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FAMILY LIFE IN BRITAIN

1650–1910

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Editors

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Contents

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List of Figures

List of Tables

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Carol Beardmore, Cara Dobbing and Steven King

Context

Early narratives of the size and structure of British families and their place in wider European systems of family formation and re-formation were fundamentally shaped by Peter Laslett and the wider Cambridge Group for the History of Population and Social Structure. At the broadest level, it was argued that extended families were never a common feature of the British, and particularly English, domestic landscape.[1] It has been estimated for the period between 1622 and 1854 that households

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containing more than two generations constituted a mere 5.7% of the whole, in contradistinction to some European family forms.[2] By the nineteenth century more people lived alone (often with servants) than lived in such multigenerational families. Moreover, English co-residential units in particular tended to be relatively small (between four and five members at any one time) as well as relatively simple. Households and housefuls were of course often rather larger, but the sense that the British lived in kin-light contexts was a powerful driver of early narratives of the family.[3]

For Laslett, Richard Wall and others this situation was a reflection of three influences. The first was the expectation that young couples at the point of marriage would start their own lives together living under their own roof and apart from either of their spousal families. Economic factors affected this choice and thus the age of marriage might vary according to social class or the financial ability to set up a new household, but was often higher than in societies where this expectation of residential separation was not enforced.[4] This characterisation of British household formation practices has been subject to sustained criticism, but it remains a cornerstone of our understanding of the place of British families in the European demographic system.[5] A second important influence was migration among the young. In pre-industrial and industrial England there was a high degree of geographical mobility and it was not unusual for young people to leave home very early to enter service or an apprenticeship. The exact age at leaving home varied according to region or class,[6] but the work of Colin Pooley and Jean Turnbull has provided convincing evidence that multiple mobilities were part of the expectational landscape of young people from at least the eighteenth century.[7] In this sense, there was a 'natural' cap on the size and complexity of the British co-residential family unit. Finally, Laslett in particular argued that nuclear family hardship placed strict limitations on the ability of different generations of the same family to provide care through co-residence when sickness, poverty or old age became a reality. Clearly, middling families had more potential in this respect than did those with fewer resources,[8] but at the core of Laslett's construction of nuclear hardship was that the family burdens of children were heaviest at the very time that parents were most likely to need care.[9] Alternatively, and variably depending upon time period, death may have taken out generations that would otherwise have become co-resident. Subsequently, historians have

come to understand that the Old and New Poor Laws rarely enforced the legal stipulation that kin should provide care for destitute relatives and in effect provided welfare benefits and forms which substituted for such family care.[10]

Critics of Laslett pointed forcefully to the sense that his core source—censuses and census-like enumerations—created a path dependency. Such sources start from the basis of the (often hazily defined) co-residential unit, generating artificial distinctions both between those living within the same house and those people related by blood and marriage who lived nearby.[11] Crudely, we might regard a nuclear family unit living next to a grandparent on one side and a married daughter or son on the other as one extended family instead of three separate entities. On the other hand, the work of the Cambridge Group on a wider microsimulation exercise to underpin their national population estimates seemed to confirm Laslett's sense that death and marriage had a profound effect on the pool of people who could come together to form complex and extended families in England and Wales.[12] Other challenges have gained more traction. Naomi Tadmor, for instance, built upon Miranda Chaytor's early work to show that families were often deeply enmeshed into networks of fictive kin—people related to families through contract, acquaintance, friendship, or work—some of whom were co-resident and some more distantly resident. Fictive kinship, she argued was at least as important for the meaning of family and kinship as relations of blood, marriage and law.[13] Whether this was also true for the labouring poor as opposed to the literate middling sorts who were the focus of Tadmor's analysis, remains to be seen. Di Cooper and Moira Donald offer a firmer challenge. Reconstructing the familial relations of streets in nineteenth-century Exeter, they have shown that by linking together census material and a dense raft of other sources (in an exercise akin to that of Iain Riddell in his contribution to this volume) it is possible to move beyond the household relationship labels that dominate our understanding of the nineteenth-century family. Thus, terms such as lodger, visitor, servant, pupil, assistant and apprentice might actually mask a blood or marriage relationship between one or more family members. At the same time, seemingly concrete labels such as daughter, mother or aunt might in fact denote fictive kinship, much as Tadmor suggested.[14]

Against this backdrop, it is unsurprising that historians of the British family have, through surveys and detailed microstudies of individuals and

family groups, sought to reimagine the constitution and meaning of family groups and to investigate in much more depth the kinship networks within which such groupings were enmeshed.[15] Thus we now know that English marriage ages for women were not uniformly low by the eighteenth century, that proximate residence of kin might be as important as co-residence, that the Poor Law worked in partnership with kinship groups to engineer what we might now understand as adult social care, and that from the early modern through to the modern periods, brothers, sisters, fathers, mothers and others managed to maintain close and affective kinship ties through epistolary networks. Of course, it has been much easier to reconstruct the meaning and form of the family for the middling sorts and others of the literate classes who have left ego documents. Historians of the families of the labouring poor have been beset with the central problem that rather more was written about them than by them. Even here, however, inventive use of court records, pauper letters and witness statements has begun to reveal a rich and varied landscape of family structures and meanings. Rebecca Probert, for instance, has shown beyond reasonable doubt that stable and unstable family grouping based upon cohabitation rather than formal marriage were rare from the late eighteenth century onwards.[16] Steven King has suggested that the dependent poor were, and were meant to be, part of a rich canvas of functional kinship.[17] And we have begun to understand that poorer families experienced the same emotional attachments to absent family members as did their middling counterparts, a theme continued in this volume through the work of Cara Dobbing.[18] These are all important perspectives, but significant challenges remain for British family historians and it is to those challenges (and by inference the agenda for this volume) that we now turn.

The Size and Shape of Co-residential Units

That census documents reveal most co-residential family units to be broadly nuclear both at any point in time and over time, is undeniable. Diaries and letters also sometimes suggest that the nuclear form dominated the number of years lived out by individual family members. Peter Laslett in his original conception of nuclear hardship was, however, alive to the limitations of the sources that he used, recognising the likely

fluidity of family membership (and thus family form, size and structure) in the intervals between observable points like that provided by census material. Historians have subsequently made much of the fact that the census was taken on one day in every ten years, of the problems with census labels and definitions, and of the flaws with collecting, recording and preserving census data.[19] It is now clear, especially from work on the middling sorts that families were and were meant to be fluid entities with permeable borders and the flexibility to cope with various levels of crisis. Indeed, and a theme to which we return below, this had to be the case given the frequency with which families were broken by death or abandonment and subsequently re-formed. Thus Tadmor advocates the need for a much broader definition of 'the nuclear family', suggesting that family historians should consider as one conceptual landscape 'the nuclear family of origin, the nuclear family of procreation' and even the original nuclear family of a spouse.[20] In this way, the definition of co- and proximately resident 'family' is stretched to include most familial relations and consequently the unit becomes less fixed and far more fluid across time and space. Her wider point, that a neighbour, friend, former apprentice or a business associate—so-called fictive kin—could be as important to a family grouping as relations of blood and marriage whether co-resident or not, further complicates this picture.[21]

Laslett, as we have observed, to some extent anticipated these issues, but their logic remains to be followed through, particularly for groups outside the middling sorts. As Leonore Davidoff reminds us the frequent presence of non-nuclear members in middling co-residential units—grandparents, grandchildren, siblings, aunts, uncles, nephews, nieces, cousins and others—signal an essential fluidity that should cause us to question the very conceptual label 'nuclear family'.[22] There is much to recommend this view. We now know from various levels of court records, for instance, that visitors (related by blood and marriage, and not) were a normative part of the year and life cycle for ordinary families across space and time. Steven King through his work on memorials in this volume provides further evidence of the sheer ubiquity of such visitors in ordinary nineteenth-century households. More widely, apprentices might become in effect adoptive children, while the orphaned children of brothers and sisters might be taken in by another family even if they were subsequently labelled for census purposes 'boarders'. The

practice of siblings and parents taking in the children of family members who had fallen into poverty so as to give some respite to the family budget and prevent kin from applying to the poor law, also appears to have been common.[23] And while Probert is right to argue that cohabitation was uncommon, those who have sought evidence to support or contest this assertion have always ended up finding stories of highly fluid and unstable family forms and complexions among ordinary people.[24]

More observations of this sort could be made but the key point is that a number of questions remain under-explored, especially for Scottish families of the sort investigated by Iain Riddell and Regina Poertner in this volume, for whom the traditions of clanship introduce a further layer of complexity: How porous, for instance, were the boundaries of families in the short, medium and long-term and at what threshold of porosity does it become meaningless to talk about the nuclear family form or about a 'mean' family size? How often were complex and long-term extended family situations disguised by the use of labels such as 'boarder' or 'visitor'? Should people living in outbuildings and other 'flexible accommodation' in some way connected to a house be regarded as part of the co-residential family group? And how does the short- and medium-term residential turmoil associated with widowhood, abandonment and remarriage fit into the conceptions of family as held by families themselves? We might also point to an even more fundamental issue, building on the work of Dennis Mills and Barry Reay.[25] While it is clear that migration (and increasingly emigration) was, in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, integral to the experience of growing up and forming households, much movement was temporary, circular, reversible and local. This inevitably resulted in the formation and re-formation of local or neighbourhood clusters of families related by blood, marriage or association, just as Mills found for Cambridgeshire and Reay for Kent, and might even include an international element where emigration had taken place. Iain Riddell, Geoff Monks and Maria Cannon have found exactly the same constellations in their chapters for this volume. In this sense, and much as Tadmor has in effect argued for the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries, what matters when family can see each other daily or regularly and contribute to the support of others in myriad unseen ways, is not the co-residential family unit and its structure, but who peopled this wider local and functional network. Most of the chapters in our volume orientate to this basic question, collectively applying it across the class spectrum from the labouring sorts to Scottish aristocratic families.

The Extent of Nominal and Fictive Kinship

The existence of broad demographic constraints on the scale, typological distribution and physical location of biological kinship is clear. Yet, as infant death rates fell from the mid-eighteenth century, adult life expectancy rose and the much vaunted 'urban death penalty' failed to emerge in Britain on the same scale as that in Europe, what was *possible* in terms of biological kinship inevitably extended.[26] At the same time, the rapid improvement in the reach, speed and cost of the various ways of keeping in contact with kin and maintaining functional kinship ties from the eighteenth century—post, rail, ship, telegraph—inevitably had the effect of reducing the fracturing of kinship links occasioned by someone moving away or even abroad. Indeed, the impact of these increasing possibilities is a regular feature of the chapters assembled for this volume. In short, British nominal kinship networks were becoming more extensive and deeper by the nineteenth century than they had been before. Yet, British historians have lagged behind their Continental counterparts in developing a comprehensive sense of families and their networks beyond the boundaries of a shared living space. This matters because each nuclear family group fitted into a much wider range of networks which altered and flexed as the family configured and reconfigured in response to internal and external factors.[27] This theme is taken up by Iain Riddell in his chapter for our volume in which he reconstructs several generations of two Scottish families who lived in close proximity in the same community as well as those who had settled further afield in Canada. Developing a new process of record linkage—kinship collation—which draws on the methods increasingly emerging from Continental family history, he is able to show that nominal kinship was much more extensive than can ever be found from census material alone. Like many other contributors to this volume, he suggests that the presence and utility of this nominal kinship network was fundamental to the founding and sustaining of businesses, migration and emigration decisions, marriage and courtship decisions and the identity of whole physical regions. In short, the extent, depth and composition of nominal kinship networks matter and British family historians need as a collective endeavour to carry on the task of reconstructing those networks. The chapters in this volume make at least a small contribution to this task.

The extent of fictive kinship is something that also requires more work. A wider literature on British family history has assumed, almost by

default, that the construction and maintenance of fictive kinship relations was so situational that the matter defies both generalisation and quantification, at least with the current source base for British historians. There is of course merit in this observation. Indeed, Steven King and Carol Beardmore in their contributions to this volume portray the acquisition of such fictive kin as almost accidental. Yet some fictive kinship creation has an unerring regularity. Towards the start of the period covered by this volume, it has become clear that the choice of godparents for even the children of labouring households was simultaneously made to bolster both biological and legal kinship connections and the extent, depth and meaning of fictive kinship networks.[28] It is thus unsurprising to find Helen Berry and Elizabeth Foyster reminding us for the early modern period that families did not exist in isolation but instead were embedded in a range of networks of kin, friends and neighbours.[29] At the other end of our period, Andrew Davies has shown how groups of friends, neighbours and work colleagues shaped the important life-decisions, including courtship and marriage, of young people in Birmingham.[30] His work confirms the lessons of early oral history studies that networks of, in effect, fictive kin became more and more important to the experience of urban family life in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.[31] For British family historians, then, the task is to systematise our understanding of fictive kinship through large-scale comparative projects such as that flagged by Kim Price in his contribution on British professional family life for this volume.

Without these wider projects and initiatives our understanding of the extent, depth and meaning of British kinship will remain superficial, artificially connected to the fortunes of the independent residential family unit.[32] As Davidoff reminds us, kinship needs to be considered as an 'amalgam of genetic position and cultural construct'.[33] In the context of our volume, the need for this (currently un-realised) approach is signalled most amusingly by Steven King who notes that some of his memorialists considered dead relatives as continuing members of their kin group, and for whom they would leave doors open at night. More widely, however, chapters by Regina Poertner, Kim Price, Geoff Monks, Maria Cannon and Iain Riddell all deal centrally or tangentially with the issue of how kinship networks (fictive, legal and biological) were reconfigured at death and remarriage. These authors collectively portray the emergence of intricate new networks of biological kin, legal kin, stepchildren and parents and the reinvention of fictive kinship as families evolved

after the death of a household head or his wife. In effect, such events, increasingly common in the nineteenth century, shook up the kinship of many hundreds of people in a single sweep, pointing forcefully to the need for a more expansive and systemic approach to British kinship patterns.

The Meaning of Family and Kinship

This focus on the making and remaking or blending of families at death and remarriage draws attention to a further area in need of new research. Thus, although we can know through kinship collation, censuses and record linkage something of the notional constellation of potential kinship networks and co-residential family structures, the meaning of those connections was in significant part created by those on the inside. Once again, it is easy to assume that these meanings were so situational as to defy easy generalisation. There is much to recommend this point of view. In our own volume, for instance, Regina Poertner observes that the presence or absence of an active entail could shape fundamentally relationships between the incumbents of landed estates, their wives and their heirs. More widely, diaries, autobiographies and letters are replete with long-standing personal enmities among family and kinship groups on the one hand and deep and lasting friendships on the other. Fictive kinship based on, say, a person being a former apprentice might yield lifelong friendship, love and work opportunities, or the status of fictive kin might be curtailed sharply where a former apprentice set up business in competition with his old master. Servants who remained in the memory for some years after they left a domestic situation might then pass out of memory, or they might return to that memory and find old relationships rekindled when they wrote a begging letter in old age or sickness. Former in-laws might be swiftly forgotten when a marriage broke up and a remarriage took place, or they might be incorporated into a new configuration of kinship with love and long-term affection. Absent kin who were tied into an ongoing epistolary relationship with family members were much more likely to be regarded as 'real' than where they passed out of write either at home or abroad, something that explains the correspondence and diary keeping traced by Geoff Monks and Carol Beardmore in their chapters for this volume.

Yet there are also regularities. In the wider literature and in some of the chapters of our own contributors, fathers stood as the emblematic

centre of family, home, household and kinship group. Historians have argued that their position was not just symbolic as they were invested with considerable power and authority.[34] Fathers were also often constructed as loving caring men, particularly in the Victorian period. Two of our authors—Regina Poertner and Kathleen McIlvenna—explore how family men sought to bring long-term security and stability to their family and kinship groups, while Kim Price investigates the problems that might arise through the death of a young professional man who had yet to make suitable provision for his children. More widely, it is clear that families worked hard to maintain their kinship links across time and space. Processes such as 'chain migration' are evidence in themselves of these contacts. David Cressy using the letters written between those at home and emigrant family members reveals the operation of this kinship system in practice. He argues that phrases such as 'Your loving and dutiful niece', 'all our family' and 'prayers from your loving kinsmen' illustrate emblematically that claims of kinship and family extended well beyond that of the perceived co-residential nuclear family.[35] Most of our contributors provide direct evidence to support this viewpoint, uncovering the ways that individuals made families and kinship connections have a meaning. We see this most sharply played out in chapters by Cara Dobbing and Steven Taylor—on pauper lunatics and charitable child welfare societies respectively—where we learn that families did not simply abandon their relatives to institutions but sought to maintain contact and continued to try and evidence and institute affective family relations even when there were no good reasons that they should.

