

## Josephine Pullein-Thompson Collection

### MS 5120

Papers relating to the author Josephine Pullein-Thompson including manuscripts, typescripts, notebooks and research papers for her novels and short stories; correspondence with publishers, authors, literary agents, family members and friends; published material relating to Pullein-Thompson; material relating to Poets, Essayists and Novelists (P.E.N.) International and other authors' societies; contracts; ephemera including certificates, book covers, theatre programmes and programmes for sporting events and festivals; photographs and scrapbooks; footage of the Pullein-Thompson sisters

The Collection covers the year's c.1943-c.2002.

#### Introduction

Josephine Mary Wedderburn Pullein-Thompson was born 3 April 1924. Josephine and her younger twin sisters, Diana and Christine, 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, 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, the same year Josephine wrote *Six Ponies* on her own (having given up her initial ambition to become a vet).

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. Josephine's prose style – in books such as *One Day Event* (1954), *The*

Trick Jumpers (1958) and The No-Good Pony (1981) – was firmly fixed in the school of Enid Blyton.

From early titles, such as Plenty of Ponies (1949) and Six Ponies (1955), to later books such as Pony Club Challenge (1984) and A Job With Horses (1994), the gentle narratives of stately homes, plucky children and riding cups rarely veered from a tried and tested course. However, with All Change (1972), Josephine Pullein-Thompson touched on subjects such as recession and the demise of the agricultural way of life.

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.

Josephine wrote several non-fiction books on riding and the book A Place With Two Faces (1972), a gothic horror story under the pseudonym of Josephine Mann, and also wrote the adult mystery books Gin and Murder (1959), Murder Strikes Pink (1963) and They Died In The Spring (1960).

In addition to pursuing her own writing career, she was a champion of many other writers' ambitions – most prominently by working with PEN (Poets, Essayists and Novelists), the organisation which looks after authors' affairs and promotes freedom of expression, she was the general secretary (1976-93) and then president of PEN International.

She was awarded the MBE in 1984 and was, for many years, a vice president of the Woodland Hunt Branch of the Pony Club, based in the Henley on Thames area.

Josephine Pullein-Thompson died on 19 June 2014.

- MS 5120/1** Notebook titled 'Black Ebony', containing manuscript of part of 'Black Beauty's Clan', written by the Pullein-Thompson sisters and published by Brockhampton  
c.1975
- MS 5120/2** Synopsis and manuscript of 'Star riders of the moor', published by Hodder & Stoughton  
c.1976
- MS 5120/3** Typescript of 'Star riders of the moor' with corrections  
c.1976
- MS 5120/4** Manuscript of 'Race horse holiday', published by Severn House  
c.1979
- MS 5120/5** Three notebooks relating to 'Race horse holiday'  
c.1979
- 3 volumes
- MS 5120/6** Manuscript of 'Ride to the rescue', published by Hodder & Stoughton  
c.1979  
Listed as having 'some confused pagination'

- MS 5120/7** Synopsis and manuscript of 'Ride to the rescue'  
c.1979
- MS 5120/8** Handwritten and largely unidentifiable pages relating to the  
Black Beauty clan or family  
Undated
- MS 5120/9** Manuscript of 'Black Nightshade', published by Knight  
c.1980
- MS 5120/10** Incomplete manuscript of 'Black Nightshade'  
c.1980
- MS 5120/11** Manuscript of 'Black Raven and the Witch'  
Undated
- MS 5120/12** Manuscript of 'The no good pony', published in Sparrow  
c.1981
- MS 5120/13** Manuscript of 'The prize pony', published by Arrow  
c.1982

- MS 5120/14** Manuscript of 'Treasure on the moor', published by Hodder & Stoughton  
c.1982
- MS 5120/15** Manuscript of 'Save the ponies', published by Sparrow  
c.1983
- MS 5120/16** Manuscript of 'Pony Club Cup', published by Armada  
c.1983
- MS 5120/17** Typescript of pages 1-82 of 'Pony Club Cup'  
c.1983
- MS 5120/18** Typescript of pages 83-163 of 'Pony Club Cup'  
c.1983
- MS 5120/19** Manuscript of 'Mystery on the moor', published by Hodder & Stoughton  
c.1984

