

Diana Pullein-Thompson Collection

MS 5095

The papers in the Diana Pullein-Thompson collection include draft manuscripts for published and unpublished works; diaries; press cuttings; correspondence; photographs; publications; publishers' catalogues and financial records.

The Collection covers the year's 1932-2006.

The physical extent of the collection is c.200 files.

Introduction

Diana was born in Wimbledon on 1 October 1925, 20 minutes before her twin, Christine. However, the twins and their older sister Josephine grew up in the Oxfordshire village of Peppard. Their mother, Joanna Cannan, was a prolific novelist who was also credited with inventing pony stories for children, beginning with *A Pony for Jean* (1936). Their father, Captain Harold "Cappy" Pullein-Thompson, who had been a schoolteacher, was seriously wounded in the First World War and was awarded the Military Cross. A frustrated writer, he took on various jobs including selling refrigerators and board games, and later ran the Public Schools Employment Bureau. The Pullein-Thompsons also had a son, Denis, who became a successful dramatist and playwright and went on to collaborate with Christopher Fry.

A few days after war broke out, the girls, then aged 15 and 14, were allowed to abandon their sketchy formal education and start their own riding stables at their home, The Grove. At the same time the sisters, who had been writing since they were six, began their first pony story, a joint effort, *It Began with Picotee*, written in 1941 and delivered a narrative from the rider's perspective rather than horse's (as had been the Victorian tradition with equestrian fiction). It was published in 1946.

Diana was nine when her story, *The Life of a Carthorse*, appeared in the family's magazine, and at 14, she began work on her first book, *I Wanted a Pony*, which was eventually published in 1946, the first of more than 30 books. For more than a dozen years, the three sisters lived the life described in their stories, riding and breaking in ponies, teaching children how to ride, at The Grove and at a second riding school in Wolvercote, and pouring out a stream of popular books.

When the Oxfordshire stables closed in 1952, the girls' mother refused to let them continue to pay for their upkeep. Diana and Christine decided to ease the financial burden on their father and obtained jobs as professional riders in America. Diana, however, was refused a visa when an X-ray revealed TB and for six months she and her mother, who had also been diagnosed with the disease, were bedbound at

home. In November 1952, Diana was sent to Switzerland under an NHS scheme and between long bouts of lying on a balcony of a Davos sanatorium, she wrote *Horses at Home* (1954).

On her return, she applied for a job with the literary agent Rosica Colin, who handled such authors as Enid Blyton and Alan Sillitoe. She remained with the literary agent for 18-months after which she left to concentrate on her writing, financing herself by working part-time.

Her love of horses and adventurous spirit remained intact and in 1956 she rode from John o' Groats to Land's End on her grey mare Favorita, completing the journey in 42 days, resting one day out of every seven. To her regret, she did not get a book out of the experience but years later its influence could be seen in her last pony story, *The Long Ride Home* (1996).

In 1959, she married Dennis Farr, an art historian and assistant keeper at the Tate Gallery. He later became director of the Birmingham City Museum and Art Gallery and in 1980 was appointed Director of the Courtauld Institute Galleries. They shared a passion for riding (Farr was secretary of the Civil Service Riding Club). After their marriage, however, their frequent moves, including stints in Washington and Glasgow, and the birth of their two children curtailed Diana's writing for long periods, making her the least prolific of the sisters.

Diana was a doughty campaigner. In 1959, she was invited by AP Herbert to join his Public Lending Right Committee and she spoke and wrote on the subject. She was a founder member of the Children's Writers Group of the Society of Authors and founded and ran the Save the Mere campaign to stop the development of Olton Mere in Solihull.

She collaborated with her sisters on the *Black Beauty Trilogy* (1975-79) and on an evocative memoir, *Fair Girls and Grey Horses* (1996), in which they recalled their eccentric upbringing. As well as her children's books, Diana wrote three books for adults under her married name, Diana Farr, including *Prime Ministers' Consorts: Five at Ten* (1985), a well-researched but discreet book whose subjects ranged from Lady Dorothy Macmillan to Denis Thatcher, and a novel, *Choosing* (1988).

Diana Pullein-Thompson, died on 21 October 2015.

