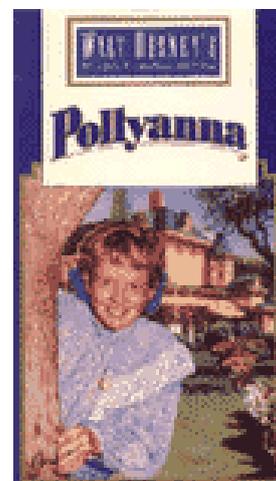
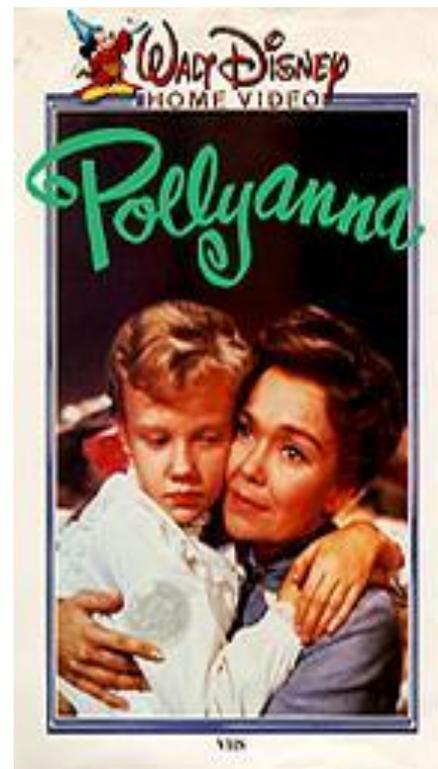


Hayley Mills

Titles: 5 Sources: 3 Stills: 7

Born: London; April 18th 1946
Daughter of actor John Mills (later knighted); sister of actress Juliet Mills



The cutesie-pie persona which won her a special Oscar for Disney's "POLLYANNA" was one she would later come to view as a major impediment in both her personal and professional lives.
Source: Various websites

Halliwell's Filmgoer's Companion entry:

"Tomboyish British juvenile actress, daughter of John Mills."

The Virgin International Encyclopedia of Film entry:

"Wholesome child actress whose highly praised debut in "TIGER BAY" (1959) landed her a five-year contract with Walt Disney, where she played a succession of sweet, ingratiating innocents. Mills's nude appearance in "THE FAMILY WAY" (1967), and her marriage to a man three decades her senior (director Roy Boulting) put her career on a decidedly different and somewhat less successful path. Daughter of actor John Mills and sister of actress Juliet Mills."

Hollywood Lolitas profile:

"The most talented youngster to be seen on the screen since Deanna Durbin, Margaret O'Brien and Shirley Temple"; "The universal daughter of the sixties, a sort of Virgin Mary Pickford"; "World star"; "a veritable genius and the first real successor of the spun-sugar crown of Shirley Temple"; "the wunderkind"; "The golden girl of British films"; "Actress of the year at sixteen"; "Everyone's favourite daughter, little sister, girl next door or - for those with more bizarre interests - Lolita symbol".

Who on earth were all these reviewers raving about? Well, for those who were around in the sixties, it's pretty obvious: Hayley Mills, of course. Who else? For those who weren't around at the time, it might not be so easy to come up with the answer. The most successful, most popular, most internationally acclaimed pup from the sixties litter of Lolitas has until very recently also suffered from the "Whatever happened to...?" syndrome.

Her brief, dazzling, juvenile career followed the all-too-predictable movie nymphet pattern: overnight celebrity, mega-exposure in the media, a frenetic period of churning out starring vehicles, never fast enough for adoring fans, a concentration of adulation, hard work, unreality and astronomic earnings, encapsulated within a few brief years, then a

slow, at first barely noticeable decline as the years set in, a quiet but steady loss of returns at the box-office, increasing difficulty in finding suitable parts ("Too old for juveniles, too young for romantic leads, my dear"), acceptance of roles that one would have rejected out of hand in films that one would have considered beneath one's status a very short time before.

And, one day, the discovery that one has become a pretty young actress out of a very large number of others for casting directors to choose from; one has a name and reputation, of course, but one's juvenile stardom can be a disadvantage rather than an advantage; audiences want new faces, or else they have retained a stereotyped image dear to their heart which they refuse to relinquish. Their nostalgic memory of an adorable moppet [*sic*], a coy nymph, an innocent tomboy or a virginal maiden, does not tally with this new vision of young womanhood showing off a sexy figure to best advantage and pursing her nubile lips for some serious screen kissing.