These regularities are important and it is no accident that most of our contributors highlight the need for more systematic study of how the meaning of family and kinship was created. Indeed, this issue—in effect how family connectivity was defined from within and thus how the family was 'lived'—is a leitmotif of the volume and was the most important core issue when we approached potential contributors. As Davidoff and others have forcefully noted, family and kinship groups (fictive and biological) were composed simultaneously by those inside and those who might come in from the outside.[36] But as many of our contributors show, these connections were lived in complex ways and it is only through an analysis of the living of them that we can truly understand the meaning—as opposed to simply the composing—of British family

life. Grappling with this issue in a way that has already proceeded considerably in the Continental literature, is an essential next step.[37]

Trends in the Utility of Family and Kinship

Understanding the family as a lived entity is partly tied up with the question of the functionality of individual and collective family and kinship connections. We know from the work of Tadmor that fictive kinship could be a powerful and enduring resource for the parties involved, both in terms of emotional support and a range of practical support such as loans or employment opportunities. Wider analysis of middling families from their ego documents confirms that biological and legal kinship could be, but was not always, a similar resource.[38] Much of the family history research on this question has concentrated on the middling and higher families purely because it is these groups who have left the most records. Yet the historiography on how kinship formed—or failed to form—an emotional and practical resource for middling or white-collar families in particular remains relatively superficial. This is not because the sources for a systematic analysis are lacking. Kathleen McIlvenna's contribution to this volume, for instance, uses pension records and correspondence relating to Post Office employees to show that family and kinship was a vital practical resource for postal workers, one that ensured the smooth operation of the postal system as it expanded exponentially in the late nineteenth century. At what might be styled the other end of the source spectrum Carol Beardmore uses the intimate and extensive diaries of the Derbyshire General Practitioner Edward Wrench to dissect the central importance of 'family' to the career of a professional man. In an age when little could be done to cure almost any serious illness it was the outward characteristics that mattered, including family. Although on the surface Wrench's wife appears to mainly make social calls she was in actual fact garnering patients, ensuring smooth relations with actual and potential patients and of course consultations frequently happened in her own domestic setting. More widely, Wrench provided active support to other kin members, both as an affective or symbolic act and as part of his duty as a prosperous professional man. Thus, a census return for the Wrench family in 1871 would simply record the presence of his two nieces and a governess. On

its own, this single entry fails to tell the story of the kinship links that the nieces' retained with their parents or the affection felt for by Edward Wrench while they remained in his care.

In short, the sources exist for a fundamental study of the functionality of family and kinship for middling and white-collar families. Indeed, many of our contributors are themselves setting out to undertake this systematic work. There is also a need, however, to ask similar questions about the labouring and dependent poor across the period covered by this volume. On this matter, the literature is both thin and contradictory. Hindle, for instance, has argued that kin became less important in the survival strategies of the poor, often replaced by neighbours.[39] Such views sit well with the nuclear hardship hypothesis outlined at the start of this chapter. On the other hand, Steven King's work on pauper letters demonstrates that not only were the poor enmeshed in dense and deep kinship networks, but those networks were fundamental to the everyday existence of poor people.[40] These polarised viewpoints can also be seen for the nineteenth century, where historians have yet to focus on the resources provided by kinship networks as one part of the explanation for the conundrum that we have extensive evidence of weak and weakening family economies at the same time as the numbers of those receiving poor relief under the New Poor Law was stable or falling. In our volume, Cara Dobbing's analysis of pauper admission to the Garlands Asylum provides a particular lens for the question of the utility of family and kinship for the poor. For the majority of those admitted, she establishes that the first line of care was always kin. It was only when these familial links were stretched to breaking point that admission to the asylum might be sought. Not only were the family instrumental in having their relatives committed but they also played an integral part in discharge. Improving literacy and the penny post allowed poor people like this to maintain their emotional connections even when a family member was in care. In a similar way to the position of emigrants writing home, corresponding with 'lunatic' relatives provided a sense of identity and a link to significant individuals with whom there were memories of a long and shared past. A link to a home place is both a physical linkage and endows such connectivity with significant and sustaining emotions.[41] The use of these sources adds a new voice to ideas of family interconnectivity and the importance of kinship networks and emotional commitment in the treatment of the mentally ill, but also reveals something more widely about the functionality of kinship to the very poorest elements of society.

Chapter Structure

The British family history literature is both rich and diverse. Yet while we have moved on fundamentally from the texts that shaped the field in the 1960s and 1970s, many of them viewing families through the lens of pre- and post-1801 censuses, our Introduction has argued that much remains to be done. The chapters commissioned for this volume take up some of these challenges. Collectively, they juxtapose familiar sources (diaries, letters, court records) with new or under-used ones such as entails, memorials, superannuation records or the case notes from the Waifs and Strays Society as used by Steven Taylor. They explore and carry forward methods drawn from traditional approaches to family history (detailed analysis of individual diaries, for instance) and suggest new methods such as Iain Riddell's kinship collation. Starting from the perspective that family relationships and structures were confected, understood and given meaning by those who lived them, our chapters point in essence to family fluidity and flexibility as a leitmotif. The nuclear family and its meaning, so much at the centre of early perceptions of the British and particularly English family, have little place here. Rather families and kinship groups were, and were meant to be, organic, porous and capable of endless reconstruction.

Chapter 2 sees Regina Poertner exploring family fortune, marriage, inheritance and economic challenges in Scotland c.1660–1800. The Scottish family has attracted much less research attention than England, Ireland or Wales. Poertner's study explores the uses of law and litigation to negotiate the economic challenges which elite families faced in the period from the Restoration to the end of the eighteenth century. Overall this chapter explores how family identity and fortunes were shaped and forged through interaction with the state, law and religion. Chapter 3 by Kim Price undertakes a study of professional families and explores the relationships within this group through the lens of the impact of death on the shape and future of the family unit. Professional kinship groups grew out of a somewhat shapeless and unstructured 'middling sort' from the mid-eighteenth century onwards and Price has used an innovative methodology which melds together case studies, prosopography and qualitative data analysis. He argues that the structural transformations occasioned by death were wide-ranging but also anticipated. Chapter 4 by Kathleen McIlvenna concludes the first part of our volume, and explores the economics of the family. She turns her

attention to Post Office worker and Civil Service pensions. Post Office workers quickly became part of a much wider discussion surrounding welfare provisions through burgeoning superannuation schemes. Post Office employees were, however, expected to make provision, much like the professionals in Chapter 3, through private insurance. By focussing on the Post Office, it is possible to examine the family dynamics of a large and complex workforce and to employ sources rarely used in the study of family history.

Chapter 5 by Geoff Monks starts off the second part of this volume and explores family processes through the lens of the Packe family. Although there is a considerable literature exploring the relationships of mothers to their offspring, there is much less concerning that between stepmothers and adult stepchildren. Elinor Packe, in her role of stepmother, was the lynchpin of a widely dispersed family. She acted as the repository of family memories and dissemination point for family news on an almost daily basis through her correspondence. Carol Beardmore, in Chapter 6, moves back to the professional families first encountered in Chapter 3 and uses the diaries of Edward Wrench, General Practitioner in Baslow. New transport and communication links had the potential to spread families far and wide and for a busy doctor balancing both work and family could be problematic. Beardmore thus takes up several key aspects of the Victorian family including the relationship between work and the nature of the family, the construction of fatherhood in the professional family and the quality of family relationships at different career stages of the main breadwinner. Chapter 7 by Cara Dobbing moves to the north of England and the Garlands Lunatic Asylum. Here Dobbing argues the family must be understood as a process rather than a fixed entity. The first port of call for the care of lunatic relatives among the poor was always the family. When the behaviour of such relatives deteriorated or family circumstances changed, kin reluctantly committed their relatives to asylums, which in themselves were by the late nineteenth century attempting to recreate a family-like environment. A sojourn in an asylum did not, however, mean that families abandoned their relatives from memory, or that residence in an institution would be permanent. In fact, families went to considerable lengths to maintain contact and offer emotional support. Some of these themes are taken up by Steve Taylor in Chapter 8. He examines how ideas of the perfect family developed in the late nineteenth century and how philanthropic institutions involved in the rescue of vulnerable children sought to impose these essentially

middle-class models. This situation was not uncontested, and Taylor shows persuasively that poor families often tried to assert their moral and emotional claims to children.

The final part of the book begins with Chapter 9 by Maria Cannon, which focuses on reconstituting the family. She draws together theoretical approaches to the family and emotions as cultural concepts and explores how they were manifested in reality. The blended families which are the focus of this chapter were formed of mixed ages, genders and social ranks who did not always share blood ties but in the early modern period were regarded by society as part of the same family network. The chapter explores important central themes of this volume including the fluidity of family forms and the porosity of family boundaries. Iain Riddell in Chapter 10 reconstitutes a century's worth of bureaucratic records for two Aberdeenshire families using the new technique of kinship collation. He argues that is it possible to explore the varied interactions and interpretations of family, household and kinship as experienced by multiple egos, reconstructing kinship networks as they were perceived by those involved in them rather than as demographic historians would wish to see them. We conclude with Steven King in Chapter 11. He uses the under-researched medium of written memorials of the nineteenth century to investigate how families configured and reconfigured. Memorials are not autobiographies but contain personal reflections and histories which provide a more generic history of place, county, and family. They were published by people across the social scale and in that sense give a unique perspective on the family and create a platform from which to explore two of the central themes of this volume, family form and fluidity.

Notes

1. P. Laslett (1972) 'Mean Household Size in England Since the 16th Century', in P. Laslett and R. Wall (eds.) *Household and Family in Past Times: Comparative Studies in the Size and Structure of the Domestic Group Over the Last Three Centuries in England, France, Serbia, Japan and Colonial North America* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pp. 125–158; P. Laslett (1965) *The World We Have Lost* (London: Methuen). See also the rendering of this work in L. Davidoff, M. Doolittle, J. Fink, and K. Holden (1999) *The Family Story: Blood, Contract and Intimacy, 1830–1960* (London: Longman), p. 32.

2. Davidoff, Doolittle, Fink, and Holden, *The Family Story*, p. 37. For European context see contributions to P. Laslett and R. Wall (eds.) (1972) *Household and Family in Past Times: Comparative Studies in the Size and Structure of the Domestic Group Over the Last Three Centuries in England, France, Serbia, Japan and Colonial North America* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), and for more recent context see D. Kertzer and M. Barbagli (eds.) (2002) *Family Life in the Long Nineteenth Century 1789–1913* (New Haven: Yale University Press).
3. See R. Wall (1972) 'Mean Household Size in England from Printed Sources', in Laslett and Wall (eds.) *Household and Family*, pp. 159–204.
4. R. Wall (1987) 'Leaving Home and the Process of Household Formation in Preindustrial England', *Continuity and Change*, 2:1, pp. 77–101; R. Wall (1999) 'Beyond the Household: Marriage, Household Formation and the Role of Kin and Neighbours', *International Review of Social History*, 44, pp. 55–67. For the classic European comparison see H. J. Hajnal (1965) 'European Marriage Patterns in Perspective', in D. Glass and D. Eversley (eds.) *Population in History: Essays in Historical Demography* (Chicago: Aldine Publishing), pp. 101–143; H. J. Hajnal (1982) 'Two Kinds of Pre-industrial Household Formation System', *Population and Development Review*, 8, pp. 449–494.
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11. For a rendering of this criticism see L. Davidoff (2012) *Thicker Than Water: Siblings and Their Relations, 1780–1920* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), p. 22.

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15. See, for example, L. Davidoff and C. Hall (1987) *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class 1780–1850* (London and New York: Routledge); Davidoff, *Thicker Than Water*.
16. R. Probert (2014) 'Introduction', in R. Probert (ed.) *Cohabitation and Non-marital Births in England and Wales, 1600–2012* (Basingstoke: Palgrave), pp. 1–10.
17. S. A. King (2010) 'Forme et Function de la Parenté chez les Populations Pauvres d'Angleterre, 1780–1840', *Annales*, 65, pp. 1147–1174.
18. See D. Gerber (2016) 'Moving Backward and Moving On: Nostalgia, Significant Others, and Social Reintegration in Nineteenth-Century British Immigrant Personal Correspondence', *History of the Family*, 21:3, pp. 291–314.
19. See, for instance, L. Schweber (2006) *Disciplining Statistics: Demography and Vital Statistics in France and England, 1830–1885* (London: Duke University Press).
20. Tadmor, 'Early Modern English Kinship', p. 24.
21. Tadmor, *Family and Friends.*
22. Davidoff, *Thicker Than Water*, p. 22.
23. R. Wall (1986) 'Work, Welfare and the Family: An Illustration of the Adaptive Family Economy', in L. Bonfield, R. Smith, and K. Wrightson (eds.) *The World We Have Gained: Histories of Population and Social Structure* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell), pp. 261–294; S. King (2019) *Writing the Lives of the English Poor 1750–1830s* (Toronto: McGill-Queens University Press), pp. 75–81.
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27. Tadmor, 'Early Modern English Kinship', p. 19.
28. W. Coster (2002) *Baptism and Spiritual Kinship in Early Modern England* (Aldershot: Ashgate); W. Coster (1995) '"To Bring Them Up in the Fear of God": Guardianship in the Diocese of York, 1500–1668', *Continuity and Change*, 10:1, pp. 9–32.
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32. Davidoff, Doolittle, Fink, and Holden, *The Family Story*, p. 33.
33. Much as Iain Riddell also argues in his contribution to this volume. See Davidoff, *Thicker Than Water*, p. 4.
34. See M. Doolittle (2007) 'Fatherhood, Religious Belief and the Protection of Children in Nineteenth-Century English Families', in T. L. Broughton and H. Rogers (eds.) *Gender and Fatherhood in the Nineteenth Century* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan), p. 31.
35. D. Cressy (1986) 'Kinship and Kin Interaction in Early Modern England', *Past and Present,* 113:1, p. 46.
36. Davidoff, *Thicker Than Water*, pp. 14–16.
37. See, for instance, contributions to C. Johnston and D. Sabean (eds.) (2011) *Sibling Relations and the Transformations of European Kinship: 1300–1900* (Oxford: Berghahn); J. Coy (ed.) (2015) *Kinship, Community, and Self: Essays in Honor of David Warren Sabean* (Oxford: Berghahn).
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40. King, *Writing the Lives*, pp. 235–269.
41. See D. A. Gerber (2006) *Authors of Their Lives the Personal Correspondence of British Immigrants to North America in the Nineteenth Century* (New York: New York University Press).

PART I

Economies of the Family

CHAPTER 2

Family Fortunes: Marriage, Inheritance and Economic Challenges in Scotland *c.*1660–1800

Regina Poertner

Overview

As the editors suggest in their introduction to this volume, historians of British family life are particularly fortunate in being able to build on a wealth of disciplinary and interdisciplinary studies exploring the social, economic, cultural and emotional dimensions of the subject since the early modern period.[1] It is now clear that even if Peter Laslett was right and that most British families (as opposed to households) were small and simple compared to their Continental counterparts, such families were usually enmeshed in a rich and complex web of obligation, dispute, contract and affection.[2] We now have a keener sense of the way that key actors such as siblings could play a role in binding families together, and also of the tensions that family breakup and the re-formation (through remarriage) could generate.[3] Yet, significant gaps still remain. The Scottish family has attracted relatively light historiographical attention compared to its English, Welsh and Irish counterparts.[4]

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An early tendency to view Scottish family and kinship structures primarily through the lens of clanship still has traction in the modern literature.[5] Above all, historians of the modern period still have much work to do in order to understand the quality of family relationships as opposed to just their form and extent. Social scientists exploring the mechanisms that underlie family support and inform a nuanced sense of obligation within complex family and kinship networks have long made this point.[6] Naomi Tadmor too has drawn attention to the sense that emotional, contractual and friendship connections could be as important as blood ties in creating lasting bonds of kin-like obligation and attachment.[7]

In this context, the current chapter aims to contribute to the interdisciplinary discourse in family studies by inquiring into the uses of the law and litigation for negotiating the political, social and economic challenges confronting families of the landed elites in Scotland, from the Restoration of the Stuart Monarchy to the end of the eighteenth century. The second half of the eighteenth century was a period of both promise and challenge for Scotland and its patriotic leaders, one that was shaped almost inexorably in every respect by responses to the Act of Union of 1707. As the first section below will demonstrate, the use of specific restrictive legal devices to regulate property succession in Scotland and on the continent supports the view of Scotland's enlightened lawyers, philosophers, and political economists, that their country's landed elite and economic and legal framework shared 'feudal' traits with its Continental counterparts. The second section of the chapter will explain how public finance and private fortunes in Scotland became intertwined in the period *c*.1760–1800. As will be shown, this was a period of overall economic growth, but also of significant economic challenges arising from the balance of payment crisis in Scotland in 1762, a banking crisis in 1772, and the impact of war on taxation and credit, all of which affected private fortunes alongside testing the capacity of the British fiscal-military state.[8]

The main part of the chapter, however, will evaluate the evidence for disputed inheritance cases relating to family entails that were dealt with by the Court of Session, as well as appeals to the House of Lords, and private acts of parliament.[9] The guiding questions for evaluating these sources relate to the nature of the contentious issues, the outcomes sought and achieved, and the attitude of the courts. This study will further explore whether judges and parliament adopted a consistent attitude or policy towards strict entails, and if so, if there is any evidence of

change over the period under consideration. The conclusions will seek to draw a balance regarding the overall effectiveness of Scottish noble families' efforts at negotiating the legal, economic, and political challenges they confronted primarily in the eighteenth century.

