶ David was charged and sentenced to 14 days in prison (7th incarceration)
- ▶ Early morning of 16 April 1969: two police officers seen pursuing a man in The Calls, close River Aire (near Leeds Bridge)

THE TRIAL OF ELLERKER & KITCHING

8th – 23rd NOVEMBER 1971

- ▶ Ellerker & Kitching accused of actual & grievous bodily harm & manslaughter of David Oluwale
- ▶ At the trial, David was described as a 'lithesome, miniature Mr Universe' with big, dirty teeth who attacked and bit the psychiatric nurses
- ▶ David Odamo, a Nigerian nurse at the time, wrote that David was not a violent person. His evidence was not called.
- ▶ Several police testified to Ellerker's & Kitching's assaults on David



In 1971, the Crown Court was situated in Leeds Town Hall





REMEMBER OLUWALE

**WORKING FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE,
DIVERSITY, EQUALITY & INCLUSION**



rememberoluwale.org

  RememberOluwale

DOMA (David Oluwale Memorial Association) is a registered charity that is:

- * Educating & campaigning, with partners, on the intersecting issues that David endured: incarceration, mental ill-health, racism, destitution, homelessness, police violence
- * Building a memorial garden in David's name for peaceful dialogue and artistic performance
- * Embracing art of every type as a major means of changing attitudes, policy & practice

Main texts: Caryl Phillips 'Northern Lights' in *Foreigners* (2007) Kester Aspden *The Hounding of David Oluwale* (2008)