



Inventory

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Papers relating to *Something Leather*, a novel by Alasdair Gray published by Jonathan Cape, June 1990.

This archive contains 29 numbered folders and bound sheaves arranged chronologically to show the growth of the book from a short story written in August 1987, to the reviews following publication in June 1990.

[Note: A sequential numbering system has been imposed on this collection, but otherwise it has been arranged and described by the author, Alasdair Gray.]

1. CONTENTS LISTS
2. SOMETHING LEATHER: SHORT STORY, 1987
3. CORRESPONDENCE WITH JONATHAN CAPE
4. CHAPTER 1
5. CHAPTER 9
6. CHAPTER 11
7. VERSION A
8. VERSION B
9. CHAPTER 4
10. CHAPTER 6
11. CHAPTER 3
12. VERSION C
13. VERSION D
14. VERSION E
15. VERSION F
16. CHAPTER 5
17. CHAPTER 2
18. CHAPTER 8
19. CHAPTER 10
20. CHAPTER 12
21. CHAPTER 13
22. VERSION G
23. VERSION H
24. CHAPTER 7
25. EPILOGUE
26. VERSION I
27. NOTES, CONTENTS PAGES, BLURBS, EPILOGUE
28. ILLUSTRATIONS
29. TRADE PAPERBACK
30. REVIEWS
31. FIRST AMERICAN EDITION
32. REVISED PAPERBACK EDITION

1. This sheaf lists manuscripts, corrected and completed typescripts, 9 different versions of the book, source material in earlier writings; correspondence between author and publisher, photocopies of illustrations, dated as accurately as possible.
2. **Something Leather:** a short story written to entertain May Hooper, sometime in August 1987.
This folder contains:

- (1) 13 manuscript pages - drafts
- (2) 4 photocopies of manuscript pages with manuscript corrections.
- (3) 1 - 7 numbered typed pages: final story version.
- (4) 1st page of typed story with Curtis Brown label on it, sent to Ann McDiarmid to market it, in August or September 1987.

3. A correspondence between Alasdair Gray and Jonathan Cape publishers, explaining the origins of the novel and its involvement with his book of verses Old Negatives and The Anthology of Prefaces.

This sheaf holds 9 original letters from [Tom Maschler of] Cape dating from 4 December 1986, interleaved with 6 manuscript drafts or summaries of letters from Gray, the last dated 18 February 1988, and containing a typed copy of the short story written around August 1988 which expanded into the story. The items in the sheaf are numbered alphabetically A to Q, being 24 sheets, four written on both sides. (Four manuscripts).

4. **Chapter 1**
 - (1) 7 pages of type numbered 9 - 15 for inclusion in **version A**, with some manuscript changes on page 14 added to **version C**.
 - (2) 1 other copy of page 15 with manuscript additions carried out in **version B**.
 - (3) 1 other copy of page 9 retyped with additional material added in manuscript to **version D**, but with the additional material struck out as in **version G**.
5. **Chapter 9**
 - (1) [8] typed pages numbered 16 - 24 with manuscript corrections, first page being headed **TWO: A FREE MAN** with two page 21 copies, the second corrected most. This was its earliest form, when still intended to be the second chapter of the book, as in **version A**.
 - (2) 9 typed pages numbered 66 - 74 and titled **7: A FREE MAN WITH PIPE** as in **version D**.
 - (3) 1 page only of original manuscript, the rest being in **version A**.

(4) A copy of the stage script of **Dialogue**, the play on which this chapter was based almost verbatim. (It was my only play to be given radio, stage and television productions, but the radio production was earliest - 25 November 1969. 24 typed pages of text. 1 title page and cast list page.)

Note: this chapter is brought from 1969 into the late eighties by a few sentences about the location of Leo's flat which is out into re-gentrified central Glasgow and some map references and words about his profession that put him in post-industrial Scotland.

6. Chapter 11

(1) 6 photocopied typed pages numbered 25 - 26 headed **THREE: PERHAPS** changed by manuscript to **SEVEN: PERHAPS** with small manuscript changes on other pages. The copy was made from the chapter in **version B**, an adaption - and extension - of the self portrait at the start of Saltire Self-Portrait no 4.

(2) 8 typed sheets numbered 86 - 92 with the heading **SEVEN: DAD'S STORY**, corrected by hand, with many other manuscript additions intended to make the narrator a humourist, changing the name Zoe to Donalda, and introducing a queen's distant cousin in her adult form. This is nearly the chapter as found in **version D**.

(3) 7 typed pages numbered 95 - 101 and based on the previous version. It is identical with the chapter in **version F**, except that the heading **9: DAD'S STORY** has been changed to 10 in manuscript.