Inheritance Laws and Family Property: Fideicommissa, Entails and the Enlightened Attack on 'feudalism'

On 2 March 1779, the clerk of the Court of Session in Edinburgh recorded the verdict in a case of disputed inheritance in favour of the plaintiff, John Leslie of Balquhain, against David Orme, a writer from Edinburgh acting as legal representative of the contending branch of the Leslie family. The underlying dispute was a long-standing one, having generated a previous lawsuit in 1746, and concerned the succession of the estate of Inch. These lands were part of one of two family entails, created in 1679 and 1700, respectively.[10] Entails as part of strict marriage settlements in England,[11] and perpetuities, or 'tailzies' for family estates in Scotland, were the British equivalent of the Roman law institute of fideicommissum. They were, in essence, a mode of passing on landed property undivided to a named person and succession of heirs as determined by the instrument of fideicommissum or entail. Succession would normally be in primogeniture, so the title and estate would go to the eldest son. However, in exceptional cases the testator or creator of the instrument might specify a different male heir. Scottish perpetuities were protected by legal clauses—'irritant' and 'resolutive'—against mortgaging and alienation by the heir in possession. The sale, mortgaging, or any long-term lease of land amounting to de facto alienation were prohibited by these clauses; contravention would result in the heir in possession forfeiting his right to the estate. Commitments entered into against these clauses were invalid at law. To protect prospective buyers or creditors from fraud, a—retrospective and prospective—duty of registration of entails was introduced by statute in Scotland in 1685. Scottish heirs of entailed estates, like their English and Continental counterparts, thus became effectively trustees, managing and preserving the family estate for future generations. The scope for investment, or, per contrast, dissipation, by an heir in possession was limited to the disposable income drawn from the estate, and any other mobile or transferable assets.[12] Entails and their Continental counterparts were thus designed to protect

the landed property of noble families as far as possible against the hazards of war, economic crises, mortality, and dissipation by spendthrift and reckless heirs.[13] Clearly, then, entails, either in their operation or when contested, could have had an important impact on the quality and constellation of family relations for Scottish landed families, much as we might have inferred from the Leslie family example that opened this section. It is thus surprising that the practice and its particular impact on families has attracted so little attention.

A full discussion of the historical and technical differences between entails in England, Scotland and on the Continent, is beyond the scope of this chapter. However, it is important for the argument of this study to note that English Law, unlike Roman Law—influenced Scottish and Continental counterparts, provided a legal device, other than obtaining a private act of parliament, for consensually barring an entail by a collusive suit of 'fine and recovery', or common recovery. This was a fictitious suit between the heir in possession and his son or heir presumptive.[14] There is no evidence to suggest that the availability of this device in England undermined in practice the purpose of the institute of strict settlements and entails. The point is that this device existed, alongside the more costly but less complex recourse to parliament, which can arguably be seen as indicative of the greater capacity of English Common Law over Roman and Scots Law to provide solutions to the needs of the nobility. On the Continent, fideicommissa could be at odds with customary inheritance law and legal practices, notably partible inheritance which was widespread.[15] The fideicommissum, if not otherwise agreed on marriage, would extend to dowries, and imply or state explicitly the exclusion of spouses and female issue as direct heirs. Instead, female relatives would depend on specific provisions being made, such as widows' portions, annuities, and similar income set aside for their support by the testator. Fideicommissa had a long tradition in Spain, and specifically in medieval Castile, from where the practice spread and became popular in other parts of Europe, notably in Southern and Western Europe and in the Holy Roman Empire, in the course of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. They were less enthusiastically embraced by the nobility of Scandinavia, and in Eastern Europe and Tsarist Russia, where resistance to bypassing customary laws of partible inheritance in favour of the eldest son was strongest.[16] Given their, to some extent, arbitrary and discriminatory nature, fideicommissa were arguably intrinsically divisive, and their growing popularity from the sixteenth century corresponded

to an ever-increasing volume of litigation. This fact did not escape the attention of enlightened critics like the Italian priest, historian, and lawyer Lodovico Antonio Muratori (1652–1750).[17] In his programmatically named 'Treatise of the shortcomings of jurisprudence' of 1742, he chastised the fad for fideicommissa that had gripped the nobility in his time. While Muratori conceded their usefulness in principle for maintaining the wealth and splendour of noble families, he was emphatic that these benefits were gravely diminished by the constraints they put on the heir in possession, and the damage fideicommissa caused to excluded relatives, notably sisters and daughters. He scoffed at the human hubris ("superbia") that was at the root of perpetual entails, whose intended indefinite duration was in practice cut short by the ruses of lawyers, and the whims of princes. Muratori's treatise was published in Venice, and his arguably most effective criticism concerned the economic hazards the widespread adoption of fideicommissa throughout Italy posed to the fiscal and commercial transactions of republics.[18]

By the mid-eighteenth century, Continental fideicommissa and Scottish entails had become the subject of an extensive literature beyond and outside academic disputations and learned treatises. In Scotland,[19] the opinions expressed were divided—unevenly, in favour of the conservatives—between supporters, notably from the legal profession, who defended the institute as an essential part of the economic and legal foundations on which the nobility's prestige and prosperity rested, and enlightened critics, notably lawyers, political economists and philosophers from Edinburgh's circle of 'literati'. Foremost among them were Henry Home, Lord Kames, Sir John Dalrymple and the much more radical John Swinton.[20] They were supported by the Lord Chief Justice, William Murray, Lord Mansfield and a small number of the Scottish nobility, as well as Scottish MPs, most notable among them John Oswald of Dunnikier, who seconded their efforts by lobbying for reform in parliament. The critics' arguments focused on the constraints that entails and their prohibitive clauses imposed on the private credit of heirs of entail, and the disincentives they presented to long-term investment in agricultural improvement and industrial ventures. Like clerical mortmain, entails permanently removed land from circulation, and contributed to the concentration of landed property in Scotland. The impact of entails on the nature and quality of family relations, the position of women who brought resources to a marriage and the problems with entails occasioned by remarriage figures lightly if at all in these deliberations.

To the enlightened lawyers and writers who pressed for a reform of entails in the mid-eighteenth century, the Act of 1685 represented a flagrant assault on Scotland's political liberty, and a deliberate attempt by the crown and Scottish parliament to shackle its population, from the aristocracy to the lower orders, forever to a backward feudal social and economic order. John Swinton, for example, urged his readers to consider the political context of the entail statute of 1685 so as to gauge its intention. As he argued, the statute formed an important part of the repressive legislation enacted by the Scottish parliament in 1685, e.g. the law that made merely concealing a request for support from a forfeited person treason, even if such support were not granted. Likewise that in trials for high treason, 'judicial confessions, th' not made in presence of the assize, should yet be legal evidence to the assize', which was 'a direct repeal of the Act of 1589, a magna charta of our liberties in Scotland!' Swinton further cited the Test Act of 1681, and the 1685 Act for Preserving Game, for the benefit of proprietors of large estates of at least £1000 Scots value per annum, as evidence which 'manifests, that the intention was, to reduce despotism to a system, by extending it from rank to rank in a regular subordination'. The Stuarts' entail legislation, he pointedly concluded, belonged to the same stable. For Scottish patriots like Swinton, strict entails epitomised the tyrannical suppression of Scottish liberty: 'Perpetuities, therefore, deserve no sort of favour in any respect, and it is worthy of the enlarged and liberal sentiments of these times, to abolish them by an express Law. We owe it to ourselves, to our families, to commerce, and to public liberty'.[21] Swinton's treatise forms part of an extensive debate in which supporters and opponents based their case on substantially contrasting views of Scotland's future in the Union.[22] A grass roots campaign that started in 1749 culminated in 1765, when the Scottish Faculty of Advocates prepared a proposal for an entail reform bill. However, the Montgomery Act in 1770 was, as the fruit of these efforts, something that fell far short of radical reform. In practice, it made some limited concessions only for the purpose of facilitating the more efficient management of entailed estates.[23] The defenders of the status quo in Scotland thus maintained the upper hand until the mid-nineteenth-century Liberal reforms. Britain's landed proprietors demonstrated their resilience, as well as their determination to hone rather than abolish legal devices on which families' material and immaterial fortunes were perceived to rest and which, at least in theory,

predictably shaped the nature and constellation of family relations across the generations.

Public Finances and Family Fortunes

Reforming writers and activists were not, of course, motivated simply by broad philosophical considerations. Rather, in particular from the 1760s, their activities both reflected and embodied the entanglement of public finances and private fortunes in Scotland. The second half of the eighteenth century thus witnessed an extensive public debate on the national debt.[24] In 1768, Thomas Mortimer (1730–1810), for example, published a bulky treatise which he programmatically entitled 'The National Debt No National Grievance, or The real State of the Nation'.[25] Mortimer had been the English vice-consul to the Austrian Netherlands since 1762, but was abruptly dismissed from government service in 1768. In the preface to his book, Mortimer blamed the machinations of personal enemies for his fall, and his outspoken support for John Wilkes, whom he knew personally.[26] Following his dismissal from the crown's service, he became a prolific writer on a range of economic and financial topics of national importance. The treatise on national debt contributed to an extensive contemporary debate about fiscal policy, and more specifically about taxation and the consolidation and reduction of Britain's war-induced national debt. This debate was triggered by the financial fallout from the Seven Years' War and grew in intensity as Britain's war expenditure spiralled over the following decades. The desperate fiscal measures of Pitt the Younger's government in the Napoleonic wars and its legacy of dizzyingly high debts made this an issue of unprecedented urgency. Doom-laden predictions of national disaster and proposals for fiscal miracle-cures abounded, and the public loss of trust in the government and its fiscal policy to achieve equilibrium and political stability is eloquently captured by the notorious and best-selling satirical drawings of James Gillray.[27]

Writing during the early stage of the debate, Thomas Mortimer felt it was his patriotic duty to challenge the prevalent pessimistic view of public finance. A lengthy section of his book is dedicated to a favourable account of Britain's fiscal prowess, and by implication Pitt the Elder's achievement, as compared to its main Continental rivals'. Mortimer argued that, in principle, the British state's capacity for increasing the national debt in a sustainable fashion was unlimited. It was in fact the

level of private debts and underlying patterns of consumption and investment which posed a major threat to public credit, considering 'that all ranks of people are living greatly beyond their incomes, and that posterity stands a foul chance of being impoverished by this prevailing error'. To address this issue, Mortimer proposed an elaborate lending scheme by which private households were encouraged to invest part of their income for twenty-one years into annuities for their children.[28] The details of this scheme need not concern us here, but it is worthy of note that Mortimer's proposals formed part of a much broader and complex economic discourse about regulating or liberating markets, sustainable versus unsustainable debts, and their respective impact on a nation's prosperity and political stability. The definition of the role of government and legislation with regard to both public and private interests was pivotal to these debates.[29]

The development of Scottish banking formed an important feature of this overall picture of Britain's economic transformation in this period. More specifically, it was a crucial factor in enabling Scotland's backward and disadvantaged economy to catch up with, and in some respects overtake, its powerful southern rival.[30] As the Bank of Scotland, created in 1695, remained weak for much of the eighteenth century, there was room and demand for more credit institutions as the volume of Scotland's commercial and financial transactions increased.[31] Two further chartered banks were created in the shape of the Royal Bank of Scotland in 1727 (by holders of Equivalent debentures, so as a direct outcome of the Union), and the British Linen Company in 1746, whose business was limited to supporting the linen trade until the 1760s. In the absence of legislation regulating the sector, further private banks sprang into existence to cater to the needs of merchants in Glasgow, Aberdeen and Dundee. These included note-issuing banks that focused on smaller loans, and non-issuing banks dealing with bills of exchange to commodity trade, resulting in a brief banking war between the chartered banks in Edinburgh and the interlopers in Glasgow. The outcome of this conflict was the Banking Act of 1765 (discussed below), which abolished optional clauses that allowed banks deferral of payment for up to six months and prohibited the issuing of notes of less than twenty shillings, thus ending the deluge of notes for less than one pound. Banks who held the right to issue notes retained this.[32]

In spite of its overall progress, the Scottish economy confronted some significant challenges in the decade 1762–1772. The effect of these

difficulties was to limit, at least in the short term, the availability of ready money for credit and investment. In particular, war taxation caused a drain of funds from Scotland to London. In the immediate aftermath of the Seven Years' War, speculation in London caused the repatriation of English capital from Scotland. As early as 1762, the Scottish economy suffered from the combined effects of rising prices, an adverse exchange with London, and an acute shortage of specie. A flood of paper money was put on the market by the private banks until the Banking Act of 1765 prohibited the worst excesses, as suggested above. For the rest of the 1760s, the problem remained that Scotland's banking and credit facilities did not keep up with the growing credit demand of entrepreneurs and agrarian improvers. To remedy this defect, the Ayr Bank was set up in 1769 for the express purpose of supplying finance to landed proprietors. Two of Scotland's wealthiest landowners, the Dukes of Queensberry and Buccleuch, took a leading part in the launching of this enterprise. However, after initial successes, the Bank's policy of raising money by a chain of bills on London was to bring about its failure within three years of its foundation when their main English partner, the banking house of Neale, James, Fordyce and Downe, collapsed in 1772.[33]

It was against this background of heated economic activity and vigorous public debate on credit that an attempt was made to modernise Scotland's laws governing entailed landed property. This is significant because of the Scottish banks' lending policy, which relied heavily on personal and heritable bonds. These were long-term loans, which were usually granted to substantial landowners. They were secured either by pledges of real property, for heritable bonds, or by the signature of the borrower and two or more co-obligants (personal bonds).[34] The potential limiting effect of entails for such transactions is obvious, and the timing of the reform initiative was arguably not coincidental. In 1765, the Faculty of Advocates in Edinburgh, under the leadership of their ambitious recently appointed Dean, Alexander Lockhart, took the initiative in lobbying parliament for the reform of entails. The arguments marshalled in support of change tied in with contemporary enlightened discourse on political economy, and, as Muratori's attack on Italian fideicommissa in 1742 illustrates, there was some common ground, or shared concerns, that were voiced in the Continental literature on the subject. As previously mentioned, the proponents of entail reform or abolition argued that strict entails were a hindrance to investment and economic progress for a number of reasons: for example, by encouraging

short-term exploitation of property on behalf of the present proprietor rather than investment with the prospect of long-term increases in productivity which would benefit later generations. Depending on the terms of the entail, these might not even be the direct offspring of the proprietor. Secondly, the land was put out of commerce, and was unavailable as a credit security, because of prohibitive clauses against mortgaging and sale. Finally, the injunction against mortgaging put constraints on the landed classes' personal credit for investment and consumption, and thus had an adverse effect on domestic industries and agrarian improvement.

Enlightened critics pursued their agenda of liberating Scotland from the fetters of its feudal past. The national 'good', the creation and maintenance of a national family as it were, overtook and substituted for the interests and concerns of individual landed families in this critique of the law. This—and the existence and longevity of entails in the first place—is an important observation for a volume in which most contributors focus on the freedoms of individual families to constitute and reconstitute themselves and who implicitly or explicitly separate the issues of family form and function from the (constraining or enabling) power of the State. Yet, entails also involved the negotiation of manifold practical consequences by Scotland's landed families, the handling of which provides important insights into the quality and nature of landed family relations in the country. It is to this issue that the final section turns.

