

This glass box contains the blood, secretly collected and kept for permanence, of a person who was at the forefront of the French Revolution and was sacrificed in the history.

In January 1792, Louis the XVI, the French emperor, was executed on charges of conspiracy against the state, and in the aftermath the National Convention was convened in September 1792. At the Convention, the Jacobin Party and the Girondists were sharply pitted against each other, and in this midst Jean Paul Marat (1743-1793), an important figure of the *Montagnards*, the radical faction of the Jacobin Party, was assassinated. Charles de Corde, an ardent Girondist, and a daughter of an obstinate monarchist, gained access to the house of Marat by falsely stating that she knows the conspiracy and the plans of the Girondists. The moment Marat turned his ears to listen to what she had to say, Corde killed Marat by stabbing him in his chest with a dagger she had carried in hiding.

Afterwards, Marat's body was placed in a coffin in accordance with the funeral customs. However, immediately before his body was put in a coffin, blood was collected from the corpse by a surgeon whose name is not known and who was an ardent member of the Jacobin Party. It has been said that the collection was carried out in strict secrecy and in the presence of Georges Jacques Danton (1759-1794), a colleague of Marat. At the time, Danton dedicated a stem of rose as a token of his lamentation for the confused state of affairs in France and Marat's death. However, Danton's head was severed in an execution by guillotine the next year in 1794.

Such a collection of blood was not a common occurrence, and it is not known for what reason an anonymous surgeon collected Marat's blood. The receptacle that contained the blood had been kept in the basement of a hospital in Calvados but was lost during World War II. After that, in 1996, a Scotch businessman, John D. Stirling, revealed the blood receptacle to the world and submitted it for a scientific examination to prove that the blood belonged to Marat. The result of the examination verified Marat's blood, and in this process the metal receptacle that formerly contained the blood was replaced by a glass box. The glass box is currently kept at a private museum (Stirling House Museum) founded by Mr. John Stirling.

courtesy: Stirling House Museum, Kirkwall, Scotland

This box contains the permanent storage of the conversation between two people whose importance is unprecedented in the world history.

The President of the United States, Richard Nixon, visited China on February 12, 1972 and met the President of the People's Republic of China, Mao Zedong. The meeting of the two heads of the states was an important event that foreshadowed a change in the world political map that had been sharply torn apart on ideological differences. Two years from then, on March 23, 1974 Mao Zedong, along with Deng Xiaoping, then the head of the Party Organization Department and a member of the Politburo, was invited to visit the United States unofficially. The visit was carried out in secrecy. It is not known where they had a meeting, or what was discussed at the meeting. What is known is that Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, who was exiled by the Soviet Union and staying in Switzerland at the time, was present. The content of the meeting is too difficult to infer that the meeting had produced a result that was mutually satisfactory. However, the meeting found a point of compromise after two days. To commemorate the success of the meeting, Solzhenitsyn made a suggestion to the United States, to permanently close off the room used for their meeting to commemorate it. Nixon and Mao readily accepted the suggestion, and the CIA agents and scientists collected conversations from the interior of the closed room and stored them in two permanently sealed glass boxes. This was not at all the intention of Solzhenitsyn, however it is said that China did not object at all to such behaviors by the U.S. Currently, one box is kept in a CIA document storage room in Nevada, United States. The other box was delivered to China. However, around the time of the collapse of the USSR in 1991, the glass box that had been delivered to China had been destroyed by the Chinese government. In July 1998, the glass box that had been stored by CIA had been removed for an unknown reason. The box had gone through many changes of hands for ownership before it finally reached the hand of a businessman in Hong Kong. This glass box is currently on display on the 54th floor of the Bank of China building in Hong Kong.

Courtesy: Wang Tsu Lin, Hongkong