(4) 9 photocopied pages lettered A to I with heading **9: DAD'S STORY**, manuscript note to typist Scott Pearson, manuscript changes, and a manuscript page B. These changes emphasise the world of the humourist and his political cowardice, and make the chapter in its final form.

(5) 12 draft manuscript pages for the above.

7. Version A

Given to typist Flo Allan, August 1988, to make a fair copy to give to the publisher, Cape, to prove that their investment in me was about to bring a return.

This sheaf holds -

3 manuscript preliminary pages: Title page and epigraph, dedications, contents list, the last two sheets numbered 5 and 7 (the contents list explains why).

7 photocopied pages of the original story with manuscript changes, numbered 9 - 14 in the author's manuscript, but corrected 9 - 15 in Flo Allan's, as author numbered two pages 11, and with manuscript heading on page 9 - **ONE: SOMETHING LEATHER**.

9 manuscript pages headed **TWO: A FREE MAN** and numbered 16 - 32, with some pasted-in dialogue scissored out of the play called **Dialogue** on pages 19, 20, 27, and pages 28 and 29 playscript pages with 10 manuscript pages headed **THREE: PERHAPS** and numbered 25 - 34: page 25 being mainly a paste-in section of the Saltire Society Portrait no. 4 publication.

The contents list shows the first worked out for this book. The erotic adventure of June would be interleaved with short stories based on my plays, and frank autobiographical sequences in which only the names of friends would be altered to avoid embarrassment, and literary and historical essays. The whole was intended to give an overall picture of the author's place and time with the narrator inside it, trundling on and on through several volumes like a mixture of Tristram Shandy and Herzen's Autobiography, till I went senile or died.

8. **Version B**
Typed version of **A** delivered to Jonathan Cape by hand at the end of August 1988.
- 9 **Chapter 4 The Man Who Knew About Electricity.**
12 draft manuscript pages for the full manuscript in **version C**.
10. **Chapter 6 In the Boiler Room**
(1) 3 draft manuscript pages for the full manuscript in **version C**.
(2) 8 typed pages numbered 48 - 55, page 48 headed **5: IN THE BOILER ROOM**, as in **version F**, but changed to 6 in manuscript as in **version G**.
(3) 17 un-numbered sheets, typed copy of the television play **In the Boiler Room** commissioned by the BBC in 1972 but never used.
11. **Chapter 3 The Proposal**
(1) 15 manuscript pages, drafts (un-numbered) for the manuscript in **version C**. A page headed **FOUR: MARTIN**, another with **ENTANGLED**, show earlier titles. Only in the course of writing did it strike me that Martin could be the youthful adolescent form of dynamic Mr Lang.
(2) 10 printed sheets numbered 18 - 27 and headed **2: THE PROPOSAL**, retyped from the manuscript altered typescript in **version D**, with no manuscript changes except an indication that it be made 3rd chapter, as in **version G**.
(3) 42 pages of typed playscript, author's rehearsal script for a BBC Scotland Schools Television play called **MARTIN**, one of a series of plays edited by C S Taylor. The text is pages numbered 1 - 39, with preliminary title page and schedule indicating that the play was recorded on January 6, 1972.

12. **Version C**

1 typed contents page with manuscript changes and note to Flo Allan, the typist. Pages numbered:

9-15 photocopy of old **Something Leather** with manuscript changes.

16-29 **The Man Who Knew About Electricity** in manuscript.

30-42 **In The Boiler Room**: manuscript with some pasted-in dialogue from the playscript.

43-57 **The Proposal**: manuscript.

58-66 **A Free Man With a Pipe**: typed copy with manuscript changes.

67-72 **Dad's Story**: page 67 manuscript, 68 and 70 are typescript with manuscript changes, 69A - 69B - 71A - B and 72 are collages of manuscripts and typescript.

73-84 **Class Party**: manuscript, with pages 79A and 79B. It is not completed, but the end is summarized on the last page.

Author's note, written 22 April 1991.