"Hayley is still a child ... but she is growing up so very fast ... I think she will, picture after picture, turn into one of England's most popular, most attractive female stars," 74-year-old Maurice Chevalier predicted when he co-starred with fifteen-year-old Hayley in Disney's "IN SEARCH OF THE CASTAWAYS" (1963). But the problem was that when Hayley Mills did turn into an attractive, talented adult actress, people were still coming up to her fifteen years later, not to tell her how good or beautiful she had become with age, but how many times they had seen "CASTAWAYS" and other sugar and spice epics she had starred in when she was a nymphet [*sic*].

Was Hayley Mills a movie nymphet, or a true Hollywood Lolita for that matter? Some of the vital ingredients were there and some were not. To begin with, she was English and the daughter of a quintessentially British actor, Sir John Mills. However she went to Hollywood at thirteen and she had just the right American-style looks that are a Humbert Humbert's delight: blonde, snub-nosed, knobbly-kneed, tomboyish and gracefully gawky in a happy, coltish way.

No-one could say that she looked sexually precocious or knowing in the manner of a Sue

Lyon or a Tuesday Weld; yet her very first film, "TIGER BAY" (1959) was a somewhat ambiguous adventure story about a twelve-year-

her hands, but was curiously drawn to him and, instead of denouncing him to the police, befriended and protected him, not so much out



old girl and a murderer. She held his fate in

Perhaps a trifle too well-fed to be anyone's idea of a "Lolita", she had already passed that age by the time of her third film, but it would certainly be true to say the commercial requirements of her five-year contract with Disney artificially prolonged early adolescence to the ripe old age of 20.

Source: Hollywood Lolitas

of compassion or kind-heartedness but because it was clear that the little slum kid on the verge of pubescence was not indifferent to handsome

Horst Buchholz's animal magnetism. Much of the film's success rested on the ambivalent complicity that bound the girl child and the

male adult, very reminiscent of that which existed in a beautiful French film of that same period: "LES DIMANCHES DE VILLE D'AURAY".

It was not, however, Hayley's nascent sex-appeal that was subsequently exploited after her personal triumph in "TIGER BAY". Unlike many another Hollywood Lolita, she came from



Her first and best performance, in the neat little eyewitness / desperado on the run thriller "TIGER BAY". Unlike the Disney fodder which followed, it was a film free of artificial sweeteners, and Hayley's debut performance was deft, natural and remarkably assured. Father John Mills played the police inspector investigating the murder, but their scenes together give no hint at all of that relationship. Hayley should perhaps have stayed in Britain, where her career possibilities would have been more modest, but the fallout on her private life would have been less severe. Fame is a cancer.

Source: A Pictorial History of the Talkies

a family which had no financial

need to emphasize that side of their growing daughter's personality. On the other hand it was a "showbiz" family with inevitable movie contacts, so it was natural for Hayley to have a go, especially with her looks. In Hollywood, however, she was snapped up by Walt Disney Studios, which offered a 100 per cent guarantee of Pickfordian sweetness and innocence. Indeed Hayley's very first film for Disney was a remake of "POLLYANNA" (1960), the sunny-tempered, pig-tailed darling who brought gladness to the hearts of all. She won a special Oscar for her performance and, before long, her name was regularly appearing on the list of the Ten Top Box Office Stars.

The slight moral ambiguities of "TIGER BAY" were forgotten. Hayley had become a bubbly, asexual, wholesomely cute Baby Doll in all her Disney and Disney-style films: "THE PARENT TRAP" (1961), "IN SEARCH OF THE CASTAWAYS" (1963), "THE MOON

SPINNERS" (1963), "THE TRUTH ABOUT SPRING" (1964), "THAT DARN CAT" (1965), "THE TROUBLE WITH ANGELS" (1965), and "SKY WEST AND CROOKED" (1965). Hayley became a family institution. Mothers named their babies after her. You could safely take your kids to any film she appeared in.