Negotiating Family Interests: Litigation in the Court of Session, Appeals to the House of Lords, and Private Statutes, *c.*1660–1800

Scottish legislation regarding entails prior to the Montgomery Act of 1770 (see above) arguably derived its first impetus from the Restoration settlement's laws relating to the estates of the politically compromised nobility. On 9 September 1662, the Scottish parliament registered an Act of Indemnity and Oblivion for crimes committed between the outbreak of the civil war in 1637, and 1 September 1662. In substance, the Scottish Act was modelled closely on the legislation for England in 1660. Special clauses dealt with the aiders and abetters of the regicide, including those who had supplied financial support. The Act excluded all persons declared forfeited of fugitives in the present parliament, or by the Committee of Estates since August 1660. In particular, it upheld the

decrees of forfeiture against Archibald Campbell, late Marquis of Argyle, Archibald Johnston of Wariston, John Swinton of Swinton, James Guthrie, William Govan, John Home, William Dundas, James Campbell of Ardkinglas and James Campbell of Orinsay.[35] A separate Act temporarily excluded from the pardon a group of further named persons, pending payment of heavy fines. Building on this Restoration legislation, but arguably implicitly reinforcing Scotland's feudal social order, a further Act was passed in 1674 that stated the legal liability of heritors of landed property and masters for their tenants and servants. From 1677, compliance was enforced by bonds.[36]

As we saw above, the increasing popularity of fideicommissa in parts of Europe from the sixteenth century, and in the second half of the seventeenth century in Britain and Central Europe, reflects a shared concern of monarchical governments and nobility for securing social and economic stability and prosperity for the landed elites in the face of natural and political hazards. The ambivalence of the resulting compromise is well illustrated by the Scottish Statute of 1685, *c.*22, that regulated in detail the terms for the creation and registration of legally valid entails: Firstly, and above all, the statute sanctioned the practice of creating entails, whose compatibility with Common Law had previously been doubtful with regard to its disadvantageous implications regarding rights of heirs-at-law and other third parties. The Act decreed the form for instruments of entail, which had to include prohibitory clauses whose specific details would be defined by the entailer, but which had to include the prohibition of the sale, mortgaging, or encumbering with debts, and the alteration of the line of succession. Secondly, there had to be 'irritant' and 'resolutive' clauses, whose purpose was to make the prohibitory clauses operative. The resolutive clauses, as the name suggests, defined the penalty for contravention of all or any of the prohibitory clauses, which was the heir in possession's forfeiture of his right to the estate. Finally, the 'irritancies' ensured that all deeds granted by the heir in possession that went counter to the prohibitions were null and void.

Obviously, such cast-iron safeguards for families' entailed estates could potentially result in fraudulent financial transactions by heirs in possession, if the landed property was pledged as security. To counter the risk of fraud, and to allay the adverse impact on commercial activities, the statute made the registration of entails in a new Register of Tailzies a binding requirement for their validity at law. Furthermore, prospective creditors of the nobility, or buyers of landed estate, could consult the

register on payment of a small fee, and thereby ascertain the legal status of the property in question.[37] After the Revolution of 1689, this was amplified by a statute of William II and Mary in 1690 'for security of the creditors, vassals, and heirs of entail of persons forfeited'. This decreed that heirs of entails set up in accordance with the regulations of 1685 should be liable for debts contracted by a predecessor who subsequently had forfeited his estates only to the extent that this was compatible with the predecessor's liberty to incur debts, without affecting the prohibitory, resolutive, and irritant clauses.[38] The clause appeared to amount to an extraordinary exemption of the entailed estates of the Scottish nobility from the normal course of law. To avoid such misconstruction, and the fraudulent creation of entails by rebels and traitors, a statute by Queen Anne in the wake of the Union Act clarified 'that all persons convicted or attainted of high treason, or misprision of high treason in Scotland, shall be subject and liable to the same corruption of blood, pains, penalties, and forfeitures, with persons convicted of these crimes in England'.[39] Families of entailed estates and third parties interacting with them had to operate within this legal and political framework, and the evidence from court records suggests they resorted to litigation and appeals to the House of Lords with increasing frequency. The Court of Session records provide evidence for at least 166 cases involving entailed estates for the period 1667–1800. However, the distribution illustrates the increase in volume, as only twenty-three cases fall within the period to the mid-eighteenth century (1667–1749). The majority thus played out against the background of the organised campaign for reform, which began in 1749, and did not end with the limited achievement of the Montgomery Act in 1770.

The nature of the disputed issues predictably ranged widely, but there is a discernible pattern that allows for dividing cases dealt with by the Court of Session in the first instance, into seven thematic groups, three of which represented the predominant sources of conflict. These were: debts, irritancies or prohibitory clauses, and entail registration duty. Further cases arose from fraudulent tailzies and invalid or unreasonable clauses, rights of remote heirs, leases of entailed land (tacks), and finally, disputed eligibility of heirs for religious or political reasons. At least fifty-six of the cases dealt with by the Court of Session between the Act of Union in 1707 and the end of the century were appealed to the House of Lords. While the picture regarding outcomes of appeals is complex, there is evidence that preeminent judges who were actively involved

in the entail reform movement, notably William Murray, Lord Chief Justice Mansfield, used appeal cases to highlight the detrimental effects for Scotland's commerce and the general public, and to openly demand reform.[40] There was also of course the option of obtaining a private statute from parliament to empower the Court of Session to license specific transactions otherwise not permitted by the statute of 1685 and the terms of the entail in question. Between 1727 and the end of the century, members primarily of the Scottish aristocracy successfully petitioned parliament in at least seventy cases. These included requests made by or on behalf of female relatives of heirs of entail. The fact that most of them were obtained in the last three decades of the century may be explicable by the earlier reform movement, and the modest progress achieved by the Montgomery Act.[41] Collectively, these cases provide a detailed picture of the nature of landed family relations for the later eighteenth century in particular.

Of the twenty-three cases concerning disputed debts, two date from the seventeenth century (1667 and 1669)[42] and precede the regulation and clarification provided by the Entail Act of 1685. The Court's response is therefore illuminating of pre-regulation attitudes towards the constraining effect of tailzies: the 1669 case concerned a contested case of alienation of part of the entailed estate of Kilburny to cover the heir in possession's debts. The heirs of the tailzie as plaintiffs challenged the legality of the transaction on two counts: because it contravened the entail's clause prohibiting alienation, and secondly, because the value of the property sold exceeded the debts, so in fact represented a profit for the heir. The Court of Session, however, decided in favour of the proprietor's right of disposal of his property, and rejected a subsequent appeal by the heirs. The verdict asserted, in terms that would have gladdened the heart of later enlightened critics, the right of the heir in possession of disposition over their estate, against a legal device that appeared to challenge the very nature of property and hence constituted a res odiosa: 'It was answered, That this clause de non alienando, being against the nature of property, was odious, and not to be extended, and the faculty not to be restricted further than the defunct's own words and terms'. The latter was a reference to the license the testator had demonstrably given to his daughter for selling or mortgaging a specified portion of the estate to cover any debt. This license was construed as extending to a possible windfall from a sale.[43] In this case, then, an entail had been constructed so as to leave a degree of licence for subsequent generations, a

de facto acknowledgement of the potential impact of tightly drawn directions on family relations.

The Scottish entail act of 1685 changed the situation considerably as it provided a clear legal framework for drafting and validating instruments of entail. The existence of these rules had implications for the nature of subsequent disputes involving entails, and the arguments that could be, and were, adduced: the emphasis was now on proving or disproving conformity with the law, rather than interpreting testators' intentions, and assessing their validity against societal moral values, abstract principles (such as ideas of natural rights relating to property and obligation) and the need to protect familial integrity and relations. This does not mean that court decisions went un-informed by such norms and values, or that there was no connection with the broader philosophical debate on entails in the second half of the eighteenth century, to which lawyers actively contributed. The Court of Session demonstrated continuity in considering restrictive clauses of entails as in principle problematic. This meant that heirs in possession and their relatives who sought relief for needs that transcended the limitations of entails could hope for success if they could prove a formal, technical defect in the instrument of entail, or its registration. Cases like these clearly demanded a fusion of family interests, even if only temporary. On the opposite end of the spectrum, the Court of Session appears to have been less favourable to creditors, who needed to have a cast-iron case to recover debts from entailed estates. A typical verdict illustrating this tendency is the Court of Session's decision in the case of the Creditors of Gordon of Carleton versus Gordon in November 1749: 'it was in general argued for the creditors, that in dubio all such irritancies, when not expressly limited to the contravener himself, extend to his heirs; for which they referred to the statute 1685 as supposing it: But the Court were of a different opinion, as all irritancies are to be strictly interpreted, and as the irritancy expressed in the statute 1685 was statutory'. This case was appealed to the House of Lords, who, however, followed the creditors' argument, thereby making the debts recoverable from the estate of Carleton.[44]

The part women played in the creation and management of entails and in related family disputes is, inevitably, rarely captured by these sources. However, there are glimpses proving women could, and did, play an active part. For example, there was a case relating to an entail created by a woman before 1746. The entailer was Agnes Campbell,

widow after Andrew Anderson, King's Printer.[45] The instrument's clauses against alienation as well as changes to the succession appear to have left room for conflicting interpretation, and the heirs of the tailzie brought a case in 1746 against the substitute, who, as they argued, had acted in contravention of these clauses by selling property. The case is interesting also because the heirs made explicit reference to the common historical origins of Scottish tailzies and their Continental counterparts, stating that both had 'taken their rise from the fidei-commiss(um) in the Roman law, and are to be interpreted according to the principles laid down concerning them'. The effect of this comparison was to emphasise the fiduciary nature of entails and their primary purpose of maintaining heirs, and to diminish the significance of the prohibitory clauses' inadequacy. The Court of Session accepted the point about lack of clarity, but used it to reject the heirs' case, arguing the entail's clauses did not specifically prohibit sales.[46]

If the immediate causes of litigation relate to the economic effects of entails on the living and future generations, they nevertheless bore testimony to the enduring influence of Scotland's past, beyond residual 'feudalism'. Even in the second half of the eighteenth century, the religious and political conflicts and allegiances of the past continued to exert a formative influence on family identity, and the ways in which families tried to negotiate the legacy of history, including their own. Forfeiture arising from participation in open rebellion or clandestine sedition from the Restoration to the repressive post-1745 settlement left its mark on statute law relating to landed property and inheritance, as previously discussed. Yet it is also a recurrent theme in the court records relating to entails. For example, a case in 1750 involving the heirs of Charles Stewart of Ardshiel vs. the Crown revealed that Ardshiel's marriage contract in 1732 stipulated the terms under which he and his male successors would hold the estate. This included a clause by which his heirs should not be affected should he forfeit his estates for treason or other crimes, "but should succeed immediately after such attainder, in the same manner as if the said Charles Stewart were naturally dead." On the occasion of the marriage of his son in 1742, Charles had resigned and instated his son as proprietor. However, the formal infeftment had been completed only in August 1745, by which time Charles had already been attainted for his participation in the rebellion. His son had tried to invoke the clause of the earlier contract to retain the fee of the family estates, a claim that was thrown out as invalid by the lord judges.

Their comments are confirmatory of the widespread practice of this slightly naive ruse. As the Latin dictum stated, nobody could make their will exempt from the law: 'Nothing can be more idle than that clause which is to be met with in every tailzie, that the lands shall not fall under forfeiture in case of the heir's committing treason; a clause, which is a non obstante to the law. - Nemo potest cavere ne leges in testamento locum habeant. Where an heir of tailzie committed treason, by the law of Scotland, he forfeited for his life only; and that was what no precaution by any clause whatever could prevent'.[47]

The fact that religion continued to play a part in shaping family identity and family fortunes in eighteenth century Scotland can also be seen through the lens of entails. The case of the Leslie family with which I started the first section of this chapter, is illustrative: A seventeenth-century member of the family, Walter Leslie (1607–1670), served in the army of the Holy Roman Emperor Ferdinand II during the Thirty Years' War. He struck lucky when he was entrusted, alongside a fellow Scotsman, with the assassination of Generallissimus Albrecht von Wallenstein in 1634, who had lost favour with the Emperor. His lengthy supplication to Ferdinand II for elevation to the rank of Imperial Count, which he was granted in 1636, was supported by a rather fanciful genealogical account of his descent from an eleventh-century Hungarian noblemen, who in 1067 had allegedly gone to Scotland as chamberlain to Princess Margaret, later wife of Malcolm III of Cadmore.[48] His descendant Cajetan, Third Count Leslie (1696–1762) of the German line of the family was an Imperial Councillor and connected to the top tier of the Austrian aristocracy by his marriage to Princess Maria Teresa Josepha of Eggenberg. He was the father of, among other offsprings, Count Anthony Leslie, Nineteenth Baron of Balquhain, who became Fifth Count Leslie of the German line.[49] In 1746, a case arose in the Court of Session between Anthony as next heir in line to the entail created in 1696 on the estate of Inch, and Patrick Leslie Grant of the Scottish side of the family, who challenged Anthony's claim on grounds of nationality (as 'alien'), and on grounds of religion, as the seventeenth-century entailer had been Protestant and had reserved right to change the succession accordingly. The Court of Session followed this argument and settled the case in favour of the plaintiff as the next Protestant heir.[50] The judges' decision thereby acknowledged the enduring legal and political significance of religious allegiances that had been formed in Scotland's 'feudal' past, and continued to influence the lives

of Scottish noble families, during and beyond the Jacobite rebellions and enforced 'settlement'. The fact of the case itself points to the capacity for entails to both generate family conflict but also to be used as a mechanism to play out family conflicts which had arisen (or been continued) for complex other reasons.

Conclusion

The picture that emerges from entail disputes running from the Restoration to the end of the eighteenth century illustrates the needs of Scotland's landed families, and the extent to which these were being met by laws and institutions that were a hybrid of Scotland's feudal past, and its forcible incorporation into consecutive political entities, all of which were dominated from a centre of power located across its southern border. Entails as part of marriage contracts or wills were used on both sides of the border to control family fortunes, creating shared interests, but also potential sources of friction between governments and their courts on the one hand, and heirs of landed estates and their families on the other. As has been demonstrated, Scottish perpetual entails shared some important traits with their Continental counterparts, the Roman Law fideicommissa, and lacked the measure of flexibility Common Law afforded their English counterparts. This gave rise to extensive litigation and calls for reform, supported by pre-eminent members of the legal profession, from the mid-century. Scottish perpetuities were, on balance, both popular and successful as a strategy for preserving family property undivided. Yet disputes point to the fact that there was a considerable social and economic cost to excluded family members, notably female relatives. There were also consequences for heirs-in-possession's personal credit and their scope for investment in commerce and long-term agricultural improvement. Attempts to, as it were, 'bullet-proof' family estates against the consequences of political crimes, such as treason, of heirs in possession, proved pathetically ineffectual. The survival of the entail system despite growing legal challenges and mounting criticism from Scotland's enlightened intelligentsia, patriotic Unionist reformers from the legal profession, and those who sought to subvert the individual identity of Scottish landed families with a model of the national family, is important. Though often latent in court cases, evidence, and decisions, there was a sense in which the entail had become perceived as

a bulwark of Scotland's existing social order, and as an effective protector or family fortunes, both material and immaterial.

Notes

1. See, for example, K. Barclay (2011) *Love, Intimacy and Power. Marriage and Patriarchy in Scotland, 1650–1850* (Manchester: Manchester University Press); L. Davidoff and C. Hall (1987) *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class 1780–1850* (London and New York: Routledge); C. Flint (1998) *Family Fictions: Narrative and Domestic Relations in Britain, 1688–1798* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press); K. Harvey (2012) *The Little Republic. Masculinity and Domestic Authority in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press); R. Probert (2009) *Marriage Law and Practice in the Long Eighteenth Century. A Reassessment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press); and J. P. Zomchick (1993) *Family and the Law in Eighteenth-Century Fiction: The Public Conscience in the Private Sphere* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).
2. For the best expression of this situation, see N. Tadmor (2004) *Family and Friends in Eighteenth-Century England: Household, Kinship, and Patronage* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).
3. See L. Davidoff (2012) *Thicker Than Water: Siblings and Their Relations 1780–1920* (Oxford: Oxford University Press); S. A. King and M. Shephard (2012) 'Courtship and the Remarrying Man in Late-Victorian England', *Journal of Family History*, 37:3, pp. 319–340.
4. For a review, see Barclay, *Love, Intimacy and Power*.
5. J. Campbell, E. Ewan, and H. Parker (2011) *The Shaping of Scottish Identities: Family, Nation, and the Worlds Beyond* (Guelph: University of Guelph Press).
6. J. Finch (1989) *Family Obligations and Social Change* (Oxford: Polity Press), pp. 57–85.
7. Tadmor, *Family and Friends*.
8. These crises will be discussed in detail below. The state of research on the historiographical concept of the 'fiscal military state' and its empirical foundations in Britain and Europe are explored by A. Graham and P. Walsh (2016) (eds.) *The British Fiscal Military States, 1660–c.1783* (London: Routledge); C. Storrs (2009) (ed.) *The Fiscal-Military State in Eighteenth-Century Europe* (London: Routledge).
9. While scholars have explored family relations through the lens of bequests in wills, the fact of an entail takes away a level of choice in terms of bequests, such that it is in the dispute and contestation of entails that we learn something about family relations. On this there is surprisingly

little literature. Note for instance the absence of substantive discussion of entails in B. Capp (2018) *The Ties That Bind: Siblings, Family and Society in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press).