At this stage I thought the book nearly completed. **Dad's Story** had been fictionalised, all intention of using biographical matter was dropped, and a scheme had emerged: a socially realistic sketch of city life from the 60s through to the eighties, framed in an erotic adventure. The last began with a passive professional class woman meeting a manipulative artisan class woman and passive (or manipulated) woman of the artisan class. They start to excite each other - the chapter ends. Then the next four chapters are flashbacks showing the lives all three women wanted to escape from into infantile eroticism, since maturity presented nothing but more slavery. **Dad's Story** located the women on the verge of Glasgow's culture capital year, showing Donalda and Senga from an outsider's viewpoint. But in writing **Class Party** a new character, Miss Cane, was introduced, and I wanted her to have a flash-background in the book too. Hence the notion of calling her Ms McCann in ordinary life, and having the new receptionist-secretary in **Mr Lang and Miss Watson** chapter. In preparing this I also changed the lady who called my narrator **Dad** in **Dad's Story** to Miss Cane: to bring in the irony of Dad imagining betraying Donalda with Miss C when she is on the way to a Class Party with Donalda. But I also consciously wished that my book were more like Bleak House or Dombey and Son in its social range, though had no idea how to make it so.

September - October 1988.

13. **Version D revised from C with additions.**

5 preliminary pages, giving blurb and contents page in manuscript and numbered 1 - 9.

26 pages typed pages, originally numbered 9 - 43, but with many manuscript additions, changes and excisions and renumbered 11 - 38 in the authors hand, but the last 10 pages renumbered again 28 - 37 by the typist.

These are **Something Leather** (now called **One for the Album**) **The Man Who Knew About Electricity** and **The Proposal** corrected and typed from **version C**.

4 manuscript pages numbered 39 - 42/48: the start of **MR LANG AND MISS TAIN**: so titled, with a summary of the end. (Note: on the back of page 41 are sentences relating to **Quiet People** and several used at the start of **A Distant Cousin of the Queen**.)

1 manuscript page headed **5: QUIET PEOPLE**, giving a first sentence and summary, and numbered 49 - 58.

8 typed pages numbered 26 - 53, but with manuscript changes and corrections renumbering them 59 - 66: **IN THE BOILER ROOM**.

9 typed pages numbered 67A - 74, with very slight manuscript changes on page 67A: **A FREEMAN WITH A PIPE**.

8 manuscript pages lettered A - H. This, minus the first paragraph, is the start of chapter called **The Distant Cousin of a Queen**, with a summary of the ending. English poshspeak is not phoneticized.

7 typed pages numbered 85 - 91: **DAD'S STORY** with many manuscript additions.

8 typed sheets with manuscript additions, numbered 72 - 78 in manuscript the last page variously numbered in accordance with several forgotten schemes.

1 unnumbered manuscript page giving the start of **New June** and a summary of it.

1 un-numbered manuscript page giving **The Sitting Room in Baker Street**.

Note: the typed pages are a redoing of **version D**, the manuscript gives the start of four new chapters, also the blurb and a spoof final chapter echoing it. Frequent revisions resulted in the version being completed (despite the October date optimistically given on title page) in November 1989.

14. **Version E. Typed from version D.**

1 - 135 typed and numbered pages, fairly copying all the changes, additions and revisions in the **C** and **D** versions. Even so, there are many small manuscript changes on the prelim and more recently written pages for further retyping.

One of these additions, for the attention chiefly of the publisher, predicts that the whole book will be completed by April 1989, if the author does not "think too much" and "expand the narrative".

So although the Distant Cousin was still expected to stay in Chapter 8 before moving through **Dad's Story** into the **Class Party** there was a sense of expansion coming on. The first page of **Something Leather** - first paragraph - has here been expanded by a foretaste of Mr Geikie and his government office, to prepare the reader for **New June**. This addition was later removed. Despite a title page with a misleading sentence saying this work was to be posted in October 1989 (which must be a mistake) this was not.

At this time I started employing Scott Pearson as well as Flo Allan, so as to avoid the guilt of asking someone to do again what they had already redone often. October 1988.

15. **Version F**
Final copy of **version E**, typed with all corrections on pages numbered 1 -135.
16. **Chapter 5 Mr Lang and Ms Tain**
 - (1) 2 manuscript pages headed **FIVE: MISS MCCANN**. This is the start of the chapter in its final form, except that the heroine here introduced is the Miss Cane of **Class Party**.
 - (2) 3 typed pages numbered 38 - 40/47, based on the 5 manuscript pages numbered 39 - 58 in **version D**, with the heroine definitely June.
 - (3) 22 manuscript pages of draft material.
 - (4) 18 photocopied pages numbered 62-79 given to Jim Kelman asking for suggestions, with red manuscript marginal notes by Kelman offering these and some
 - (5) 4 typed pages numbered 66, 73, 78, 79, with authors manuscript alterations as a result of Kelman's advice.
 - (6) **Sam Lang and Miss Watson** 43 pages of a stage play on which this chapter was based: first written for television (commissioned but not produced) about 1969: stage version done by Rutherglen Repertory in 1981.

Begun September-October 1988.