- MS 5120/20** Manuscript of 'Ghost horse on the moor', published by Beaver  
c.1984
- MS 5120/21** Transcript of 'Ghost horse on the moor' with corrections  
c.1984
- MS 5120/22** Uncorrected proofs of 'Ghost horse on the moor'  
c.1984
- MS 5120/23** Manuscript of 'Pony Club Challenge', published by Fontana  
c.1984
- MS 5120/24** Notes, synopses and maps relating to 'Pony Club trek',  
published by Armada  
c.1985
- MS 5120/25** Manuscript of 'Pony Club trek'  
c.1985
- MS 5120/26** Typescript of 'Pony Club trek'  
c.1985

- MS 5120/27** Manuscript of 'Suspicion stalks the moor', published by Hodder & Stoughton  
c.1986
- MS 5120/28** Synopses and notes on 'Black Swift', published by Canongate  
c.1991
- MS 5120/29** Manuscript of 'Black Swift'  
c.1991
- MS 5120/30** Second draft of 'Black Swift'  
c.1991
- MS 5120/31** Manuscript of 'A job with horses', published by Allen Junior  
Fiction  
c.1994
- MS 5120/32** Unpublished manuscript of 'A place with two faces' by Josephine  
Mann  
Undated

**MS 5120/33** Unpublished typescript of 'Death march'  
Undated

**MS 5120/34** Unpublished typescript of 'Murder mars the show'  
Undated

**MS 5120/35** Unpublished manuscript of 'Murder for company'  
Undated

**MS 5120/36** Notebooks with notes for an unfinished and unpublished crime  
novel  
Undated

2 volumes

**MS 5120/37** Notebooks with notes for an unfinished and unpublished crime  
novel  
Undated

3 volumes

**MS 5120/38** Notebooks with notes for an unfinished and unpublished crime  
novel  
Undated

2 volumes

- MS 5120/39**    Typescripts of short stories  
Undated  
Includes two copies of typescripts of 'The birdwatcher of Beacon Hill', 'Bone of contention', 'A crazy gallop', and 'A horribly horsey daughter'. One copy of 'Ebony joins the circus', 'The failure' and 'The new flats'.
- MS 5120/40**    Typescripts of short stories  
Undated  
Includes typescripts of 'Oh Cobweb, how could you!', 'Once too often', 'The Race', 'The Runaway Boy', 'Thanks to Mavis', 'The Trek' and 'What the eye doesn't see'.
- MS 5120/41**    Material relating to short stories including biographical notes, synopses and lists  
Undated
- MS 5120/42**    Unpublished short stories and notes  
Undated
- MS 5120/43**    Notes for an unpublished book on early British history  
Undated

- MS 5120/44** Notes, articles and information used in the writing of the Moor books  
Undated
- MS 5120/45** Quantity of notes for an unpublished novel  
Undated
- MS 5120/46** Quantity of notes for an unpublished novel  
Undated
- MS 5120/47** Typescript of 'Fair girls and grey horses' by the Pullein-Thompson sisters, published by Allison & Busby  
c.1996
- MS 5120/48** Manuscript and typescript of chapters 4 & 5 from 'Fair girls and grey horses'  
c.1996
- MS 5120/49** Miscellaneous typed and handwritten pages from 'Fair girls and grey horses'  
c.1996

- MS 5120/50** Miscellaneous typed and handwritten pages from 'Fair girls and grey horses'  
c.1996
- MS 5120/51** Letters of correspondence relating to 'Fair girls and grey horses'  
c.1996  
Includes one letter from Jilly Cooper
- MS 5120/52** Articles and Allison & Busby catalogue relating to 'Fair girls and grey horses'  
c.1996
- MS 5120/53** Typescripts of short stories  
Undated  
Includes two copies of 'Do good and die', one copy of 'The mock hunt', 'The scavenger hunt', 'Envious eyes', 'Chop and change', 'The failure', and 'She keeps him beautiful'.
- MS 5120/54** Cover and photocopies of typed pages from 'The Grove Magazine'  
Undated
- MS 5120/55** Copy of 'The Grove Riding School Horse Book', recording names and prices paid for horses  
1943