10. Decisions of the Court of Session (…), edited by William Maxwell Esq. Advocate, vol. VI, Edinburgh 1811, National Library of Scotland, Advocates library (NLS. Adv.), no. 46, 15422–15425: 1769 January 25. Peter Leslie Grant of Balquhain versus Gordon of Cobairdie, and ib., no. 96, 15530–15534: 1779 March 2. John Leslie of Balquhain, versus David Orme. The earlier case related to the family's divided religious allegiance, and will be discussed later in the chapter.
11. For the English strict settlement and entails see the following classic studies: L. Bonfield (1988) *Marriage Settlements, 1601–1740: The Adoption of the Strict Settlement* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press); J. Habakkuk (1994) *Marriage, Debt, and the Estates System. English Landownership 1650–1950* (Oxford: Clarendon Press), pp. 2–76; J. Habakkuk (1950) 'Marriage Settlements in the Eighteenth Century', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 32, pp. 15–30.
12. See R. Burgess (1979) *Perpetuities in Scots Law* (Edinburgh: The Stair Society), pp. 49–119. On marriage portions and settlements and their relation to entails see Bonfield, *Marriage Settlements.*
13. For the classic statement on the alternative of partible inheritance, see J. Hajnal (1982) 'Two Kinds of Pre-industrial Household Formation System', *Population and Development Review*, 8, pp. 449–494.
14. The procedure is explained in: E. Coke (1788) *The First Part of the Institutes of the Laws of England. Or, a Commentary Upon Littleton* (London: T. Wright for E. Brooke). See also J. Biancalana (2001) *The Fee Tail and the Common Recovery in Medieval England 1176–1502* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pp. 313–351.
15. See S. Ruggles (2010) 'Stem Families and Joint Families in Comparative Historical Perspective', *Population and Development Review*, 36, pp. 563–577.
16. There is an abundance of case studies in national languages on European fideicommissa, the classic twentieth-century study for Spain being the deceptively narrowly titled B. Clavero (1974) *Mayorazgo. Propiedad feudal en Castilla, 1369–1836* (Madrid: Siglo Ventiuno Editores). The best English-language account of entails as used by the European aristocracy can be found in H. M. Scott (1995) (ed.) *The European Nobilities in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Harlow: Longman).
17. Dei Difetti della Giurisprudenza Trattato di Lodovico Antonio Muratori, Bibliothecario del Sereniss. Sig. Duca di Modena (…), in Venezia 1742, Austrian National Library Vienna, 27. R. 79, Caput XVII: Dei Fideicommissi, Maggioraschi, Primogeniture, e Sustituzioni, S. 145–155.

18. Muratori, Difetti della Giurisprudenza, quotation on p. 147: "Da che queste (= fidei commissi, R.P.) han preso così gran piede in Italia, che poci ci sono, i quali purchè abbiano stabile, ancorchè meschino, nol tramandino a li eredi con qualche vincolo di Sustizione o Fideicommisso: ecco un pernicioso regalo alla Repubblica per l'incertezza, a cui restano esposti i contratti del vendere e comperare, del fondar censi, dell'ipotecare, e simili," S. 147.
19. I have been able to trace the origins of the reform movement to 1749, when Scottish lawyers supported by English politicians started to canvass support among the Scottish landed proprietors in a systematic and organised fashion, for a parliamentary bill for the abolition of perpetuities. A letter published in the December item of the *Scots Magazine*, vol. 11, Edinburgh, 1749, pp. 568–570, invited all proprietors of entailed estates in Scotland to attend a meeting in Edinburgh on 20 February 1750. The letter was sent to all Edinburgh newspapers. Its author signed with his initials 'C.T.'. For reasons that will be set out in greater detail in my forthcoming monograph on the subject I believe the author to be Charles Townshend, who was a member of the Board of Trade in 1749, and a few years later married into the Scottish aristocracy. The letters relating to this campaign and debate on entails, and the minutes of proprietors' meetings and addresses, were published in the *Scots Magazine* in Edinburgh between 1749 and 1770, the year of the Montgomery Act. With the beginning of the Advocates' campaign led by Lockhart in 1764 there are also reports in the *Edinburgh Advertiser*.
20. See for example the detailed discussion of tailzies in the context of Scotland's history by John Dalrymple, who wished to reform, but not abolish, the institute: J. Dalrymple (1764) *Considerations Upon the Policy of Entails in Britain; Occasioned by a Scheme to Apply for a Statute to Let the Entails of Scotland Die out, on the Demise of the Possessors and Heirs Now Existing* (Edinburgh: printed for A. Kincaid and J. Bell). The National Library of Scotland's copy comprises 118 pages, and an appendix of Errata. The most sophisticated and influential attack, in terms of reception and author's influence on the law reform movement, came from the King's Bench judge and philosopher, H. Home (1775) *Sketches of the History of Man*, *Vol. 4* (Edinburgh: A. Strahan and T. Cadell), Appendix, Sketch I.
21. J. Swinton (1765) *A Free Disquisition Concerning the Law of Entails in Scotland. Occasioned by Some Late Proposals for Amending That Law* (Edinburgh: A. Kincaid and J. Bell), pp. 99–101.
22. This is the subject of a monograph-length study the author is currently preparing.

23. For details see J. L. Wark (1928) *Encyclopaedia of the Laws of Scotland* (Edinburgh: Lormier and Chalmers), p. 198.
24. A thorough analysis of this debate, with a comprehensive bibliography of the contemporary literature, is provided in R. B. Vernier (1993) 'Political Economy and Political Ideology: the Public Debt in Eighteenth-Century Britain and America' (Unpublished DPhil thesis, University of Oxford).
25. T. Mortimer (1768) *The National Debt No National Grievance, or the Real State of the Nation, with Respect to Its Civil and Religious Liberty, Commerce, Public—Credit, and Finance* (London: printed for J. Wilkie).
26. Mortimer made an attempt to salvage his reputation with a public account of his downfall. In the preface, he stated that it was suggested to him at the time that his connection with Wilkes caused his disgrace, see T. Mortimer (1770) *The Remarkable Case of Thomas Mortimer, Esq., Late His Majesty's Vice-Consul for the Austrian Netherlands* (London: printed for J. Wilkie), p. 8.
27. P. Smallwood (2002) 'The Johnsonian Monster and the Lives of the Poets: James Gillray, Critical History, and the Eighteenth-Century Satirical Cartoon', *British Journal for Eighteenth Century Studies*, 25, pp. 217–246.
28. Mortimer, *National Debt*, p. 167. For the proposed scheme see pp. 167–169.
29. For which see Vernier, 'Political Economy'.
30. The following account of Scotland's economy, banking system, and financial crises is based on S. G. Checkland (1975) *Scottish Banking. A History, 1695–1973* (Glasgow: Collins); R. E. Cameron, O. Crisp, H. T. Patrick, and R. H. Tilly (1967) *Banking in the Early Stages of Industrialization: A Study in Comparative Economic History* (London: Oxford University Press), pp. 60–83; C. A. Whatley (1997) *The Industrial Revolution in Scotland* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pp. 55–78.
31. G. Acheson, C. Hickson and J. Turner (2011) 'Organisational Flexibility and Governance in a Civil-Law Regime: Scottish Partnership Banks During the Industrial Revolution', *Business History*, 53, pp. 505–529.
32. F. Capie (1993) *The History of Banking, 1650–1850: Vol. 5; Scottish and Irish Banks and Savings Banks* (London: Pickering and Chatto).
33. See H. Hamilton (1953) 'Scotland's Balance of Payment Problem in 1762', *Economic History Review*, 5:3, pp. 344–357; T. B. Goodspeed (2016) *Legislating Instability: Adam Smith, Free Banking, and the Financial Crisis of 1772* (London: Harvard University Press). Goodspeed is an economist, whose illuminating study scrutinizes Scotland's financial history throughout the second half of the eighteenth-century.
34. Cameron et al., *Banking*, p. 75.

35. 'The King's Majesty's Gracious and Free Pardon, Act of Indemnity and Oblivion', Charles II, 8 May 1662, Parliamentary Register at Edinburgh 9 September 1662, Records of the Parliaments of Scotland to 1707 online, University of St Andrews.
36. For the follow-up acts to the settlement indemnity see W. Bell (1838) *A Dictionary and Digest of Law of Scotland: With Short Explanations of the Most Ordinary English Law Terms* (Edinburgh: Bell and Bradfute), p. 981.
37. Wark, Encyclopedia of the laws of Scotland, pp. 196–197, and Burgess, *Perpetuities in Scots Law*, pp. 73–80. For developments in the sixteenth and seventeenth-century, before the statute of 1685, pp. 80–90, where Burgess demonstrates in detail that the Act of 1685 made provision for the first effective perpetuities, or strict entails, in Scots Law.
38. William II and Mary II, c. 104, 15 April 1690, Parliamentary Register at Edinburgh 22 July 1690, Records of the Parliaments of Scotland to 1707 online, University of St Andrews.
39. Statute of 7 Anne, c. 20, quoted in: Burgess, *Perpetuities in Scots Law*, p. 14.
40. Calculation of numbers based on information extracted from *The Scots Digest of Scots Appeals in the House of Lords from 1707 and of the Cases Decided in the Supreme Courts of Scotland 1800 to 1873* (4 vols., Edinburgh, 1908–1912), vols. 1 and 2, Edinburgh 1908–1909, National Library of Scotland, and *Reports of Cases Decided in the House of Lords, upon Appeal from Scotland, from 1726 to May 1757*, by John Craigie, John Shaw Stewart, and Thomas S. Paton, Esqs., Advocates (Edinburgh, 1849) (vol. 1). Reports of Cases (…), from 1753 to 1813. By Thomas S. Paton (Edinburgh, 1849) (vol. 2). Reports of Cases (…), from 1753 to 1813. By Thomas S. Paton (Edinburgh, 1853) (vol. 3), Bodleian Law Library. A particularly instructive example of a verdict demanding further legal reform enabling heirs to break entails was delivered by Mansfield in the appeal case of Irvine vs. Earl of Aberdeen in 1777, see *Reports*, Paton, vol II., pp. 419–425.
41. This is based on an evaluation of George Bramwell, An analytical table of the private statutes, passed between the 1st Geo. II. A.D. 1727, and 52d Geo. III. A.D. 1812, both inclusive; arranged chronologically, alphabetically, and according to the subject matter, and combining, in facility of reference, the utility of each of these methods of arrangement (London, 1813). Cases are listed chronologically from 1727. No pagination. For some instructive examples involving women see 30th Geo. III – 1790, cap. 32, granting Margaret Lawrie as widow of Walter Lawrie the right to add lands in Kircudbright to the entail created by her husband in 1727 and 1733, for herself and the series of heirs set down in these entails. Or see 40th Geo. III – 1800, cap. 58, for Ann Ranoldson Dickson: 'To

empower Court of Session to sell sufficient part of her intailed (sic) estates in Fife and Perth, to pay debts and provisions to younger children affecting the same'.

42. Decisions of the Court of Session (…), no. 1, 15347: 1667, July 16, Sir James Keith versus Lundie, and no. 2, 15347–15350: 1669, January 20 and February 3: Laird Kilburny versus Heirs of Tailzie of Kilburny and Shaw of Grenock.
43. Decisions of the Court of Session (…), no. 2, 15347–15350: 1669, January 20 and February 3: Laird Kilburny versus Heirs of Tailzie of Kilburny and Shaw of Grenock. Quotation p. 15349.
44. Decisions of the Court of Session (…), no. 23, 15384–15387, recording the Court of Session's verdict and appeal. Quotation on p. 16385.
45. Decisions of the Court of Session (…), no. 85, 15505–15507: 1746. June 17. Heirs of Tailzie of Agnes Campbell versus the Representatives of Provost Wightman.
46. Decisions of the Court of Session (…), no. 85, 15505–15507: 1746. June 17. Heirs of Tailzie of Agnes Campbell versus the Representatives of Provost Wightman. Ib. pp. 15504–15506 for the argument from shared legal heritage of fideicommissa and Scots entails, with explicit reference to the Roman Codex *De Legatis*.
47. Decisions of the Court of Session (…) no. 102, 15547–15550: 1750, June 30. Stewart versus His Majesty's Advocate. Quotation on p. 15548. The Latin quotation literally translates as 'Nobody can make precautions so that the laws should not apply to their testament'. The judges also made reference to the ongoing debate about the legal situation regarding the forfeitures of the Jacobite rebels Lord Lewis Gordon, who was to die in French exile in 1754, and the more spectacular case of Simon Fraser, 11th Lord Lovat, who was executed in April 1747.
48. D. Worthington (2004) *Scots in Habsburg service, 1608–1648* (Leiden: Brill), pp. 205–206.
49. For a portrait and short biographical information see Austrian National Library (ÖNB), inventory reference: PORT_00139800_1. Further information on the descendants of Walter Leslie and the family's Fideicommissum, which ended with the extinction of the Austrian house of Leslie in 1802, can be found in Johann Gottfried Sommer, Das Koenigreich Böhmen; statistisch-topographisch dargestellt, vol. 4, Prague 1836, p. 198.
50. This formed part of the evidence in the previously discussed case in 1779, see Decisions of the Court of Session (…), edited by William Maxwell Esq. Advocate, vol. VI, Edinburgh 1811, National Library of Scotland, Advocates library (NLS. Adv.), no. 46, 15422–15425: 1769 January 25. Peter Leslie Grant of Balquhain versus Gordon of Cobairdie, and ib.,

no. 96, 15530–15534: 1779 March 2. John Leslie of Balquhain, versus David Orme. The information on the history of the entail since the seventeenth-century and the circumstances of the dispute in 1746 are related on pp. 15530–15531.

CHAPTER 3

Victorian Professions: The Galvanising (and Shaping) Force of Death on Families

Kim Price

Introduction

The historical study of the family has long been shaped by the fact that historians, social scientists and genealogists have attempted to define the term 'family' in different, often competing ways.[1] For the historical demographers Lawrence Stone and Peter Laslett, writing in the infancy of family history as a discipline, the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries saw for the upper and middling sections of British society a distinct bonding of the nuclear core of families at the expense of relationships with neighbours and wider kin.[2] In much of the early historiography, then, 'the family' was conceptualised and ordered through the lens of its direct members (husband, wife, offspring and a limited number of 'other' kin) or through the shifting membership of the household and houseful, including servants and other non-kin.[3] These labels seemed 'natural' and inevitable in the sense that the census, the single

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most important source for early writers, counted the people under a given roof on a specific evening and ordered the membership under such roofs according to the binary categories of kin and non-kin.[4] As Chase and Levenson remind us, the need to use census material as evidence was a primary driver of the mechanism by which 'family' became a spatial *and* a social unit.[5] For Laslett in particular, the key questions were about the size, complexity and depth of families, rather than about the socio-cultural processes that shaped how family life was experienced and constructed.[6] Subsequent family historians have been more centrally concerned with the enormous range of permutations of family configuration, the complex drivers of family formation and re-formation, and the quality as opposed to just the extent of kinship connections. Di Cooper and Moira Donald, for instance, have used detailed record linkage for middling streets in Exeter to call into question the meaning of labels such as 'servant' which usually signal the distinction between household and family.[7] They argue powerfully that such labels effectively disguised kinship connections within the household. At the other end of the social spectrum, Steve King argues that pauper households were more complex in kinship terms than has ever been allowed and that whatever the structure of their co-resident family grouping, the dependent poor were enmeshed in a complex network of functional kinship which brings into question the utility of talking about the individual co-residential unit.[8]

These are important historiographical advances, but one group that has received relatively little attention are the professionals who emerged out of a more amorphous 'middling sort' between the mid-eighteenth and mid-nineteenth centuries.[9] Leonore Davidoff has described the 'difficulties' of truth in family history, 'not least because many records are more informative of what people in the past thought the family should be, rather than…how families were actually constituted'.[10] She has also questioned the sensitivity of family-focused historiography because of its overdependence on case study or crude impersonal macro-views of 'families' reaped from vast demographic formulations reflected in the censuses.[11] Such issues have particular traction when we try to consider the constellation and re-constellation of professional families and the quality (rather than simply the extent and nominal complexity) of family relations given that we have no significant body of research that can act as a benchmark for this group. The current chapter thus seeks to investigate the nature of relations in the nineteenth-century professional family.

It does so through an analysis of death in a family and the impact the loss of different familial protagonists had on the surviving members of their family. The death of a household head is particularly important in this regard. The death of a breadwinner—especially in the early years of a career—could be catastrophic across a spectrum of economic, emotional and social levels. It also altered the structure and meaning of established family groups and could represent a heady precursor to momentous change. Using an innovative methodology—a welding together of genealogical methods, case study, prosopography and qualitative data analysis—arising out of a research project on the Victorian professions, the chapter suggests that the structural transformations occasioned by deaths were varied and widely anticipated, including remarriage for adults (creating a new familial order), adoption for bereaved children and the formative impact of personal loss on future family and career choices.[12] In short, the chapter (alongside those of Regina Poertner and Goeff Monks elsewhere in this volume) rises to Davidoff's challenge that 'For a rounded picture, the cycle of individual lives as they form and disband families must be observed.'[13] To this end, the next section deals briefly with the nature of the professional family. The main focus, however, is in section three where we trace through both cohort analysis and individual case studies the impact of bereavements on different sorts of family members. A focus on Scottish data means that the chapter contributes, alongside those by Iain Riddell and Regina Poertner, to this relatively neglected aspect of British family history.