17. **Chapter 2 The Distant Cousin of a Queen**
 - (1) 2 manuscript pages numbered 76 and 77/85 giving the first two paragraphs of this chapter and a summary of the rest indicating that it will rapidly describe how the heroine "grows up, comes to Scotland, meets Senga, becomes the bold woman of other chapters and puts money into Senga's business."
 - (2) 5 manuscript pages lettered B, C, D1 (a third of a sheet) and D2 and D3. The last three take the story to nearly the end of the fifth paragraph, the last two have the same summary of the chapter ending as before.

- (3) 6 typed pages **A** numbered 75 - 80/94, giving the first seven and a half paragraphs followed by the summary above, with the typists manuscript alterations in pencil dictated to her over the phone partly to make the posh diction phonetic.
- (4) 6 typed pages **B** numbered 75 - 80/94, corrected from **A** with a few manuscript phonetic alterations by the author.
- (5) 6 typed pages **C** numbered 75 - 85/94, with pages 77, 78, 79 missing and more detailed alterations on the author's hand to the phonetic diction.
- (6) 1 manuscript page with a word list setting of specimen words and the posh English (or Queen's English) phonetic equivalents. This list is in the author's hand with some additional words in the hand of Scott Pearson.

All the above versions are headed Chapter 8.

- (7) 19 photocopied typed pages numbered 18-36, headed chapter 2, and identical (apart from some manuscript alterations) with the Chapter in **version H**.
- (8) 33 draft manuscript pages, some cut short by scissors.

Begun late September 1988.

Note: This chapter and its expansion into three chapters was not anticipated in the earlier schemes, and came on suddenly after discussing rich people with Carol Roades, then my lodger, in the kitchen of 39 Kersland St. She had met some young ones when young at a hippy nice boarding school in the Himalayas, also when hanging exhibitions of paintings in the 3rd Eye Centre, and being ordered about by an administrator who had richly aristocratic ways. Out of a sentence I decided Miss Cane must be an aristocrat.

18. **Chapter 8 The Bum Garden**

- (1) 11 photocopied manuscript pages (numbered 1 - 18 but with all between 8 and 16 lost) of the final manuscript copy of this chapter in **version G**, with an manuscript revision by the author on the last page which he dictated to Scott Pearson, the typist over the phone. This chapter is headed **8 Culture City Culture**, as it was begun with the intention of not just describing the distant cousin's development as a sculptor but bringing her to cultured Glasgow. However, that become a separate chapter.
- (2) 1 typed sheet, formerly page 114 in **version H**, with a large addition to it in manuscript added in August 1989 after the death of a Hampster entrusted to me by Irene Taylor, an occasional lodger of mine.
- (3) 36 manuscript pages, some half sheets, of draft material.
- (4) 18 photocopies of typed pages 97 - 114 in **version H** with manuscript additions and alterations and typist's note attached.

19. **Chapter 10 Culture Capitalism**

(1) 15 photocopied pages of the final manuscript **version G**, called **Culture Culture** numbered 122 - 136.

(2) 25 manuscript pages of drafts for the above.

(3) 2 manuscript sheets of headed notepaper written on both sides, nearly complete draft of a letter sent to Kathy Acker, sometime in 1988 (probably between January and August) explaining how Something Leather relates to The Anthology of Prefaces, and containing the dialogue between the white and black American women which is used in **The Bum Garden**, and asking for advice on the diction.

(4) GOWN Literary Supplement: January 1989

A magazine edited by students of Queens University, Belfast, containing an interview with Alasdair Gray on page 13. This was edited from a conversation recorded in November 1988, when, asked about Glasgow's forthcoming status as Europe's culture capital, I said a lot of things which became the ground of Linda's monologue at the start of this chapter, and the reason for the Queen's Cousin coming to Glasgow.

20. **Chapter 12 Class Party**

(1) 1 photocopy of the last page of the **Something Leather** story, typed sometime in August 1987, with manuscript additions which became the first paragraph of this chapter, added in January or February 1988.

(2) 5 manuscript pages numbered 73 - 79 (78 missing) drafts for the unfinished chapter which ends **version C**, completed around the start of October 1988.

(3) 13 photocopied typed pages, made from pages 102 - 109 in **version F** (completed 10 December 1988) with photocopy of manuscript pages 109 - 104 posted to typists Scott Pearson from Bridge of Wier, July 1989, with pencilled manuscript on last page in typists's hand, dictated over phone. This was the final version of the chapter.

(4) 20 pages of draft manuscript, some written on both sides.