Yet something in her must have appealed not only to the kiddies and to the clucking mamas in the audience, but also to the Dirty Old Men [sic] lurking within some respectable and other not-so-respectable males. Most people at the time would have scoffed at the notion that Hayley could be regarded as a sexy nymphet, yet the fact remains that she was very seriously considered for the coveted role of "LOLITA". She had to refuse, because it would have completely spoilt her wholesome Disney image; but, ironically, whereas Sue Lyon later claimed that playing Lolita had ruined her life, Hayley

Mills regretted having turned down the part, feeling it might have helped her to grow up both in her personal life and in her acting career. "I might not have had such a difficult time growing up if I had accepted," she later explained.

Tuesday Weld and Sue Lyon found it hard going to be propelled into a sexy nymphet's real-life role at the tender age of fifteen. Hayley Mills found it just as hard to grow up with the Pollyanna, "everybody's favourite daughter" label sticking to her wherever she went. Towards her seventeenth birthday, she sank into a deep depression, that eventually verged on clinical breakdown. She kept repeating: "My mind is dead. I'm like a big brown donut with a hole in the middle." She was going through the all-too familiar pangs of the ageing Hollywood nymphet who feels that nobody wants her to grow up, just when a girl most needs to be encouraged in that direction; the terror that no one will even like her anymore if she gets any older, that she is letting down her fans, her studio, often her mother, and all the people who have made her what she is rapidly ceasing to be: a child star.

"I was struggling for so long with the little girl image," Hayley later recalled. "I seemed doomed forever to be a little girl, whatever I did. And I knew nobody wanted me to change anyway." The mildest attempt to appear more mature and self-confident was instantly squashed: "There was a hell of a stink if I was seen with a cigarette, and no pictures were allowed to be taken of me holding a glass just in case someone thought the drink might be alcoholic." She became morbidly self-conscious: "I always thought people expected more of me than I could give and that I would be a huge disappointment to them. So at every party I went to I spent the whole time hiding in the loo." She was even more ill-at-ease with youngsters *[sic]* of her own age, feeling they would make fun of her for being different or for being so far behind them academically: "I was scared stiff of other teenagers." Her strict work routine and dawn departures for the studio made it almost impossible for her to date boys, but when she did, as her mother recalled: "It was difficult for her to tell whether a boy liked her for herself or simply because she was Hayley Mills."

Though it shocked and astounded everyone at the time, it was not really surprising that Hayley, at a very immature eighteen, should

have sought security and understanding in the arms of 52-year-old Roy Boulting, who had produced "THE FAMILY WAY" (1966), the first, rather coy, film to try to portray her as an adult. When she finally married Boulting, her parents were not the only ones to be horrified: enraged young men all over the world wrote her violent letters accusing her of setting a bad example for youth. But Hayley did not find the serenity and maturity she always felt eluded her, not with Boulting, nor with her second husband, a man of her own age. She may have felt that she had found it at last with a man fourteen years younger than herself who converted her to the Hare Krishna sect: "They have found something that they know will never go," she explained blissfully. "What he and the movement have taught me has made me a much wiser, kinder, person. I can now cope with my difficulties and disappointments and problems."

Was one of those disappointments the fact that Hayley's career, impeded by her hang-ups and her checkered private life, had tapered down from mega-stardom to quiet TV serials, even though in her portrayal of the English mother in "The Flame Trees of Thika" (1981) she was well-received as a serious actress in her own right. She shared that fate with all the other sixties Lolitas, and like almost all movie nymphets before her, she was to declare: "I should never let any children of mine go into it... Of course, you have a marvellous time when you're doing it all, but you end up completely uneducated."

FILMOGRAPHY

Year	Age	Title	Role
deb 59	13	TIGER BAY with <i>Brian Hammond</i>	in central role, Gillie Adams, 11
60	14	POLLYANNA † with <i>Kevin Corcoran</i>	Disney – in title role
61	15	THE PARENT TRAP	Disney – in dual role
61		WHISTLE DOWN THE WIND	
62	16	IN SEARCH OF THE CASTAWAYS with <i>Keith Hamshere</i>	Disney
63	17	SUMMER MAGIC with <i>Eddie Hodges</i>	
64	18	THE CHALK GARDEN	
64		THE MOONSPINNERS	
65	19	THAT DARN CAT	
65		THE TRUTH ABOUT SPRING	
66	20	SKY WEST AND CROOKED	
66		THE TROUBLE WITH ANGELS	
67	21	AFRICA, TEXAS STYLE	
67		THE FAMILY WAY	
67		PRETTY POLLY	

[† she was awarded a "special" Oscar]