The Victorian 'Professional' Family

Historians have tended to ascribe the professional class with a separate identity from the middle class. This largely stems from the work on Victorian professions by Harold Perkin. To him, the professions were a distinct group with economic strength and durability.[14] Yet he used limited empirical research and recent historians have questioned the distinction. As Sheila Sullivan observed '…the regulated self (and the regulating texts) that professionalism presupposes is difficult to separate from middle-class status and ideology'.[15] Perkin also imbued the professions largely with a goal of professional legacy through their own offspring. It is in this respect that his views have had the most profound implications for how we have considered their families.[16] The empirical base for these

views was in fact slim. In order to test them, the Victorian Professions project built a database that stemmed from over a thousand professional men from nine towns stratified from the 1851 census.[17] Using archive and genealogical methods, the project team traced their wives (and both partners' parents) and their descendants' in two further generations, resulting in over 15,000 individuals broadly spanning the periods from the mid-eighteenth to the mid-twentieth centuries. In addition to a mass of analytical data collected for every census until 1911, the project team dredged local archives and online material, collecting a vast range of archive material from schooling, matriculation and marriage contacts, to *inter alia* professional associations, diaries, newspaper cuttings, memorials and wills.[18] Together, this research suggested that the weakness of the Perkin approach was an over-concentration on traditional, well-established professions such as the law, church, military and medicine. In contrast, the Victorian Professions project reframed 'professionals' to include a broader ambit encompassing a more recognisably diverse range of sectors and occupations. The project established that these 'new' professions—teaching, engineering, banking, architecture, and so on—are essential for inclusive analyses of the broad range of professional families cementing their place in the socio-economic structure of Victorian Britain. In contrast to Perkin's original analyses, which portrayed professions as economically solid, the project found that these newer professional families (and indeed some of older professions) were relatively insecure, sometimes living in fragile financial circumstances.

Against this backdrop, career security was a preoccupation of parents and their children because it *mattered*; families were shaped by the success or failure of a young professional. As historians, such as Sullivan, have argued, the appropriation of success and failure to underpin masculine ideals in the professional project further hardened gendered roles in professional families.[19] This played a key part in the professions, their family life and in death's impact on their families. In married life, women were often subsumed into a family life that was the epitome of gendered romanticism in the nineteenth century. As Davidoff and Catherine Hall have noted, engendered expectations 'indelibly fixed the image of a rose-covered cottage in a garden where Womanhood waited and from which Manhood ventured abroad: to work, to war and to the Empire.'[20] There is of course a substantial

empirical base for these views, particularly by the later Victorian period, and we explore this matter further in the final section of the chapter. Yet, many women lived a more independently steered life than this model allows. Davidoff and Hall also recognised that there were constantly shifting shapes for gender roles and a consequent variety of female kinship structures: 'The variability of family forms cannot be overstressed; there is no essential "family", but always "families"'.[21] This broad perspective both informs the rest of the chapter and is also the singular theme of the other chapters in this volume.

In some striking ways this research therefore adds weight to recent scholarship that has begun to reinterpret the traditional view of the Victorian family. Certainly the majority of Victorian Britons would have spent some of their lives within a domiciled family group based on matrimony. For most this began as a child of marriage and then, later, as married adult and parents themselves. Even this broad model came under pressure from changes to fertility and birth rates. The 1870s are seen as a turning point in fertility, when births per woman on average began to decline dramatically. The professional classes were at the vanguard of falling numbers of children born in wedlock.[22] More widely, however, a larger number of lived years were expended in roles beyond that 'traditional' model, not least because death frequently spliced and reshaped the family. Cohort analysis from the Victorian Professions project shows clearly that a large number of the middling sort spent their childhoods with different parental figures than is generally given credence—as step-children, orphans, nieces/nephews or grandchildren. As adults, too, Victorians were likely to spend some of their life beyond the normative model in one or some of a number of common roles (imbued with distinct cultural and gendered agency): bachelor or spinster; widow or widower; step-parent; grandparent; or as 'in-laws'. In short, the data for this research suggest that the lived experience of alternative family groups is important because many people spent the majority of their life in roles beyond a traditional familial structure, pointing to the need for reconsideration of actual lived years *en masse*. Beginning this process, the next sections will explore further how the death of a loved one could interplay with family structures, create mixed-parenthood families and, in some cases, alter the course of a career.

An Experiential Account of Bereavement in a Professional Family

Gaining an insight into how families were re-constellated after a death and the ultimate meaning of that re-constellation for the relatives left behind is no easy task. As Davidoff notes: 'Even today few people go around speaking about or leaving written records detailing their changed relationships and ambivalent feelings due to the loss of a sister or brother through permanent estrangement or death—they *live* it out.'[23] Diaries provide a unique opportunity to discover emotional and physical responses to death in the past. Thus, the exquisitely detailed journals of Alexander Beazeley (1830–1905) are a rare insight into the career of a Victorian professional, from his indenture as an apprentice to Beazeley's notable international recognition and success. Beazeley was a civil engineer from Brighton who maintained journals documenting most aspects of his life from an urbanite young Englishman to Nova Scotia and Australia and finally a jubilant return to Europe as an established engineer.[24] They also provide a glimpse into the interactions of bereavement, emigration and career. Indeed Alexander seems to have altered his life's direction after the death of his beloved sister. This section will therefore adopt his experience as a case study to argue that death could sometimes galvanise people by forcing a change in their lives, rupturing and altering their—and their family's—life course.

Alexander's father, George (1789–1875) was a successful naval commander with an unusual backstory: he was the illegitimate son of a Russian count of aristocratic origin.[25] Both of his sons became engineers and the family were an exemplary 'professional' family. Despite their closeness, a cursory glance at Alexander's family tree (Fig. 3.1), shows that death had created a family of step-children. By the time he was 10 years old, Alexander had already experienced the deaths of five siblings. The impact of this can only be surmised (there is no intimation in his journals) but the closeness of the adult Beazeley family is perhaps at least partly a result of childhood bereavements. Both of his surviving sisters, Catherine ('Kate', 1829–1903) and Simeona ('Owo', 1821–1851) were children of George's first two marriages to women who had also died relatively young.[26] Alexander's mother, Margaret (1800–1850), adopted Kate and Owo on marriage, creating a blended family of the sort also explored by Geoff Monks later in this volume.[27] She was exceptionally close to Owo, the pious cherished heart of the family. Nevertheless, it

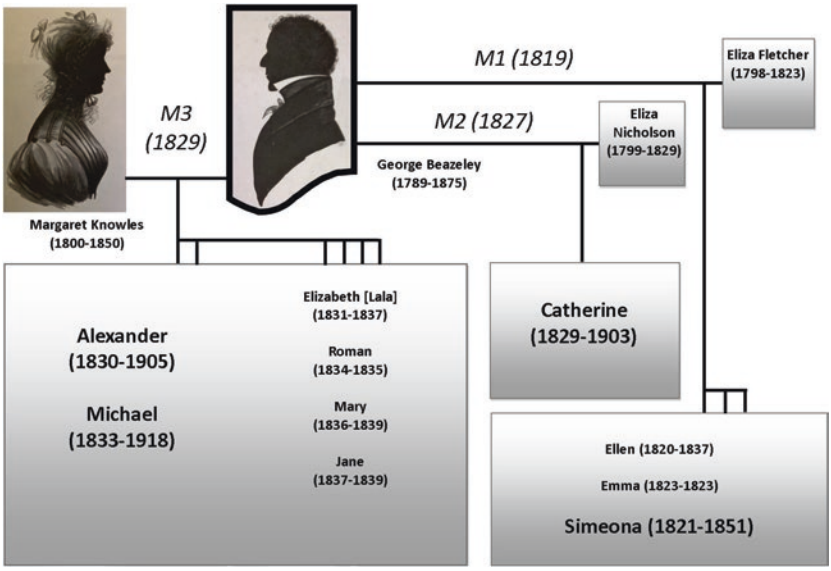

Fig. 3.1 Beazeley family tree (*Source* Beazeley, *Alexander's Journal*)

was a focus on Alexander's career that seems to have led the family to further tragedy in adulthood. His story presents an enticing picture of early career instability, remarkable change and eventual success.

Alexander's diaries provide an intriguing and contrastive juxtaposition. His early journals, set in southern England, contain very little of professional value. His later diaries, set in Australia, are by contrast mostly about the challenges of engineering and the engaging environment of his new home—reflecting a contemplative and professionally engaged man. These are punctuated with documentation of complex engineering formulas and problems—and his descriptions of overcoming work-based challenges. His successful career in Australia is interesting because in England, as will be discussed below, he was languishing in his apprenticeship, facing an uncertain future. What had happened in the intervening years? How did Alexander 'make it' and what role—if any—had his family played in this success? Thus, in the late 1840s, Alexander was indentured to a London engineering practice. As an apprentice, Alexander was a bit of a layabout. While amusing, this does not seem

particularly unusual in itself. His diaries indicate a well-meaning but unfocused youth. Yet, his (and his father's) fears of career failure were acute. Alexander seems to have made a number of mistakes on the job—at one point missing a crucial curve in the laying out of the London to Portsmouth Direct Railway, which delayed work for a day. His manager was clearly unimpressed by Alexander's potential as an engineer, and the diaries consistently show that Alexander was distracted by his social life; primarily focused on finding a 'sweetheart' and wife.[28]

Despite his comfortable upper-middling sort background, it is also clear from his diaries that Alexander was by no means assured of professional success. In one sense this is not surprising. The histories of other professions describe overstocked and competitive environments, a theme also visited by Carol Beardmore in her chapter later in this volume.[29] Not many professionals could afford to fritter away career prospects. Zuzanna Shonfield's study of the Marshalls of Saville Row traced the prospects of an upper-middle class family of professionals and their struggles to excel. Their lives echo the Beazeleys and other professional families: 'There is a great deal of evidence to show that the elevated situation in which the successful professionals found themselves in the latter part of the nineteenth century was precarious'.[30] It is thus unsurprising that the insecurity of professional life became a (not misplaced) preoccupation of Alexander's father. In 1848, the tension built between father and son, bursting into a heated conversation about the errant engineer's prospects:

> This morning at breakfast there was a most ridiculous scene. Father and I were talking upon the subject of my emigrating in case there was no work for me in England when my time was out … At last Mother began to cry, and said how ridiculous and wrong it was to talk about my leaving England, and unsettling my mind about my profession. A long discussion ensued on that point, and it ended by Father protesting that he did not want to distract my mind from my profession, but only to have the liberty of conversing as to what might be done in case that there should be no opening in Engineering for me when out of my time. When all the rest had left the breakfast room, he told me that if he were in my place he would endeavour to learn engineering by all the means in his power, and would get some little wooden bricks and build bridges for practice. From what he said he seemed to imply that I did not study my profession enough. I was not best pleased by the whole scene, and felt excessively vexed…[31]

One month later, the Beazeley parents were set on emigrating—alternating between proposed destinations until finally settling on Canada. Alexander reflected, 'I was much disgusted at the idea of us all going out, because I only could not succeed in England'.[32] His optimism was misplaced; one year later he had not secured an engineering post and the entire family emigrated from England, setting sail on 20 August 1849 for Prince Edward Island.

The voyage was unexceptional but would ultimately be the cause of a fracturing of the family because Alexander's mother and sister, Owo, caught an infection of the chest. On arrival the family established themselves in the local community, but again Alexander was unsuccessful in his career aspirations, becoming a low-level bureaucrat for the probate office. The diaries detail his limited social life and a preoccupation with hunting wildlife. Engineering was barely mentioned. Storm clouds were, however, brewing and these would have important consequences for the shape and meaning of the family. Barely a year after arriving in Canada, Margaret succumbed to her chest illness and died.[33] A few months after her death, Alexander reflected, 'On the night she died, as I lay in bed, I fancied several times, quite vividly, that she was arranging my pillow and that I felt her breath on my face. Oh, that she *were* near me and would visit me in my sleep!'[34] Owa (Alexander's adored sister) continued to waste away at the same time. During the summer of 1851 it seemed as though she rallied and there was a remission, '…Owo seemed so well and happy…She is still pleased at the idea of going to England, but thinks she will not live long after her arrival. Pray heaven, though, she may! And may live with recovered health and strength for many years!'[35] Even so, the doctor (and family) expected her to die within a year and she succumbed on 1 September 1851.[36] Although Alexander stated: 'It must be such a blessed rest for dear [Owo] now, after long suffering, to lie in that quiet state', he was obviously deeply grieved at her passing.[37] Davidoff has said of siblings: 'According to time, place, social group, or fate there have been wide discrepancies in the circumstances of sibling loss…the structures, culture, and beliefs of the particular society in which the loss occurs may mould and temper mourning reactions'.[38] In many ways, the Beazeleys were typical of the early nineteenth century, but their emotional response provides a nuanced and rare experience of coping with tragedy at this time.

Alexander, Kate, Michael and their father retreated to their rooms for a number of days, taking pills supplied by a doctor. Yet, they were able to emotionally absorb Owo's death because it had been protracted, virtually painless, and there was time for her to say her goodbyes—even time for Owo to plan her funeral rites, coffin and clothing. For Victorians this was the 'good' death, described so well by historians, such as Jalland.[39] Alexander was reassured by the words of the doctor: 'He says he never saw anyone so well aware of their condition and so perfectly calm, resigned and happy in the prospect of death'.[40] The family would have been strengthened by Owo's piety, salubriousness and courageous conviction in death, especially after the shock of Margaret's more sudden and unexpected expiration. Alexander described his feelings at the funeral, 'I did not shed a tear—indeed have hardly done so since dear [Owo] died—I don't feel as if she were so separated from us as dear Mother is, and I sincerely hope she will come to us in dreams as she promised to do if permitted'.[41] Although Alexander was initially disappointed, four weeks later he dreamed of Owo—she 'evidently wished me to be resigned to [her death], not grieving'.[42] The family had emigrated ostensibly to further an engineering career that had not materialised and lost two cherished members, in effect reconstructing the meaning of the family unit. There is no intimation from Alexander's diary that the remaining family members blamed Alexander's youthful follies for his sister's death, but her demise nonetheless seems to have galvanised Alexander into leaving Canada for Australia in 1852, perhaps to seek a fresh beginning. Her death occupied his psyche as he prepared to embark: 'I was dreaming last night of my going to Australia, and wished very much to say good bye to Owo, whom I thought of as still alive. She came and kissed me, but did not say "goodbye"…I woke up crying bitterly and clasping her tight to my heart'.[43]

Beazeley signalled the decision to leave Canada in January, barely four months after Owo had died. By March 1852 he had solidified his plans. His career was among a number of the reasons cited for his motivation: '[Australia offered] the chance of bettering my condition more rapidly than I could do here, and if I failed, I could then return here and live at Belvedere, I should be just where I should be if I stayed here till out of my time…'[44] Thus, on Christmas Eve, 1852, Alexander disembarked from his ship in Sydney Harbour. He had two letters of introduction for the Governor of New South Wales, Sir Charles Augustus FitzRoy (1796–1858) and:

> [FitzRoy] said that there was no opening for me in Government appointments, as they were all filled up; and asked me what my views were. I told him that my profession was a [Civil Engineer] and that I wished chiefly to obtain employment in that – which appeared to relieve him of a great weight and he said he would put my name down as an applicant for it and that if I could wait a month or two, there would probably be an opening for me, if competent, but that would be seen by examining me – to which I bowed assent…Then we fell into a general conversation about the Island and so on.[45]

The letters of introduction had effectively opened the door for Alexander because they came from officials in Prince Edward Island where FitzRoy had formerly served as governor from 1837 to 1841. He had arrived in Sydney with the intention of seeking a further government administration post but his introduction led to a foothold back into engineering as assistant engineer to the colony. Within eight years, he had accomplished enough for acceptance to the London-based Institution for Civil Engineers (ICE). Civil engineers were elected to the ICE on the strength of their professional accomplishments and their recommendations by members. Alexander's were outstanding.[46] He rose to Executive Engineer in the public works department of New South Wales, building some of Australia's most iconic lighthouses. In 1863 he returned to England as chief engineer for Trinity House, using the expertise gained in Australia to build various lighthouses around the coast of Britain (becoming a recognised authority on fog signals). He contributed extensively to the Oxford English Dictionary and became Librarian to the Royal Institute of British Architects. In 1873 he also went to Sweden as resident engineer on the Halmstad and Jönköping line, and subsequently worked on the North of Europe Railway.[47]

Beazeley's exchange with the Governor of New South Wales reveals that he stepped back into the profession with a mixture of guile, courage, chance and a 'favourable' letter of introduction. His father's (arguably well-founded) fears of Alexander failing, in 1848, had pushed the family to emigrate, but it was the death of his mother and sister that had finally galvanised the son into career action of independent volition. In a very short space of time Alexander had moved from living in a normative nuclear family in England (and thus one that was traceable in the nineteenth-century census) to one in which he was a singleton living in Australia. In between these two states of living, he had also been briefly

resident in a family headed by a widower. The sort of short-term fluidity in family form traced by Steven King in his contribution to this volume is also seen here. There is, however, a bigger narrative and this centres on the way in which locality—particularly the choice to stay or relocate—played a key role in weathering (or not) the storms of a familial tragedy. It is to this matter that the next section turns.