MS 5095/1 Typescript of 'The Hidden River' illustrated by Sheila Rose, containing corrections, line drawings and mock-ups of preliminary pages, published by Hamish Hamilton c.1960

- MS 5095/2** Typescript of 'Bindi must go' with corrections, published by Harrap
c.1962
- MS 5095/3** Material relating to 'Black Piper' from the story collection 'Black Beauty's clan', published by Brockhampton Press
c.1975
- MS 5095/4** Material relating to 'Black Princess' from the story collection 'Black Beauty's clan'
c.1975
- MS 5095/5** Miscellaneous pages relating to 'Black Beauty's clan'
c.1975
- MS 5095/6** Typescript of 'Black Romany' with corrections from the story collection 'Black Beauty's clan'
c.1975
- MS 5095/7** Incomplete typescript of 'Black Romany' with corrections from the story collection 'Black Beauty's clan'
c.1975

- MS 5095/8** Parts of chapters from 'Black Romany', as part of the story collection 'Black Beauty's clan'
c.1975
- MS 5095/9** Parts of chapters and loose notes from 'Black Romany', as part of the story collection 'Black Beauty's clan'
c.1975
- MS 5095/10** Typescript of 'Ponies in the valley' with corrections, published by Severn House
c.1976
- MS 5095/11** Carbon of typescript of 'Ponies in the valley'
c.1976
- MS 5095/12** Typescript of chapters 1-5 of 'Ponies in the valley', with corrections
c.1976
- MS 5095/13** Typescript of chapters 6-11 of 'Ponies in the valley', with corrections
c.1976

- MS 5095/14** Typescript of 'Cassidy in danger' with corrections, published by Dent
c.1979
- MS 5095/15** Typescript of 'Cassidy in danger' with corrections
c.1979
- MS 5095/16** First rough draft of 'Ponies in peril', published by Armada
c.1979
- MS 5095/17** Typescript of 'Ponies in peril' with corrections
c.1979
- MS 5095/18** Typescript of 'Ponies in peril' with corrections
c.1979
- MS 5095/19** Typescript of 'The Pony Seekers' with corrections, published by Severn House
c.1981

- MS 5095/20** Typescript of 'A foal for Candy' with corrections, published by Sparrow
c.1981
- MS 5095/21** Proofs of 'A foal for Candy' with author's corrections
c.1981
- MS 5095/22** Proofs of 'A foal for Candy' with corrections, passed for press
c.1981
- MS 5095/23** Typescript of 'A pony found' with corrections, published by Sparrow
c.1983
- MS 5095/24** Typescript with corrections of pages 1-168 of 'Five at 10: prime ministers' consorts since 1957', published by Deutsch
c.1983
- MS 5095/25** Typescript with corrections of pages 196-299 of 'Five at 10: prime ministers' consorts since 1957'
c.1983

- MS 5095/26** Typescript of pages 1-102 of 'Choosing', with corrections,
published by Bodley Head
c.1988
Written under the name of Diana Farr
- MS 5095/27** Pages 103-206 of 'Choosing'
c.1988
- MS 5095/28** Incomplete typescript of 'Choosing', pages 20-151
c.1988
- MS 5095/29** Pages 152-280 of 'Choosing'
c.1988
- MS 5095/30** Typescript of 'Dear Pup' with corrections, published by Barrie &
Jenkins
c.1988
- MS 5095/31** Typescript of 'Dear Pup'
c.1988
- MS 5095/32** Typescript of 'The long ride home' with corrections, published by
Cavalier
c.1996

- MS 5095/33** Material relating to 'The long ride home'
Undated
Material includes incomplete typescript with corrections, along with letter from literary agent and a book cover.
- MS 5095/34** Typescript of first thoughts relating to 'Fair girls and grey horses' by the Pullein-Thompson sisters, published by Allison & Busby c.1996
- MS 5095/35** Typescript of Diana Pullein-Thompson's chapters from 'Fair girls and grey horses'
c.1996
- MS 5095/36** Typescript of Diana Pullein-Thompson's chapters from 'Fair girls and grey horses'
c.1996
- MS 5095/37** Paginated typescript of Diana Pullein-Thompson's chapters from 'Fair girls and grey horses'
c.1996
- MS 5095/38** Typescript of Diana Pullein-Thompson's chapters from 'Fair girls and grey horses'
c.1996