January 1988 to June 1989

21. **Chapter 13 New June**

(1) 5 manuscript pages lettered A - E, the start of the penultimate version of the chapter, with a pasted in cutting from a photocopy of a typed earlier version on page D.

(2) 8 photocopied manuscript pages of the complete penultimate version sent to Scott Pearson for typing, with manuscript additions in his hand dictated to him over the phone: first 6 lettered A - F, last two unlettered.

(3) 3 loose draft manuscript sheets.

Note: this is a shorter than the chapter as it appears in version H, where I have inserted a telephone dialogue between June and Miss Cane.

Completed 27 June 1989.

22. **Version G**

Numbered pages 11 - 123 with contents page scribbled with note to typist, Scott Pearson, done before he received the last pages included here (the **New June** chapter) posted to him on the 27 June 1989.

In this version four chapters begun but not finished in **Version F** are completed in manuscript: **Mr Lang and Ms Tain**, **The Distant Cousin of a Queen**, **Class Party** and **New June**. The **Quiet People** chapter has been dropped, but the **Distant Cousin of a Queen** chapter has expanded into two others: **The Bum Garden** and a chapter initially called **Culture City Culture**, here changed on the contents list to **Culture Culture**.

A proposed **Postscript of the Foregoing** is also on the contents table, but scored out: perhaps because I was late with my intended delivery and wanted done with the thing at this point.

(PS I switched to my friend Scott Pearson as typist because I was ashamed to ask Flo Allan to retype so much yet again.)

Completed 27 June 1989.

23. **Version H**

Typed version of **G**, numbered 1 - 167 inclusive, with very few manuscript corrections.

The contents pages shows that a postscript is now intended but the novel is otherwise preserved as complete - **Quiet People** is no part of it.

Posted to Agent and Publishers July/August 1989.

24. **Chapter 7 Quiet People**

(1) 1 photocopy of the typed sheet from version [] giving the first sentence of this chapter and a summary of it as originally planned.

(2) 18 manuscript pages of the final version numbered 1 - 15 in the author's hand, the page 15 sheet being half size, and pages 16 - 18 numbered in the hand of the typist Scott Pearson.

(3) 25 preliminary manuscript sheets.

(4) 1 - 20 numbered pages of BBC radio production script with un-numbered titlepage giving cast, producer's name, rehearsal and recording dates and date of transmission - 25 November 1968.

Note: The play on which this chapter is based provides the start of it, but has extra character and a plot from which the chapter diverges further than **Mr Lang and Ms Watson** diverge from their original source, though not as far as **Dad's Story** diverges from The Saltire Self Portrait.

25. **Critic Fuel: An Epilogue**

- (1) 24 pages of the completed manuscript version numbered 1 - 20 and A - D.
- (2) 71 preliminary manuscript pages.

This account of the novel's growth includes material intended for the **New June** chapter.

26. **Version I**

Copy of typed pages numbered 1 - 202, being the completed story finally sent to the publishers, with some final changes and revisions and remarks for the typesetter in the hand of the editor Maggie McDiarmid, and the author.

Quiet People and **Critic Fuel** are included: but the names of **Mr Lang** and **A Distant Cousin of a Queen** are not yet in their final form. Maggie McKernan thought Judy (the cousin's original name) too like June so I changed it to Sam (short for Samantha), so Sam Lang had to become Tom. Finally Sam Shetland was changed to Harry, short for Harriet...

Also a sheaf of 9 pages with some final corrections in manuscript and a note from Maggie McKernan dated 28/9/89.

27. **Notes, Contents Pages, Blurbs, Epilogue**

- (1) 2 manuscript notes to the typist Flo Allan, the first 5 October (1988) the second from a little later.
- (2) 12 contents pages numbered to indicate the growth of the book.
- (3) [7] assorted blurbs, un-numbered, also indicating the growth of the idea.
- (4) 1 manuscript epilogue for paperback.
- (5) 3 versions of a spoof final chapter [**12: The Sitting-room in Baker Street.**]

28. **Illustrations**

- (1) 15 photocopies of the original drawings used to illustrate Something Leather.
- (2) 11 Photocopies of chapter headings with illustrative capital letters roughly incorporated with the text.

29. Trade paperback version of this book put out as advance publicity, Jan or Feb 1990: Graphics incomplete and cover later simplified - uncorrected proof copy in poor condition.
30. 39 cuttings of British reviews of the novel Something Leather, June/July 1990.
31. Alasdair Gray Something Leather New York: Random House, 1990.
(First US edition, inscribed copy.)
32. Alasdair Gray Something Leather London: Picador, 1991.
(Revised paperback edition, inscribed copy)