- MS 5120/56** Camp timetables and letters from 'Pony Club'  
1973-1976
- MS 5120/57** Collection of publications including articles relating to Josephine Pullein-Thompson  
Jan 1947-1999  
Includes 'Riding', January-February 1947, 'Riding', November 1951, 'Pony', Christmas 1951, 'The Horse', 1975, 'Pony', June 1979, 'Letteratura della Giovent  Giovenezza della Letteratura', 1985, 'Penny', 1987, and 'Harpers & Queen', 1993.
- MS 5120/58** Copies of 'Red Herrings', the bulletin of the Crime Writers' Association  
Mar 1974-May 1989  
Includes bulletins from March 1974, October and December 1975, March, April and May 1978, November 1979, January 1980, November 1981, November 1983, March, April and September 1988, May 1989.
- MS 5120/59** Correspondence with publishers  
1980-1991  
Includes correspondence with Arrow Books 1980-1985; Cannongate Press 1990-94; Hutchinson 1980-87; Sparrow Books 1981, and Walker Books 1991.
- MS 5120/60** Correspondence with Collins  
1960-1992

**MS 5120/61** Correspondence with Armada  
1967-1979

**MS 5120/62** Correspondence with Armada  
1980-1988

**MS 5120/63** Correspondence with Hodder & Stoughton  
1966-1975

**MS 5120/64** Correspondence with Hodder & Stoughton  
1976-1978

**MS 5120/65** Correspondence with Hodder & Stoughton  
1979

**MS 5120/66** Correspondence with Hodder & Stoughton  
1980-1981

**MS 5120/67** Correspondence with Hodder & Stoughton  
1982-1984

- MS 5120/68** Correspondence with Hodder & Stoughton  
1985-1989
- MS 5120/69** Correspondence with a number of publishers  
1965-1990
- MS 5120/70** Correspondence relating to visits to schools and libraries  
1979-1997
- MS 5120/71** Programmes of meetings from the International P.E.N  
1978-1998
- MS 5120/72** Minutes of meetings and reports from the International P.E.N  
Undated
- MS 5120/73** Press cuttings and articles relating to the International P.E.N  
Undated

**MS 5120/74** Correspondence relating to the International P.E.N  
Undated

**MS 5120/75** Photographs relating to the International P.E.N  
Undated

**MS 5120/76** Material relating to the Children's Writers Group and Crime  
Writers' Association  
Undated

**MS 5120/77** Correspondence with Robin Wade, Rosica Colin and A.D.  
Peters, literary agents  
1980-2002

**MS 5120/78** Correspondence with Jennifer Luithlen, literary agent  
1978-1987

**MS 5120/79** Correspondence with Jennifer Luithlen  
1988-1989

**MS 5120/80** Correspondence with Jennifer Luithlen  
1990-1991

**MS 5120/81** Correspondence with Jennifer Luithlen  
1992-1993

**MS 5120/82** Correspondence with Jennifer Luithlen  
1994-1999

**MS 5120/83** Correspondence with Jennifer Luithlen  
2000-2002

**MS 5120/84** Miscellaneous correspondence  
Undated

**MS 5120/85** Contracts: 1955-1972  
1955-1972

**MS 5120/86** Contracts: 1973-1980  
1973-1980

**MS 5120/87** Contracts: 1981-1989  
1981-1989

**MS 5120/88** Contracts: 1990-1991  
1990-1991

**MS 5120/89** Contracts: 1992-2002  
1992-2002

**MS 5120/90** Contracts, including correspondence and one undated contract  
Undated

**MS 5120/91** Letters from Josephine, Diana and Christine Pullein-Thompson  
and Denis Cannan to their parents  
Undated

**MS 5120/92** Family letters  
Undated

**MS 5120/93** Family letters  
Undated

- MS 5120/94** Photographs, correspondence and lists of published works relating to Joanna Cannan  
Undated
- MS 5120/95** Correspondence with Joanna Cannan regarding to the re-publication of a number of novels  
1974-2003
- MS 5120/96** Contracts relating to Joanna Cannan  
Undated
- MS 5120/97** News cuttings relating to Josephine Pullein-Thompson  
Undated
- MS 5120/98** News cuttings relating to all members of the family  
Undated
- MS 5120/99** Miscellaneous items of ephemera  
Undated

**MS 5120/100** Miscellaneous items of ephemera  
Undated

**MS 5120/101** Certificates and personal items  
Undated

**MS 5120/102** Book covers  
Undated

**MS 5120/103** Transcript of an MA dissertation by Alison Haymonds, titled  
'Rides of Passage: the Rise and Fall of the Pony Book'  
Undated