- MS 5095/39** Typescript of Diana Pullein-Thompson's chapters from 'Fair girls and grey horses'
c.1996
- MS 5095/40** Miscellaneous pages of Diana Pullein-Thompson's chapters from 'Fair girls and grey horses'
c.1996
- MS 5095/41** Typescript of chapters 1-2 of 'Fair girls and grey horses', with corrections
c.1996
- MS 5095/42** Typescript of chapters 3-4 of 'Fair girls and grey horses', with corrections
c.1996
- MS 5095/43** Typescript of chapters 5-6 of 'Fair girls and grey horses', with corrections
c.1996
- MS 5095/44** Typescript of chapter 7 and the epilogue of 'Fair girls and grey horses', with corrections
c.1996

- MS 5095/45** Typescript of Diana Pullein-Thompson's contribution to 'Fair girls and grey horses'
c.1996
- MS 5095/46** Typescript of Diana Pullein-Thompson's contribution to 'Fair girls and grey horses'
c.1996
- MS 5095/47** Alternative essays relating to 'Fair girls and grey horses'
c.1996
- MS 5095/48** Alternative essays relating to 'Fair girls and grey horses'
c.1996
- MS 5095/49** Collection of short pieces for adults
Undated
Includes 'The man on the bridge', 'The empty victory', 'Househunting in Washington', 'Driving in Washington'.
- MS 5095/50** Collection of unpublished short pieces for adults
Undated
Includes 'Grandad said', 'Back to bantams', 'Do we underestimate canine sesibility?', 'Why are we so shocked? It has never been easy in the health service ', and 'Travellers  tales Shimla'.

- MS 5095/51** Collection of short stories for children and adults
Undated
Includes 'Time to adjust', 'A real mother', 'It's been a long time',
'Out to kill', 'The gentle giants', 'Please take him', 'A sensible
compromise', 'The ponies must go', 'Runaway bantams in the
snow'. Some published.
- MS 5095/52** Unpublished first typescript of 'Summer in Virginia' with
corrections
1965
- MS 5095/53** Unpublished draft of 'Cassidy in Cumbria'
Undated
Draft sequel to 'Cassidy in danger'
- MS 5095/54** Typescript of 'Cassidy in Cumbria'
Undated
- MS 5095/55** Unpublished typescript of 'The dog's domain'
Undated
- MS 5095/56** Unpublished final draft of 'The incredible Igor'
Undated

- MS 5095/57** Final draft of 'The incredible Igor'
Undated
- MS 5095/58** Unpublished first draft of pages 1-174 from 'The artful goddess'
Undated
- MS 5095/59** Pages 175-262 from 'The artful goddess'
Undated
- MS 5095/60** Unpublished typescript of pages 1-139 from 'Directors don't cry'
or 'Silenced by death'
Undated
- MS 5095/61** Pages 140-287 from 'Directors don't cry' or 'Silenced by death'
Undated
- MS 5095/62** Script for episodes one and two of 'Directors don't cry' television
series which was never commissioned
Undated

- MS 5095/63** Material relating to television series of 'Directors don't cry'
Undated
Includes script for episode three, character details of cast, and a rejection letter from Cecily Ware Literary Agents
- MS 5095/64** Typescript of 'Murder at the gallery', unpublished
Undated
- MS 5095/65** Typescript of 'The colour of defeat' or 'Love and prejudice' with corrections, unpublished
Undated
- MS 5095/66** Typescript of 'We can't sell Milo', unpublished
Undated
- MS 5095/67** Extra pages from the typescript of 'We can't sell Milo'
Undated
- MS 5095/68** Typescript of 'We can't sell Milo' with corrections
Undated
- MS 5095/69** Draft of short story titled 'Saving Josh'
Undated

- MS 5095/70** Typescript of play titled 'The new guy', unpublished
Undated
- MS 5095/71** Synopsis and script of a play titled 'Conflicts', never published
Undated
- MS 5095/72** Typescript of an unnamed, unpublished serial
Undated
- MS 5095/73** Miscellaneous pages belonging to the typescript for 'Black
Beauty's clan'
Undated
- MS 5095/74** Sheets from an unidentified typescript, including pages of more
than one book
Undated
- MS 5095/75** Collection of exercise books containing poetry and stories
[c.1938]-[c.1963]
Includes one dated 1938-40, one dated 1963 with the other four
undated.