Declining Fortunes in Nineteenth-Century Dundee

Different towns created contrasting circumstances for professional families. Environment could also interact with a family's life-course, amplifying or reducing the impact of death. On the one hand, for example, the fallout from the death of a breadwinner could be mitigated in a relatively stable profession in an economically prosperous environment such as Leeds or Brighton. On the other hand, a town in economic turmoil could present a catastrophic scenario if a breadwinner died before establishing themselves or preparing their family economically for their loss. For those professionals concerned with extending economic prosperity into the next generation and maintaining (or creating) professional dynasties, the fear of an early death must have been ever-present. With a biological clock ticking against the need to establish a career before marriage, the continuation of a family meant that 'life' was quite literally hanging in the balance for an aspiring professional in the nineteenth century. Many faced a crude choice: forego marriage to increase economic prosperity and success or marry early and risk economic hardship (and catastrophe in an unexpected early death).

A case study drawn from the wider project outlined above and focusing on Dundee provides a particularly acute rendering of this sort of dilemma. Throughout most of the eighteenth-century Dundee had enjoyed status as a major trading centre in Scotland. By the beginning of the nineteenth century, it was an established port, chiefly trading in flax and linen.[48] The city excelled at manufacture, shipping in raw produce and exporting manufactured hardware, such as bleached linen, sail cloth, bagging and rope making. It therefore attracted a large working-class populace. In turn, an able workforce encouraged more manufacturing. This mix of shipping, industry, growth and migrant population was the ideal breeding ground for Dundee's famous foray into globalised industry and trade: jute processing.[49] From the mid-nineteenth century, jute became the dominant product manufactured and refined in Dundee.

By the century's end, the city skyline was punctuated with over 200 factory smoke stacks, mostly built for processing the raw jute that had been shipped from India. Both locals and the Scottish press acerbically referred to the town as 'Juteopolis'.[50] The switch from a diverse hub of trade and industry, to a mono-manufacturing jute centre, brought sweeping urban demographic changes.

Nineteenth-century Dundee has received notoriety because of its large working-class population (dominated by female workers) highly dependant on factory employment.[51] It was though in many ways representative of the urban population explosion across British regions as a whole at this time, including the demographic concentration in Scotland across its central industrial belt (spreading from Glasgow eastward to Dundee).[52] This region drew in large numbers of Scottish migrants and Irish immigrants at the height of the famines, with 19% of Dundee's population claiming Irish birth in 1861.[53] They came for the thriving opportunities for work at Dundee. In return, they 'earned among the lowest rates in textiles in the UK'.[54] Poverty and overcrowding were rife. By 1911, 70% of Dundee's housing was composed of one or two-bedroom dwellings.[55] Great slums emerged and the town's historical diversity was eclipsed by the labouring classes needed for factory work.[56] The professional and middling sorts rapidly moved out to the 'healthier' and conspicuously wealthier suburbs. Satellite villages, like Broughty Ferry (a former fishing village), were among the most expensive real estate in Europe.[57]

While the working-class populace engulfed the town, manufacturing had slipped into the hands of a cadre of extremely rich and influential Dundonians.[58] Profiteering among these manufacturing elites led them to shift jute production to India, in the late nineteenth century, where cheap labour and the free market ensured greater profits.[59] As a result there was a reversal in the earlier period's tide of people coming into Dundee—and the city began to decline almost at the same time it had become most successful. Scottish historians have long-argued that jute manufacture planted the seeds of the city's decline, but less well known are the effects of manufacturing and recession on the professional classes. The Scottish historian, Louise Miskell, described such oversight, '[The] varied picture of middle-class economic activity is easily overlooked given the dominance of the textile trade as a source of employment for Dundee's workers'.[60] Many in the professional classes suffered. Jute manufacturing strangled a thriving city; destroying its diverse community of production, mercantilism, trade and shipping. This would have been

devastating for the professions who, for the most part, were dependent on fee-paying classes. Arguably in response to the economic instability and hardship brought about by jute many of the children of the professionals in the Victorian Professions' cohort seemed to have reacted by seeking careers outside the professions. Others became part of that broader story of Scots from all classes who emigrated abroad or migrated to other parts of Britain.[61] Given this backdrop, it is unsurprising that nineteenth-century Dundee was a difficult climate in which to succeed as a professional and it thus provides an excellent prism through which to think about death and the shaping of the professional family. The Scottish focus is also of course valuable in its own right given the relative lack of work on the Scottish family highlighted by Regina Poertner and Iain Riddell elsewhere in this volume.

To this end, Dr David Lyell, a Dundee surgeon, was seventy-five years of age when he died from 'softening of the brain' (senile dementia) in 1881.[62] Although dementia would have stripped him of the time to bid his farewells, the Lyell family's circumstances would indicate that the doctor died in presence of a number of family members. He had ample time to prepare for death and, above all, ensure that the family were looked after financially beyond the grave (Lyell left over £8974 in his will).[63] At thirty-two years of age, Lyell had married within the common age range for the Victorian Professions project cohort, though above the average of twenty-nine for the Dundee professional classes at the time. This tallies with the well-recognised trope that professionals delayed marriage until relatively late in life—31–33 years being the modal age range in the project's data. In turn, late marriage age is important because it interacted with the age of death (most males died between their mid-forties and mid-sixties), leaving a small window to create and sustain a family and making it more likely that some offspring would spend their childhood years under the shadow of a deceased father. In this sense, Lyell was one of the lucky ones. He lived to see his surviving five sons and four daughters thrive in adulthood. His children were very successful, but outside of the professions. Their choices reflect the character of industry and commerce in Dundee at this time: they all became either a manufacture or a merchant. Lyell's children seemed to have followed their grandfather's line. David Lyell (snr) was a linen manufacturer at the end of the eighteenth century—in the era before jute dominance. Four of his grandsons also became manufacturers (but for jute). Only one of those had a brief period of professional

training, as a mechanical engineer (perhaps following his maternal grandfather's profession of engineering) before turning to jute. The fifth became an East India Merchant; more than likely also in the jute trade. Of the four surviving daughters, only one married (to a commander in the Royal Navy)—a common pattern of female single life for the daughters of professional families, discussed further below. The Lyells escaped financial risk in the professions with an exodus into manufacturing, but their father's relatively long life and professional success had played an important part in their ability to excel. The late-life death of the Lyell breadwinner had without doubt played into the success of his offspring, shaping the not insubstantial quality of life for descendants who were married or single.

In contrast, the Guthries were at the other end of the scale for professional families faced with Dundee hardship. The head of the family, Charles Guthrie was a law clerk, one of the lowliest of the professions. Such clerks could occasionally move up the social scale, becoming accomplished as a writer (solicitor) in Scotland or moving into the legal administering of business or local governance. Whether or not Charles Guthrie was on an upward career trajectory is unclear, but his wife Grace and their four surviving children were completely unprepared when tuberculosis took Charles' life in c.1861.[64] The Guthries experienced the key ingredients for a catastrophic death of the breadwinner: early aged death; lowly paid profession; career instability (Dundee had few opportunities for young professionals, as we have seen); and a number of children either dependent or unestablished in their careers. Given the successful transition of Lyell's children into jute manufacturing, Guthrie's fate seems more tragic.[65] Of his children, Helen became a jute weaver, while Isabella, Charles and David worked in mills or factories. Grace looked after the house until the family unit was broken up and their trace was lost in the archives. Death had forced the family out of the professions and down the social scale at the same time as altering family structure and the meaning of internal family relations. It is difficult not to wonder how Grace Guthrie and her children would have fared if circumstances had been slightly different—a diverse town, a few more years for Charles' career or at least one child earning a decent living. The bereaved but working Guthrie daughters and the spinster Lyell daughters also provides the endpoint for this chapter. Of all the alternative familial structures in the Victorian Project archival research, one of the most common were women who resided together; be they

sisters, mothers and daughters or companions. Steven King has described elsewhere in this volume the 'fluidity and the porousness of family and household boundaries'—that people in the nineteenth century were more than adjuncts to nuclear families; they moved about, travelled and returned, sometimes as singletons forming (as heads) their own households. Nevertheless, the richness of the lives of widowed or single women was often obscured or missed by the inadequate and sometimes inaccurate decennial census radar. Despite women outliving men by far in the Victorian Professions database, they were also the hardest to evidence with the same quantity of empirical data for male professionals. Their silence in the project data speaks volumes of a common engendered weakness of otherwise empirically strong historical research.

Widows and Spinsters

The Beazeleys, the Lyells and the Guthries all hint at a subsection of familial structure that death created: widows and spinsters. The lives of both could be chiselled out by the preparation (or not) for the death of a husband or father. It is a truism that death played a singularly strong role in reshaping the lives of woman that married and indirectly for those that did not, in the latter case for instance limiting funds for a daughter's marriage if a father died impoverished. This could be doubly catastrophic for women because widows frequently outlived their husbands by many years—outstretching the unprepared intestate. On average (see Table 3.1), Dundee widows outlived their professional-class husbands by approximately two decades. Very few widows remarried but it was not uncommon for widowers to find a second or even a third wife. This alone marks out a severe and starkly gendered difference between men and women after bereavement. Historians of death and mourning in

Table 3.1 Data for widows in professional families in Dundee

	Generation 1	*Generation 2*	*Generation 3*
Average years as a widow	18.1	20.1	21.2
Median years as a widow	16.0	16.0	20.5
Husband dies first (%)	58	59	65
Wife dies first (%)	42	41	35

Source The Professions in nineteenth century Britain project database

the Victorian period have noted the propensity for widowers to marry, sometimes very soon after the death of a beloved wife. Jalland described how remarriage was less the wayward man seeking further fulfilment and continuation of life, but was more commonly an immediacy of need, weakness, distraction and a desire to bring life into a darkened home and affected children (who sometimes documented years of 'hell' until their father remarried).[66] Needless to say, widows were given no such encouragement to remarry. According to Jalland, 'Widows generally had an even tougher time than widowers, with no paid occupation to divert their time, and no social expectations of re-marriage, except for the youngest and prettiest.'[67] The Victorian mantra of thriftiness was a practical necessity for these long-lived female lives. Even so, Robert Morris suggests that women's spending was constrained by pressures on them to reinvest inherited money in the familial-tied business interests of their mostly male siblings—keeping funds in-house.[68]

Victorians were of course constantly aware of the presence of death. Daughters could benefit from a father's death, through inheriting funds and relative independence, but the paternally impoverished could be condemned to single life and economic hardship. Given their lack of earning options (and excluded potential) widows were much more likely than widowers to encounter financial hardship. Wills were innately important. It would seem that husbands and fathers in Dundee bucked gender expectations and prepared specific funds for their daughters and wives to survive independently in the event of their death. Perhaps, in Scotland at least, the length of life as a spinster or widow was not lost on contemporary men. Dundee wills not infrequently ring-fenced funds for their daughters, stipulating that money would not go to husbands, recognising a need for holding wealth in the family or meeting the need for a widow to survive—or perhaps both. It was not uncommon for Dundonians to ring-fence their daughters' money from future husbands.[69] Sons did not take the lion share—male and female siblings would 'share and share alike'.[70] Whatever the motivation, Dundee men were concerned with the future finances of their daughters—whether in marriage, spinster or widowhood. Moreover, widows and spinsters pooled their emotional, social and financial resources. They are not infrequently housed together in the census. Sisters, also, could spend their entire lives as single women in cohabitation. Spinsters were therefore not directly created by death, but their single status could be defined by an untimely parental death. As Davidoff described, 'If through lack

of funds, reclusive tendencies or ineptness a family did not go into local Society, girls were almost doomed to remain unmarried'.[71]

In short, beyond Dundee's well-documented high ratio of women to men in the jute industry, there were nevertheless a high number of spinsters in Dundee families mirroring a trend for Victorian professional families across Britain. The Lyells ratio of one out of four daughters marrying was not uncommon for a professional family in the Victorian Professions database. Across all generations covered in the research dataset of several thousand women, at least half of surviving and traceable daughters did not marry. The Victorian version of the spinster is one of a somewhat stigmatised woman who had failed to secure marriage. We know very little of such women, but the sheer number of single women points to a divergence between image and reality. In contrast to an image of failure, many of these women seem to have lived relatively rich lives. Many widows and spinsters travelled great lengths in Britain and went abroad to visit family in various countries—most commonly, the nineteenth-century centres of immigration, such as Canada, USA and Australia. Some of the Dundee women worked in a mix of trades and professions, such as shop-keeping, artists, nurses and teachers.[72] Although most towns demonstrate that the majority of women would give up an occupation after marriage, it is clear from the project data underpinning this chapter that a large proportion of British women were living in alternative family structures for much of their lives; alone, together or with kith and kin for much of their lives. However, the day-to-day substances of those lived experiences have been diminished by a lack of substantial research or by the masculinised objectives of projects, such as that underpinning this chapter, that by necessity prioritise economic power over reflecting on the heady impacts of social diversity. The long shadows of literal creations, such as Charles Dickens' Miss Havisham, continue to warp understandings of female bereavement and their independent lives because for the most part, a male-dominated experience of death in the archives (probates, wills, divorce—the legal machinery) has dictated the empirical agenda. Clearly male death deeply influenced the form of female households but it should not contort historical conceptions of how bereaved and single women carved out and lived their lives beyond the shadow of masculine death.

Conclusion

Ultimately, this chapter has argued that death rendered family structures differently and that there were a range of relatively common households that we know little about, such as spinsters and their mothers or enriched and loving step-siblings (and their adoptive parents). The chapter has argued that death was an unwelcome but all-too common (re-) shaper of professional family structures in the Victorian period. Given the instability of professional life in Dundee and the threat of financial failure, the pressure on the Beazeleys to emigrate seems in context for the times. 'Making it' in the professions was not the cast-iron financial security that Perkin described. In contrast, there were enormous pressures on professionals in which death played a major part. Establishing oneself in time to marry and have children (and to be able to provide for those children), must have been a constant preoccupation for Victorians. Understanding the ability (or not) to build a professional career is therefore critical, but we know little of this process. In practice the survival chances of a young Victorian family sustaining their biological structure until all children were established or married were slim. Towns like Dundee, destabilised under the weight of a mono-manufacturing culture, further exacerbated familial insecurities.

Although the professional family would no doubt have fared better than those of the labouring classes, they were nearer the doors of the workhouse than Perkin described. A professional family *could* be well connected but they could also be isolated. Death, of course, comes to all. Nevertheless, Victorian professionals constructed their familial life within a narrow window of biological and financial opportunity. A family accustomed to life among the professional classes still needed to parry away the grim reaper for as long as they could manage: a bereaved wife would need her children to be grown, with one foot in a professional career or succeeding in a lucrative job sector (such as merchants and manufacturers). The motivation, stress, anxiety and pressure to succeed should be added as an important part of the history of family formation in Victorian Britain. Moreover, the shadow (and circumstance) of death was cast over a range of important 'survivor' family groupings that remain darkened. In conclusion, historians should focus more light on the alternative lived experiences of these bereaved families who constituted a large and formative part of Victorian familial and social life.

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6. Laslett, 'Family, Kinship and the Collectivity'.
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9. L. Davidoff and Catherine Hall (2002) *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class 1780–1850. Revised Edition* (London: Routledge); Z. Shonfield (1987) *The Precariously Privileged: A Professional Family in Victorian London* (Oxford: Oxford University Press).
10. Davidoff, 'The Family in Britain', p. 71.
11. Ibid.
12. This research draws from an ESRC-funded project held by Professor Michael Moss and Professor Laurence Brockliss (PIs): http://www.victorianprofessions.ox.ac.uk/. I would like to thank them for allowing me to

publish this paper as an offshoot from that research, which is described in further detail below.

