

Margaret Brayson ID5714 per Gilbert Henderson 1840

Margaret Brayson aged 15, Liverpool Sessions July 1839, Stealing a cloak, 7 years transportation, Gaol Report – 5 times convicted – connections very bad.

Series - HO 17, Piece Number – 131, Item Number – ZZ15

To Her Most Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.

We the undersigned Petitioners most

Humbly Sheweth

That your Petitioners fully aware of the greatness of the liberty they presume to taken in addressing a personage so exalted , would certainly shrink from such a step, were they not conscious that the goodness of your majesty's heart is even superiour to the dignity of your high station and that the humblest being in your dominions is not beneath your Royal consideration.

Thus emboldened your petitioners humbly and with the most profound respect beg leave so to call your majesty's most gracious attention to the following case which is one of melancholy interest, and in which the fate of an extremely young female is involved.

Margaret Breason aged sixteen years was carefully and tenderly brought up and her parents looked forward with hope to that period when her care and affection were to recompence them for their tenderness in bringing her up. The following unfortunate occurrence is a moment blighted these fair principles and plunged her poor family into a state of indescribable sorrow and grief.

In April last, she was sent by the directions of her mother to see a younger brother to school as little inclined to education as he was swift of foot he outran his sister – weary of pursuing him to no purpose, she desisted, and having occasion into a yard that stood open remained a few moments in it. On returning she was seized upon and thrown into prison. She committed no crime – there was nothing found upon her and she suffered this outrage and shame merely on the assumption that because two females had stolen a cloak from the same house she might be accessory. She was of course confronted with the other two, but whatever their crimes might have been they had the honesty to confess that Margaret Breason was a perfect stranger to them and consequently innocent of any participation in their guilt. She never the less sentence to transportation for seven years. Thus without your Majesty's gracious interference is her doom sealed, thrown (as she will be if the sentence is enforced) among the most abandoned of her sex, her morals will be destroyed – her religion swallowed up in vice and her ruin here and hereafter consummated. We your petitioners pity the despair of her parents – but we pity still – more the youthful victim herself . We implore your Majesty to have mercy on this young creature. We confide in your own purity of soul and love of virtue to snatch this female child from the vortex of vice and [] already opening beneath her feet – restore her to religion – to society – to her mother – and your Petitioners as in duty bound will ever pray.

Thomas {Basiton}

John Smith

James Crook

Stephen Carr

28th August 1839

Lord Landon presents his compliments to Mr Phillipps and begs to transmit for the compassionate consideration of Lord John Russell

the enclosed Petition of James Norburg and others, of Liverpool praying that the sentence of transportation for seven years, passed upon Margaret Brayson at the last Liverpool Session may, upon the grounds of her tender age, and of her alleged good character, be commuted for imprisonment, for a limited term in this country.

27th August 1839

To the Right Honourable Lord John Russell

We the undersigned humbly Petition your Lordship in behalf of Margaret Brayson a young girl who being unfortunately misled received a sentence of transportation for seven years at the last Liverpool sessions the prisoner being only 16 years of age of poor but honest parents. It is heart rendering to witness this grief she never was previous to the present unfortunate circumstance in a place of confinement or before a Magistrate. We humble Petition your Lordship to the case of this unfortunate child into your kind consideration and intercede for a mitigation of her sentence also for her to be detained in England trusting to your Lordships goodness of heart and your humble Petitioners will ever pray.

Jonathan Smith – Blockmaker

Jonathan Harm – Blockmaker

Robert Butler – Blockmaker

George Brazzer – Shipwright

Henry braggs – Shoemaker

And 6 other signatures.