5 volumes

- MS 5095/76** Early writings including letters from Diana Pullein-Thompson to her mother
Undated
- MS 5095/77** Material relating to 'The Grove Magazine', nos. 1 and 2
1933
Includes title page of number 1, Christmas 1933, and
miscellaneous typed pages of numbers 1 and 2.
- MS 5095/78** Material relating to 'The Grove Magazine', no. 2
Jan 1935
- MS 5095/79** Images relating to 'The Grove Magazine'
Undated
Includes photocopies, one sepia photograph, and one negative.
- MS 5095/80** Additional writings
1932-1939
- MS 5095/81** Diary: 1957
1957

1 volume

MS 5095/82 Diary: 1958
1958

1 volume

MS 5095/83 Diary: 1959
1959

1 volume

MS 5095/84 Diary: 1960
1960

1 volume

MS 5095/85 Diary: 1961
1961

1 volume

MS 5095/86 Diary: 1963
1963

1 volume

MS 5095/87 Diary: 1964
1964

1 volume

MS 5095/88 Diary: 1966
1966

1 volume

MS 5095/89 Diary: 1967
1967

1 volume

MS 5095/90 Diary: 1968
1968

1 volume

MS 5095/91 Diary: 1969
1969

1 volume

MS 5095/92 Diary: 1978
1978

1 volume

MS 5095/93 Diary: 1979
1979

1 volume

MS 5095/94 Diary: 1980
1980

1 volume

MS 5095/95 Diary: 1981
1981

1 volume

MS 5095/96 Diary: 1982
1982

1 volume

MS 5095/97 Diary: 1983
1983

1 volume

MS 5095/98 Diary: 1984
1984

1 volume

MS 5095/99 Diary: 1985
1985

1 volume

MS 5095/100 Diary: 1986
1986

1 volume

MS 5095/101 Diary: 1987
1987

1 volume

MS 5095/102 Diary: 1988
1988

1 volume

MS 5095/103 Diary: 1988
1988

1 volume

MS 5095/104 Diary: 1989
1989

1 volume

MS 5095/105 Diary: 1990
1990

1 volume

MS 5095/106 Diary: 1991
1991

1 volume

MS 5095/107 Diary: 1992
1992

1 volume

- MS 5095/108** Diary: 1993
1993
- 1 volume
- MS 5095/109** Diary: 1994
1994
- 1 volume
- MS 5095/110** Perpetual
Undated
- MS 5095/111** Driving licence belonging to Diana Pullein-Thompson which
expired in 1976
c.1960s
- MS 5095/112** Telephone and address books
Undated
- 3 volumes
- MS 5095/113** Typescripts, synopses and agreements of 'Five at 10: prime
ministers' consorts since 1957', published by Deutsch in 1985
c.1985
- MS 5095/114** Correspondence relating to 'Five at 10: prime ministers' consorts
since 1957'
c.1985

- MS 5095/115** Press cuttings relating to 'Five at 10: prime ministers' consorts since 1957'
c.1985
- MS 5095/116** Material relating to 'Dear Pup', published by Barrie & Jenkins in 1988
c.1988
Includes cuttings and replies to launch party invitations.
- MS 5095/117** Letters from fans regarding 'Dear Pup'
c.1988
- MS 5095/118** Rejection letters
1969-2003
- MS 5095/119** Material and correspondence relating to the Children's Writers Group
- Includes letters from Anthony Buckeridge, Lettice Cooper, Laurence Meynell, Patrick Moore, Malcolm Saville.
Application forms for the Society of Authors.
Also includes list of supporters for the Association of Children's Writers, a list of authors in Children's Writers Guild, a pamphlet titled 'What are Writers Worth?' by Richard Findlater, 'The Author' copies Spring 1963, Autumn 1963 (including article 'Librarian in the dark' by D. Pullein-Thompson), and Winter 1963 (including article 'Money Now or Never' by D. Pullein-Thompson).

