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Inventory

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Eight ledgers used by Alasdair Gray as diaries, letter-books, and literary notebooks, with six typescripts of the play 'Fleck'. With the exception of the description of items 11 and 15 (which were added to the collection after the author had listed it), all the text of the inventory was supplied by Alasdair Gray.

Bought, 2009.

- 1-8 Ledgers.**
- 9-14 'Fleck'.**
- 15 Press cuttings.**

1-8 Ledgers.

Eight hard-covered ledgers containing work notes for stories, poems, plays and my last novel, mingled with drafts of letters and many diary entries.

- 1 13 ½ inches tall by 8 ¼, very worn formerly marbled cloth board, half bound in black leather (spine and corners). 200 unnumbered pages lined horizontally for ms.
The first page, headed 'Letters to be sent 12th Oct 1973' is the first of 8 pages of ms business letters, heavily corrected. These were made business-like by me employing Inge to type and post them as my secretary from her address in 39 Kersland Street (I was then lodging with the Lennoxes in Turnberry Road, having separated from Inge in 1970.) The letters deal with payment for prints I was having made, a play, *Sam Lang and Miss Watson*, commissioned but never used by Scottish BBC Radio, the retrospective exhibition I was planning for the Collins Gallery in the following year, correspondence about chapters in the fourth book of *Lanark*, work for the Glasgow University extra-mural department, and other things.
Then come work notes dated 31st January 1987, 27th December 2002, 21st January 2003, 17th February 2003, 1st August 2003, 27th July 2003, 9th November 2003, 4th September 2004, 2nd January 2005. They have work notes for the verses in *16 Occasional Poems*, stories in *The Ends of Our Tethers*, *Old Men in Love* and *A Life in Pictures*. They refer to my time from starting as Creative Writing Professor in 2001 to the heart attack ending that job in 2003, with reflections on the painting for the Oran Mor ceiling started soon after.
- 2 12 inches tall by 6 ½, brown cloth boards with marbled end papers, quarter-bound around 1995 in red leather with black label on spine stamped with the words PAPYRI OCCULT, SKINNER & GRAY in gold. This contained over 402 pages with horizontal grey and red vertical lines for double entry book-keeping, each double page from 10 to 201 with its printed numbers in black. This originally belonged to my friend Bill Skinner who died 24th May 1973. He had written *Papyri Occult* in pen on the verso of the first end paper and, in pencil, some occult notes on the second verso page, double pages 197, 198, 199, and the recto of 200. The remaining pages are filled with my own ms. The earliest diary entry starts on the numbered recto page 70 – the 70 verso is missing. The date has been corrected to 28 August 1976 in Kersland Street to which I had returned from Turnberry Road "three or four or five months

earlier". It contains a detailed list of money owed to many friends, with reflections on the death of my agent, Francis Head, the posting of the *Lanark* typescript to Canongate and a chronological list of my plays ending with *Near the Driver*, the last to be refused by the BBC. From then on are many work notes for what became *Unlikely Stories Mostly*, 1982 *Janine*, *Lean Tales* and poems inspired by Janet Sissons that went into the fourth sequence of *Old Negatives*, also *Something Leather* and *The Flight to Berlin* poem from the visit to Germany in 1990. These are mingled with diary notes, some describing dreams. From the recto of the final end paper the diary switches to an entry for Friday 16th July 1995 on the first unnumbered page after Bill Skinner's ms *Papyri Occult*, then has entries to near the end of 1999 on recto of page 46. These contain references to work on the *Book of Scottish Songs* and the Abbots House mural in Dunfermline. On double page 47 are notes dated 24th May 2000 for the villanelle about Inge's death.

- 3 *Campbell's Imperial Diary*, 1930. A desk diary, 12 inches 9/10th tall by 7¾. Red cloth boards have title stamped in gold in the centre of an embossed frame with corner patterns. On the back the frame contains a doodled line drawing with the date "6.45am, 10.2.98". The diary starts with four memoranda pages, followed by 372 pages, one for each day of the year, each with the number printed at the foot, and a heading between horizontal red lines giving the day, date of the month and the year, 1930, with the first of January 1931 and a final memoranda page. The first 18 pages are filled with densely-written diary notes running from Monday 29th December 1997 to 13 January 1998, with notes of dreams, domestic incidents, work on *The Book of Prefaces* and failed attempts to get television publicity for my *Working Legs*. Thereafter, sporadic entries are related to dates at the head of the page which have been altered in ms to make them fit the time of the entry. Some from 1998 also refer to *The Book of Prefaces*, others from 2006, 2007, 2008 refer to the Oran Mor auditorium decorations, the writing of *Old Men in Love*, small graphic works and portraits, (see page 155) also fragments of plays, some incomplete, one or two performed at the Oran Mor lunch hour theatre.
- 4 Dark brown cloth covered ledger, half bound (spine and corners) with leather in very poor condition, 13 inches tall by 8. 200 pages with faint horizontal lines, and finally-penned ms on the first page saying:

Communion Roll Book
Bridgeton Free Church
1845

A printed label on the inner board facing the inscription advertises:

COUNTING-HOUSE STATIONERY.
DAVID ROBERTSON,
188 Trongate

with a list of "sederunt books, copying and scroll, letter-books" etc. The first 10 pages alphabetically list the names of the Kirk members and their Bridgeton

addresses in fine copperplate ms. Subsequent pages give a later communion roll dated 1861, and about fifty pages at the end have been cut at the right hand side to reveal hand printed capitals from A to Z with names and addresses on each.

Under the ms inscription and 1845 date is a Gray ms entry for the 22nd December 2002, corrected to 2005, asserting that all literature is a form of holy communion. Blank areas and pages throughout the rest of the book are chiefly drafts of passages for *Old Men in Love*, with two diary entries for March 2006 with words and sketches for the Oran Mor mural.

- 5 Red cloth bound ms book with “A4 Feint” gold stamp on the top left front, and “John Menzies” at the foot of the back. The spine was saved from disintegration by addition of cloth hinge. 12 inches tall by 8¼, 150 pages. The covers have been decorated with drawing in ballpoint and felt tipped pen and coloured Tipex paint. The front cover has, upside down, a woman in bell-bottomed trousers feeding a pink sausage to a black dog. The back, also upside down, in the same mediums, shows geometric queer creatures in profile, mostly with an eyeball in their mouths.
All the pages in this book contain diary entries written between 15th August 2005 and the end of November that year. The first entry is preceded by an ms note explaining that on Wednesday 12th, in the Argyll Hotel, Iona, an acute pain and swelling of the right ankle made me unable to walk, I had been admitted to the Western Infirmary, Glasgow, on the 13th. The first entry quotes the cries of a helpless and incontinent old man in a ward, mainly for incurables, where I was parked for a couple of days before being moved to the Brownlee Infectious Diseases part of Gartnavel Hospital, where the rest was written in black and red ballpoint.
Apart from medical treatment and visitors, the diary refers to research to my introduction to the Penguin Classics edition of *Kidnapped*, introduction to *A Life in Pictures*, and essay about my self portraits for the *Divided Selves* exhibition catalogue. These were dictated to Helen Lloyd who started work for me then. I was also instructing Richard Todd on colouring a black-and-white self portrait from 1953.
- 6 Black cloth boards with quarter bound red spine, 12 ¾ inches tall by 7 ¾. A label on the front states that it is a “NEWSPAPER AND MAGAZINE DELIVERY BOOK” and was printed by “WILLIAM HOLMES & CO., LTD., Wholesale Newsagents and Stationers, 76 MITCHELL STREET, GLASGOW.” It has 128 pages printed with feint red horizontal and vertical lines and was owned by Robert Blair Wilkie, Scottish Nationalist colleague of Oliver Brown and Wendy Wood, author of *Remembered Radiance* (1956), and latterly curator of Glasgow’s People’s Palace Local History Museum. In 1945 he pasted newspaper cuttings referring to Scottish affairs into 11 pages, then made several ms notes, chiefly on recto pages, for an essay on the Scottish theatre. They show some animosity toward the Glasgow playwright, James Bridie. He and his wife lived in 37 Kersland Street when I lived in 39, but I first conversed with him when Elspeth King – then acting curator of the People’s Palace – commissioned me to draw a portrait as a gift to him, either on his birthday or on his finally retiring as curator after leaving

her to do the job for many years. He gave the book to me because he thought his notes might help me to write something better about Scottish theatre. On 3rd November 2005, when on leave from the Brownlee Infectious Disease clinic of Gartnavel Hospital, I turned the book upside down and started a diary on the end flyleaf. This continued with numbered entries through most of November, then mingled with notes for *A Life in Pictures* and lesser matters until most blank pages were filled with ms.