**MS 5120/104** Miscellaneous photocopies and notes  
Undated

**MS 5120/105** Autographs, articles and miscellaneous items relating to Joanna  
Cannan  
Undated

**MS 5120/106** Family album of newspaper cuttings  
1923-1930

- MS 5120/107** Family photographs  
Undated
- MS 5120/108** Family photographs  
Undated
- MS 5120/109** Video of the Pullein-Thompson sisters meeting Lucinda Green  
on 'Rural Rides'  
Undated  
Programme 5
- MS 5120/110** Video of the Pullein-Thompson sisters looking at the old family  
home – **TAPE NO LONGER PLAYABLE**  
Undated
- MS 5120/111** Recording of 'The V Word' about encouraging people to  
volunteer  
1993
- MS 5120/112** Illustrated film advertising brochure for a film based on  
'Inheritance', a story by H. Pullein-Thompson  
c.1920

**MS 5120/113** Theatre programmes, A-New Theatre  
c.1946-1988  
Includes programmes from the Adelphi Theatre: 'Big Ben',  
undated but c1946; 'Bless the Bride', undated; Aldwych Theatre:  
'There shall be no Night', undated but c1950; Central Stage  
Group: 'The Masque of Pandora' and 'The Bear', undated;  
Duchess Theatre: 'Blithe Spirit', undated but c1950; 'Misery Me!'  
by Denis Cannan, 1955. Essex University Theatre: 'Dear  
Daddy', by Dennis Cannan and directed by Lucy Popescu, June  
1988. Globe Theatre: 'Ring Round the Moon', 1950. Greenwich  
Theatre: 'Captain Carvallo', by Denis Cannan, 1988. His  
Majesty's Theatre, undated. Kenton Theatre, Henley: 'The  
Mikado', undated but c1950; 'The Cocktail Party', May 1952;  
'Queen Elizabeth Slept Here', 1954. The London Hippodrome:  
'Perchance to Dream', undated but c1950. Lyric Theatre: 'Point  
of Departure', 1950. The Mobile Theatre: 'Three Tchekov  
Farces', undated but probably early 1950s. Nairn Drama Club:  
'The Pen of My Aunt', 'Tony and The Spider Ring', April 1957.  
New Lindsey Theatre Club: 'Waifs that Stray', undated. New  
Theatre: 'Colombe', adapted by Denis Cannan, 1951.

**MS 5120/114** Theatre programmes, New Theatre Oxford  
Oct 1945-Nov 1957  
All programmes from the New Theatre Oxford: Three Waltzes,  
October 1945. 'Grand National Night', November 1945. 'Quiet  
Week-End', November 1945. 'Cinderella', December 1945. 'The  
Kingmaker', April 1946. 'Lighten our Darkness', April 1946. 'Day  
after Tomorrow', May 1946. 'The D'Oyley Carte Opera  
Company', May 1946, x2. 'International ballet', May 1946. 'The  
Belle of New York', July 1946, x2. 'Call Home the Heart',  
October 1946. 'Ever since Paradise', October 1946. 'The Years  
Between', October 1946. 'The Hasty Heart', October 1946.  
'Ballets des Champs-Elysees', November 1946. 'Strange as it  
may seem', November 1946. 'Babes in the Wood', December  
1946. 'Off the Record', April 1947. 'The D'Oyly Carte Opera  
Company', May 1947. 'The Guinea Pig', November 1947. 'Jane',  
November 1947. 'Waltz Time', 1949. 'Captain Carvallo' by Denis  
Cannan, July 1950, x2. 'Captain Brassbound's Conversion',  
March 1951. 'The Royal Carl Rosa Opera', March, undated. 'Pal  
Joey', March 1954. 'My Three Angels', February 1955. 'Misery  
Me! by Denis Cannan', March 1955. 'Spider's Web', November

1955. 'Silver Wedding', May 1957. 'The Tunnel of Love',  
November 1957.