- MS 5095/120** Correspondence from Collins
1958-1982
- MS 5095/121** Correspondence from Armada
1970-1979
- MS 5095/122** Publishers correspondence, A-E
Undated
- MS 5095/123** Publishers correspondence, F-Z
Undated
- MS 5095/124** Letters from family members
Undated
- MS 5095/125** Letters from unidentified friends
Undated

- MS 5095/126** Letters from Christine Pullein-Thompson and Julian Popescu
Undated
Material is dated
- MS 5095/127** Letters from Christine Pullein-Thompson and Julian Popescu
Undated
- MS 5095/128** Letters from Josephine Pullein-Thompson
Undated
- MS 5095/129** Letters from Joanna Cannan
Undated
- MS 5095/130** Letters from Denis Cannan (originally Denis Pullein-Thompson)
Undated
- MS 5095/131** Material relating to the death of Joanna Cannan
Undated
Includes letters of condolence and Joanna Cannan's will
- MS 5095/132** Letters from friends, A-F
Undated

MS 5095/133 Letters from friends, G-O
Undated

MS 5095/134 Letters from friends, P-Z
Undated

MS 5095/135 Letters from fans
Undated

MS 5095/136 Letters from Alan Kadish
1978-1984

MS 5095/137 Correspondence relating to 'Gilbert Cannan: a Georgian
prodigy', published by Chatto & Windu
c.1978

MS 5095/138 General reviews and articles
Undated

- MS 5095/139** Reviews and articles relating to 'Fair girls and grey horses'
Undated
- MS 5095/140** Reviews for 'Gilbert Cannan'
c.1978
- MS 5095/141** Material relating to Captain Harold J. Pullein-Thompson
c.1957
Includes Obituary of Captain Harold J. Pullein-Thompson,
August 16, 1957 and an article titled ♦What the soldier used to
wear♦ written by H.J.Pullein-Thompson.
- MS
5095/141a** Order of service for Dennis Farr (1929-2006) and speech by Sir
Patrick Cormac, FSA
2006
- MS 5095/142** Material relating to Rev. J. Pullein-Thompson
c.1908
Includes ♦My case against Rev. J. Pullein Thompson by W.S.
Gilbert♦, a photocopy of privately printed article, 1908. Rev. J.
being grandfather of Diana. With letters regarding tracing details
of him by Diana.
- MS 5095/143** Typescript of new DNB entries for Gilbert and Joanna Cannan
Undated

- MS 5095/144** Correspondence relating to a visit to Moscow
1977
- MS 5095/145** Notes for speeches relating to a visit to Moscow
1977
- MS 5095/146** Miscellaneous material relating to a visit to Moscow
1977
- MS 5095/147** Children's illustrated books relating to a visit to Moscow
1977
6 children's illustrated books, 2 in Russian, 1 Russian
catalogue

6 volumes, 1 catalogue
- MS 5095/148** Public Lending Rights for copies of 'The Author'
1960-1964
Includes issues from Spring 1960, Summer 1960, Autumn 1960,
Winter 1960, Winter 1961, Summer 1962, Winter 1962, Summer
1963, Autumn 1963, Winter 1963, and Summer 1964.
- MS 5095/149** Public Lending Rights for copies of 'The Bookseller', 'The Library
World' and 'London Life'
1960-1966
Includes copies of 'The Bookseller' 8 October and 19 November
1960, 'The Library World' July 1961 and December 1962,
'London Life' 24 December 1966.

- MS 5095/150** Pamphlets relating to Public Lending Rights
Undated
- MS 5095/151** News cuttings relating to Public Lending Rights
Undated
- MS 5095/152** Typescripts of articles relating to Public Lending Rights
Undated
- MS 5095/153** Typescripts of articles relating to Public Lending Rights
Undated
- MS 5095/154** Typescripts of articles relating to Public Lending Rights
Undated
- MS 5095/155** Misellaneous pieces of typescripts relating to Public Lending
Rights
Undated
- MS 5095/156** Correspondence relating to Public Lending Rights
Undated