- 7 Sketchbook with black cloth boards, with "DALER-ROWNEY, 150g/m² acid free cartridge paper" stamped in gold at the back. 8½ inches tall by 10½. 124 blank pages.
This is filled with drafts of dialogue for the *Fleck* play and lines for the *Ballad of Ann Bonny*. Near the middle is a diary entry for 24th July 2007 about the final illustrations for *Old Men in Love*. The verso of the back cover has the numbers of pages requiring proof corrections of that book, faced with a list of chapter headings in black with the height of spaces at the end of each chapter to be filled with vignettes.
- 8 White cloth covered boards, 10 ½ inches tall by 9 ¾. 180 pages, originally blank white, numbered in pencil in the top left corners. This dummy book was given me by Canongate in 2006, as an aid to planning *A Life in Pictures*. It is still the size of the book to be issued in 2009 or 2010, though it will have more pages. It has a printed jacket in black on white (though lacking typography) adapted from the jacket of the hardback *Old Negatives* edition, 1989. The earliest dated entry is 18.12.2007, but throughout 2008 I filled it with dialogue for *Fleck* after the first act, also (starting from the opposite end) dialogue for the Jonah play, *Voices in the Dark*, introductory notes for *A Life in Pictures*, and verses for the *Ballad of Ann Bonny*.

9-15 'Fleck'

Six typescripts of the play *Fleck* at different stages of completion. Each is thermally bound and inscribed with title and date on the first page under a clear plastic cover. All have ms corrections.

- 9 Cover inscription:

FLECK

**A Modern Imitation of
Goethe's *Faust*
by Alasdair Gray**

**In Three Acts with
Prologue and Epilogue
April 2008**

The word "early" in ms is written above the date.
33 pages, each dated 25th April 2008 at the foot. Large erasures are indicated with an ms cross on pages 9-12 and 14. On page 29 and 30 are many ms

corrections, with additional dialogue on the blank versos of 28 and 29. A line of asterisks on page 30 and 31 shows parts of Act 3 that have not yet been written.

- 10 Title page identical with (1) with "Mid" in ms above the date. 33 pages also dated 25th April 2008 at the foot. The type is identical with (1) but no early erasures are indicated. Ms corrections on pages 27 and 28 are different. Pages 29 and 30 have been torn out. A line of asterisks on page 31 shows where the third act is incomplete.
- 11 Title page identical with (1) with "Tuesday 29 April – annotated Friday 25th version" in ms above the title.
- 12 The title page has this printed after "A Modern Verse Imitation of Goethe's *Faust* by Alasdair Gray":

**In Three Acts with
Prologue and Epilogue
with two hymns and two
choral songs**

30 April 2008

32 pages dated 29/04/2008 at foot. Ms corrections on pages 26 to the end with large addition of the blank verso of page 29. Asterisks still indicate two unfinished parts of Act 3.

- 13 Printed title page:

THE COMEDY OF FLECK

**a modern verse imitation of
Goethe's "Tragedy of Faust"**

**by Alasdair Gray
May 2008**

with "The Comedy of" scored out on the first line, "imitation of" replaced by "comedy inspired by" in ms on the second and above it, also in ms, "details of postscript still to be consulted! (6th July 2008)". 39 typed pages with 30/05/2008.

Pages 1 and 2 with a Foreword called "Me and Faust by Alasdair Gray", later enlarged and printed as an Epilogue. This has many ms changes and interpolations written in margins and verso of title page. The following play has no missing sections, and ms changes in red on pages 7, 8, 9, 17, 19 and from 21 to 36. Large changes and additions are written on the versos of 28 and 31.

- 14 Printed title page:

FLECK

***A Modern Verse Comedy
in Three Acts with Choruses
derived from Goethe's
Tragedy of Faust
by Alasdair Gray***

June 2008

with many ms page numbers drawing attention to ms changes inside and "circa 13th of" above the printed date. The pages inside are numbered 1 to 37 without Prologue or Epilogue. Many changes are marked in red and green ms on most pages and on the versos of pages 19, 25, 26, 29, 31 and 33. Page 32 has a section covered by gum label with 8 lines in black ms on top.

15 Press cuttings.

- 15 Photocopies of reviews, 2008, from French periodicals of *Histoires Maigres* (Albi: Passage du Nord-Ouest, 2008), a translation of *Lean Tales* by Alasdair Gray, James Kelman and Agnes Owens.