**MS 5120/115** Theatre programmes Oxford Playhouse-Playhouse Theatre  
Henley  
Oct 1945-1950  
From the Oxford Playhouse: 'The Corn is Green', October 1945.  
'An Ideal Husband', February 1946, 'They Came to a City', April  
1946. 'Ah Wilderness', April 1946, x2. 'The Silver Box', April  
1946, x2. 'East Lynne', December 1947. 'Alice in Wonderland',  
December 1947. 'Under Milk Wood', October 1957. 'Darling',  
January 1958. Palace Theatre, London: 'King's Rhapsody'  
undated. Pendragon Theatre, Reading: 'An Inspector Calls',  
undated. 'Jane steps out', undated. The People's Palace: 'Max'  
by Denis Cannan, April 1949. Peppard Memorial Hall: 'Play Bill',  
March 1950. Phoenix Theatre: 'The Power and the Glory',  
adapted by Denis Cannan and Pierre Bost, April 1956.  
Player's Theatre: 'Ridgeway's Late Joys' November 1943,  
April 1945. Playhouse Theatre Henley: 'George and Margaret',  
October 1944. 'Saloon Bar', August 1945. 'Mr Pim passes by',  
August 1946. 'Gas Light', August 1946. 'It's a Boy', November  
1946. 'George and Margaret', December 1946. 'Quality Street',  
October 1947. 'Arms and the Man', October 1947. 'Fly Away  
Peter', January 1950. 'The Chiltern Hundreds', February 1950.  
'Maria Marten', February 1950. 'The Importance of Being  
Earnest', 1950.

**MS 5120/116** Theatre programmes, Princes Theatre-Wyndham's Theatre  
1947-[c.1990]  
Princes Theatre: 'Bouyant Billions', undated. Repertoire Theatre  
Company: 'The Partition', c1990. Royal Court Theatre: 'The  
Kitchen', 1961. Royal Shakespeare Company at the Round  
House: 'The Ik', dramatised by Denis Cannan and Colin Higgins,  
1976.  
Sadler's Wells Theatre, October 1972. Schweizerhof,  
Lenzerheide, Music Hall, 1947. Shakespeare Memorial Theatre,  
Stratford: 'King Richard the Second', 1947. 'The Winter's Tale',  
1948. 'The Tempest,' 1951. 'King Henry the Fourth Part 1', 1951.  
'King Richard II', 1951. St James's Theatre: 'Captain Carvallo',  
by Denis Cannan, August 1950. Staatsoper: 'Lohengrin', June  
1951. The Thames Valley Theatre Company, programmes  
designed by John Piper and edited by Joanna Cannan, mostly

undated but c1950, 'Tobias and the Angel', April 1949. 'The Dover Road', 1949. 'The Guinea Pig' 'Tomorrow's Child', 'While the sun shines' 'Cinderella', 'Tomorrow's Child', 'You never can tell', 'Power without Glory', Theatre Royal Drury Lane: 'Oklahoma!', undated but c1955. Theatre Royal Haymarket: 'Love for Love', undated but during WW2. 'The Second Mrs Tanquery', undated. Winter Gardens, Bournemouth, Dorset Guild of Singers, March 1959. Wyndham's Theatre: 'The Hostage', 1959.

**MS 5120/117** Programme for the Malvern Festival, including play 'Max' by Denis Cannan  
1949

**MS 5120/118** Material relating to sports programmes  
5 Jul 1946-2 Jul 1954  
Includes material from Epsom Races Summer meeting, 1950. Henley Royal Regatta: July 5th 1946, 1947 x2, July 2nd & 3rd 1947, June 30th, July 1st, 2nd & 3rd 1948, July 6th & 8th 1950, July 4th 1952, June 30th & July 2nd 1954.

**MS 5120/119** Material relating to sports programmes  
1946-1953  
Includes material from the London XIVth Olympiad, rowing at Henley, 1948, Closing Ceremony, Wembley 1948. British Horse Society Championship Meeting, September 1949. British Horse Society Olympic Horse Trials, Badminton 1951. British Horse Society Badminton 3 Days Event, 1950 Olympic Horse Trials 1953. Walthamstow Stadium Horse Show, June 1950. Woodland Foxhounds Hunter Trials, March 1950. Woodland Hunt Olympic One Day Event, Ewelme, 1950. Whitney Horse Show and Gymkhana, August 1949. Pony Club Championship, September 1949. Oxford University Summer Eights 1946, 1947. Wargrave and Shiplake Regatta, 1949. Swallowfield, Shinfield and District Horticultural and Sports Society's Annual Show, 1950. Twickenham Oxford v Cambridge Rugby Football Union, 1946, 1951, 1952.