- MS 5095/157** Miscellaneous material relating to Public Lending Rights
Undated
- MS 5095/158** General royalty statements relating to Dennis Farr
Undated
- MS 5095/159** Royalty statements for Century Hutchinson and Chatto &
Windus
1975-1989
Century Hutchinson 1986-89, Chatto & Windus, 1975-1981
- MS 5095/160** Royalty statements for William Collins
1975-1982
- MS 5095/161** Royalty Statements for J. M. Dent & Sons and Hamlyn
1979-1983
J M Dent and Sons 1979-1983, Hamlyn 1982.
- MS 5095/162** Royalty statements for Hodder & Stoughton
1976-1982

- MS 5095/163** Royalty statements for Hutchinson and A. D. Peters
1975-1981
- MS 5095/164** Royalty statements for Random Century
1990-1993
- MS 5095/165** Article on Diana Pullein-Thompson from 'The Bookseller'
19 Nov 1977
- MS 5095/166** Article on Diana Pullein-Thompson from 'The Bookseller'
18 Feb 1978
- MS
5095/166a** Article on Diana Pullein-Thompson from 'The Pen'
Autumn 1985
- MS 5095/167** Article on Diana Pullein-Thompson from 'The Tablet'
26 Mar 1988
- MS 5095/168** Article on Diana Pullein-Thompson from 'Westside'
Mar 1989

- MS 5095/169** Article on Diana Pullein-Thompson from 'The Field'
Dec 1993
- MS 5095/170** Article on Diana Pullein-Thompson from 'The Lady'
3-9 Dec 1996
- MS 5095/171** Article on Diana Pullein-Thompson from 'The Tablet'
8 Feb 1997
- MS 5095/172** Article on Diana Pullein-Thompson from 'The Statesman'
1 Mar 1997
- MS 5095/173** Article on Diana Pullein-Thompson from 'The Sunday Times'
6 Apr 1997
- MS 5095/174** Article on Diana Pullein-Thompson from 'Country Living'
Aug 1997

- MS 5095/175** Article by Diana Pullein-Thompson in 'Pony' magazine
May 1951
- MS 5095/176** Article by Diana Pullein-Thompson in 'The Young Elizabethan'
Oct 1956
- MS 5095/177** Article by Diana Pullein-Thompson in 'The Elizabethan'
Feb 1959
- MS 5095/178** Article by Diana Pullein-Thompson in 'The Elizabethan'
May 1959
- MS 5095/179** Article by Diana Pullein-Thompson in 'Riding' magazine
Aug 1950
- MS 5095/180** Article by Diana Pullein-Thompson in 'The Elizabethan'
Sep 1960
- MS 5095/181** Article by Diana Pullein-Thompson in 'The Elizabethan'
May 1961

MS 5095/182 Article by Diana Pullein-Thompson in 'The Elizabethan'
Sep 1962

MS 5095/183 Article by Diana Pullein-Thompson in 'The Bookseller'
24 Jun 1978

2 issues

MS 5095/184 Article by Diana Pullein-Thompson in 'Good Housekeeping'
Nov 1985

MS 5095/185 Article by Diana Pullein-Thompson in 'Writers' Monthly'
May 1986

MS 5095/186 Article by Diana Pullein-Thompson in 'Riding' magazine
Oct 1996

MS 5095/187 Publishers' catalogue for Allison & Busby
Spring 1997

MS 5095/188 Publishers' catalogue for The Bodley Head Children's Books
Jul 1987-Jan 1988

MS 5095/189 Publishers' catalogue for The Bodley Head New Books
Jul 1987-Jan 1988

MS 5095/190 Publishers' catalogue for The Bodley Head
Jul 1988

MS 5095/191 Publishers' catalogue for Chatto & Windus
Autumn 1977

MS 5095/192 Publishers' catalogue for Fontana
May 1977

MS 5095/193 Publishers' catalogue for Pan Books
May 1977

MS 5095/194 Publishers' catalogue for Penguin Stocklist
May 1977

MS 5095/195 Publishers' catalogue for Piccolo paperbacks
1977

MS 5095/196 Publishers' catalogue for Puffin
1977

MS 5095/197 Publishers' catalogue for Puffin Post, vol. 9, no. 4
1975

2 issues

MS 5095/198 Publishers' catalogue for Puffin Post vol. 11, no. 1
1977

2 issues

MS 5095/199 Photographs of family members
Undated

MS Miscellaneous items
5095/199a Undated

MS Poster advertising the publication of 'Fair girls and grey horses'
5095/199b Undated