13. Davidoff, 'The Family in Britain', p. 71.
14. H. Perkin (2002) *The Rise of Professional Society: England Since 1880. Second Edition* (London: Routledge), pp. 1–26; H. Perkin (2002) *The Origins of Modern English Society. Second Edition* (London: Routledge), pp. 218–270.
15. S. Sullivan (2000) 'Spectacular Failures: Thomas Hopley, Wilkie Collins, and the Reconstruction of Victorian Masculinity', in M. Hewitt (ed.) *An Age of Equipoise? Reassessing Mid-Victorian Britain* (Aldershot: Ashgate), p. 101.
16. Perkin, *The Origins of Modern English Society*, p. 256.
17. See http://www.victorianprofessions.ox.ac.uk.
18. The forthcoming edited volume will detail the full range of this research and data: ibid.
19. Sullivan, 'Spectacular Failures', p. 101.
20. L. Davidoff and Catherine Hall (2002) *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class 1780–1850. Revised Edition* (London: Routledge), p. 28.
21. Ibid., p. 31.
22. The average crude annual birth rate per thousand increased in the nineteenth century, but declined rapidly from the 1880s so that it was considerably less at the end of the Victorian period than it had been in 1841 (down from 32.3 to 19.9): J. Banks (1990) *Victorian Values: Secularism and the Size of Families* (Aldershot: Gregg Revivals), pp. 97–101.
23. L. Davidoff (2012) *Thicker Than Water: Siblings and Their Relations, 1780–1920* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), p. 309.
24. I am extremely grateful for the permission granted by the Beazeley collection's executor to use the Beazeley diaries and transcriptions held at the Library and Archives of the Institution of Civil Engineers, held under the transcribed Journals of Alexander Beazeley (Hereafter: ICE Beazeley).
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26. Eliza died of tuberculosis in circumstances the epitome of the 'good' death. Ibid., p. 42.
27. Davidoff, *Thicker Than Water*, pp. 309–334.
28. ICE Beazeley, see Vols. 1 and 2.

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30. Shonfield, *The Precariously Privileged*, p. vi.
31. ICE Beazeley: Vol. 1, 18 May 1848.
32. ICE Beazeley: Vol. 2, 3 June 1849.
33. ICE Beazeley: Vol. 5, 13 November 1850.
34. ICE Beazeley: Vol. 5, 28 November 1850.
35. ICE Beazeley: Vol. 5, 21 June 1851.
36. ICE Beazeley: Vol. 5, 1 September 1851.
37. Ibid.
38. Davidoff, *Thicker Than Water*, p. 333.
39. Jalland, *Death in the Victorian Family*, pp. 39–58.
40. ICE Beazeley: Vol. 5, 5 September 1851.
41. ICE Beazeley: Vol. 5, 3 September 1851.
42. ICE Beazeley: Vol. 5, 28 September 1851.
43. ICE Beazeley: Vol. 5, 11 May 1852.
44. ICE Beazeley: Vol. 5, 26 March 1852.
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49. For the most complete examination of Jute in Dundee's unique industrial history, see Miskell et al. *Victorian Dundee*: passim.
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59. T. Sethia (1996) 'The Rise of the Jute Manufacturing Industry in Colonial India: A Global Perspective', *Journal of World History*, 7:1, pp. 71–99.
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70. For example: NRS: Donald Matheson Mackay [police officer], Edinburgh Sheriff Court Wills, SC70/4/216 [1886].
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72. For Dundee's context, see Wainwright, 'Constructing Gendered Workplace "Types"', pp. 467–482.

CHAPTER 4

"The Widows and Orphans of Servants Are Dying": The Conflict of Family in the Design and Application of Nineteenth-Century Civil Servant Pensions

Kathleen McIlvenna

Overview

The Post Office is a Victorian institution. There had of course been postal systems before this time and in other places but the idea that all people in all places could be connected through the mail was a new idea.[1] In the context of this volume, the existence and development of the Post Office network matters for two reasons. Firstly, because letters connected families and kin who were not proximately resident, and they also had the capacity to make notional kinship into a functional resource. In chapters by Steven King, Cara Dobbing and Geoff Monks elsewhere in this volume it is clear that whatever the co-residential family unit might have looked like, letters were a vital mechanism for conveying information, renewing and repairing kinship bonds and giving meaning to the fictive kinship networks that are the focus of the work of Naomi

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Tadmor.[2] Secondly, in order to provide this service large (and increasing) numbers of employees were needed. This inevitably meant that the nature of work for the Post Office was a potent force in shaping family life, the nature of relationships (in the sense that for some employees the Post Office acted as an alternate family) and the very meaning of terms such as 'family' or 'kin'. Moreover, in the sense that Post Office workers rapidly became part of a wider nineteenth-century shift in welfare provision in which employers increasingly provided superannuation schemes, we might expect the service to have shaped the long-term planning of family life and even the likelihood of re-marriage or the timing of children leaving home.[3]

This chapter explores the second of these two themes, with a particular focus on the impact of pension changes on the families of Post Office employees. In the age of reform, the government had increasingly removed itself from any responsibility towards its employees' families through legislation such as the numerous Superannuation Acts.[4] Instead employees were expected to make their own provision for families through private insurance. Superannuation rewarded loyalty for service and did not include compensation to family members. However, as this chapter will demonstrate the separation of family and the employer's perceived responsibility to reward loyalty was more complex. By examining the Post Office, it is possible to see a large and diverse workforce that was often typified as providing its working-class employees with greater independence and a supportive family. Yet, this was also a workforce which received low pay and could ill-afford private insurance. The inability of workers to make private provisions was exacerbated by the fact that family could form an important part of the working lives of postal employees, notably by providing support in times of ill-health or help with the day-to-day running of local post offices. It is surprising, against this backdrop, that the role of family in the working lives of civil servants has been sadly neglected by historians of the family as well as those writing on the history of the Civil Service and the Post Office.

This chapter looks to fill this gap using the nineteenth-century superannuation legislation as the lens through which to examine the tri-partite relationship between employer, employee and employees' family. It will first assess the perception of work within the Civil Service, and particularly the Post Office, as something isolated from family. It was more commonly seen as providing a form of independent employment with a

deeper relationship with the public than any family member. The superannuation campaigns and debates will then be examined in more detail, exploring the civil servants' arguments for provisions for family based on a belief that superannuation remuneration was their 'property', either from the contributions paid from salaries, or, after 1859 when contributions were removed, as a form of deferred pay. This claim to superannuation as property and the demand that civil servants' families had a claim to it was repeatedly refuted by government. Part of the government's defence was that the efficiency of the state machine was not reliant on workers' families and, consequently, the government had no obligation to them. However, the chapter will conclude with an examination of Post Office employees' superannuation applications, alongside their census entries, which demonstrate that family did have a role to play in maintaining the smooth running of the Post Office. Superannuation legislation, as will be seen, may have been an important reform for an accountable and efficient Civil Service, but it did not address some of the fundamental needs of the lowest paid civil servants which focused around their families.

Constructing the Post Office Family

Depictions of the nineteenth-century Post Office worker have frequently been ones of separation from the domestic scene. The ideas of a divide between the working world of men and the domestic nurturing role of women, has often been centre stage when exploring gender difference during the nineteenth century. The conception and construction of separate spheres had an important part to play in structuring social institutions and relations.[5] Kate Thomas, for example, has demonstrated how the Post Office gave one of the centuries' most famous employees, Anthony Trollope, a new life, removing him 'from his tortured family life and the failures of that structure'.[6] In this sense the Post Office provided a wide and extended family with widespread networks, much as Tadmor envisaged as she developed her model of fictive kinship for the eighteenth century.[7] By moving to Ireland and working as a surveyor to improve the postal networks, Trollope developed 'economic independence, social and sexual mobility, and a network of alliances much broader than the family'.[8] Perhaps inspired through his own experience Trollope also created a literary image of the Post Office as an alternative family, providing opportunities that were not present in the domestic

sphere. Writing in *Good Words* in December 1877, he described the Civil Service as 'a rock of safety to very many men, a haven of refuge when no other haven could be reached'.[9] In his essay, Trollope was celebrating the extension of this 'government nourishment' to women through telegraph work and though he hoped many lived with parents he also imagined there must have been 'many so far alone in the world as to have to look out for their own lives as most young men are called upon to do'.[10] This image was extended to Trollope's fiction with the short story *Telegraph Girl*, where work at the Post Office was celebrated for giving independence to a young woman, enabling the central character, Lucy Graham, to create her own domestic sphere outside of the familial constraints.[11] This trope can also be seen in other works of fiction including Flora Thompson's trilogy *Lark Rise to Candleford*, where the local postmistress, Miss Dorcas Lane, was an unmarried woman who had inherited her father's wheelwright and blacksmith business and later added the local post office to her ventures.[12] She is depicted as a strong independent woman who, in another age, would have worked the forge as a blacksmith herself but instead used the role of postmistress as an 'outlet for her energy', a role that provided her with entertainment through the 'supervision of her neighbours' affairs and the study and analysis of their motives'.[13] Miss Lane may not have had a domestic family, but the Post Office put her in an important caretaker role within the local community.

Outside the literary sphere, there is evidence that increasing regulation encompassing family and work in the nineteenth century encouraged the construction of postal workers and civil servants in isolation from their families. Following the 1853 report authored by Sir Stafford Northcote and Charles Trevelyan, the Civil Service began to slowly move away from systems of patronage into a meritocracy, with appointment by examination aiming to tilt the balance in favour of the most able employees.[14] It was hoped that this new system would encourage good performance during service whilst at the same time removing special treatment for individuals due to family connections and favouritism.[15] As a result, by 1856, work for private companies, such as the Bank of England was often viewed as a more 'secure', because patronage still functioned, and sons could be provided for.[16]

As Julie-Marie Strange has shown, for many men the identity of working was an integral part of being identified as 'good' father; it was a public sign of a father's family commitment as well as a more intimate sign of love and sacrifice, an identity that was particularly poignant when a son

followed his father in to the 'manly world of work'.[17] Though Strange was focusing on working-class men, it is possible to view the removal of patronage from the Civil Service as removing an important role of a middle-class father, from having the ability to pass his position onto his son. Work for the Post Office also influenced the construction and meaning of families in other ways. The employment of women in the 1870s, for instance, was portrayed as further eroding the status, rights, wages and masculinity of male postal workers.[18] The other side of the coin was that as the loss of patronage removed connections between the government and family at the start of employment, for women the marriage bar (female employees were obliged to leave the service when they married) theoretically ensured its removal at the end of employment. In fact, the situation was more complex than this. Though the question of employing married women was discussed in the mid-1870s, after the nationalisation of the telegraph brought large numbers of female workers into the Civil Service, the opinion that work could lead to a neglect of their duty to 'their husbands, children or society' prevailed. Yet, Andrew August has established that many poor women were in continuous employment, not just meeting domestic demands, whilst research by Amanda Wilkinson on the census reveals that many women of all classes were accurately recorded 'in employment'.[19] In the particular context of the Post Office, working regulations may have been designed to keep family and working life separate but for some women (particularly for those working in smaller family-run Post Offices across the country) it is likely that they could identify as worker *and* family member and that these identities were entwined.[20] This linking of the working and domestic sphere (mirrored in Carol Beardmore's chapter for this volume wherein to be successful the Victorian GP needed a wife who actively participated in his practice) is an important contribution to the family history literature that emerges out of this chapter.

These issues are explored further below, but in the meantime, it is arguably the issue of how those at the end of their working lives (or their families in the event of death) that, on the face of it, epitomises how work and family became separated in the context of the Post Office. The issue of the provision for families in death is a much wider theme in this volume, as Geoff Monks, Regina Poertner and Kim Price show. It was also a central concern for contemporaries across the wealth and social spectrum. Aston, for instance, has shown how businesswomen used their position to assist vulnerable family members, leaving trusts for

male and female relatives.[21] Similarly, John Tosh has characterised the nineteenth-century man as 'distant or fond father' rather than an absent father, and McLeod has demonstrated the experience of many fathers as viewing the family as 'sacred' frequently involved in family leisure activities including cycling, rambling, theatres, music hall or music at home.[22] Middle-class men, as many civil servants were, took their role as a father and role model seriously, and through gaining financial support for family after death they could promote notions of respectability at home even if they were absent from it.[23] Making such provision, however, became increasingly complex. By the early nineteenth century, as we have seen, patronage and 'Old Corruption', such as sinecures and reversions which had characterised public office as property, were increasingly contentious.[24] Salaries and superannuation came to be seen as the best way of compensating civil servants as the government wanted to maintain mechanisms that promoted loyalty and service but reduce the cost by ensuring the system of remuneration could not be bought, sold or inherited. The 1810 Superannuation Act was part of an attempt to make irregular emoluments redundant by providing a clear structure of remuneration with clear conditions and set scales of payment. Pressure for further change was maintained through radicals like William Cobbett whose newspaper regularly printed the Civil List and, in 1817, adamantly protested 'that I have not included here one single person, who has any pretention to 'public merit of any kind whatsoever'.[25] Further reforms followed in the 1820s and 1830s, which also encompassed regulation of civil servant superannuation. These reforms aimed to put further controls on the economic conditions of the retirement payment, making it a contributory fund for some employees, reducing the scale of payments to recipients, and giving greater discretionary powers to the Treasury on who could receive payment and how much they should get.

Working for the Civil Service was for men, then, usually seen as a life career which increasingly equated to secure pensionable employment. Parents would often exert a degree of influence upon their children to compete for jobs that would shelter their offspring from the normal uncertainties of life, although this would inevitably mean lower remuneration for their toil.[26] The idea of extending formal pensions for the Civil Service was put forward by the MP for Portsmouth, George Staunton, in March 1844 and illustrated his belief that parliament and the state had a responsibility to provide financial support for the families of civil servants'.[27] The pre-cursor for this motion was his desire to give pensions to

the families of the Rev. Dr Robert Morrison and his son, John Robert Morrison. These two men had served government and subsequently died in China.[28] The relatives of the Revd Morrison and his son were not in financial need but were seen as deserving due to the work of their kin. Traditionally the government and the Crown had used mechanisms, such as the Civil List, to provide financial support for individuals and their families as a reward for loyalty or to assist those who had fallen on hard times and the 1810 Committee on Public Expenditure defended sinecures on this principle.[29] Staunton may have had tradition on his side, but he was quickly forced to withdraw his motion as the suggestion was decidedly unpopular.

During the 1850s the landscape was to change further, culminating in the most important of the nineteenth-century Superannuation Acts, that of 1859. This Act standardised the conditions under which a civil servant could apply for a pension based on conditions of length of service and age as well as character and conduct. It also made pension rights applicable to all grades and offices within the Civil Service and removed employee salary contributions. These were important changes, but their ultimate effect was to remove claims from an employee's family. By being a non-contributory pension, the government felt they were removing any ownership of the pension and consequently any familial claim to remuneration in the event of an employee's death. This is a further example of how government actions tended towards the separation of work and workers from family in the particular context of the Post Office. As Kim Price has also shown for some professional families in his chapter for this volume, making any provision for unexpected familial events such as death could in turn weigh heavily on breadwinners. Unsurprisingly, then, the passage of the 1859 Act was not uncontentious and nor was it the last word on the relationship between the families of Post Office workers and the state. It is to these matters that the rest of the chapter turns.

The Superannuation Debates

The campaign preceding the 1859 Superannuation Act outlined the perceptions of the civil servants and the government on the role of family and where responsibility lay for their continued support. By 1848, a special committee of civil servants had been established and a petition sent to parliament demanding that family members be recognised and

compensated in the event of a civil servant's death. The campaign had little impact at first and it took the establishment of the *Civil Service Gazette* in 1853 to reach a wider audience. The *Gazette* championed the campaign for changes in the superannuation system from its first publication and used emotive language similar to the 1848 petition. The first editorial declared that though the government had taken hundreds of thousands of pounds of deductions from pay through the 1834 Superannuation Act, 'widows and orphans of servants were dying'.[30] Statistics were used to emphasise the scale of the problem. With conditions that stipulated a minimum age of sixty-five for retirement the paper calculated that 'according to the ordinary laws of mortality', only ten out of 100 men would receive any of their superannuation contributions back.[31] Moreover, a return from 7964 civil servants counted over 20,000 dependents that would be left without income if no provision was given to family members on death.[32] The committee also broadened its activities, supporting William Farr, a civil servant and statistician, to present a paper to the Statistical Society of London entitled 'Statistics of the Civil Service of England with Observations on the Constitution of Funds to provide for Fatherless Children and Widows'.[33] Pressure was increased by the numerous letters to the editor of *The Times* and the occasional reprint of articles from the *Civil Service Gazette*, which helped to draw a wider audience.[34] However, when the government started to look at superannuation it was the large discrepancies in salary and benefits across the Civil Service that caught their attention, rather than any issues related to families. By the end of 1854, the committee had been informed that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, William Gladstone, was hoping to form a measure.[35] In 1856, the subsequent Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir George Cornewall Lewis, brought a Bill to the House of Commons to alter the scale of pension payments. This attempt to change a small part of the superannuation provision resulted in a Select Committee in 1856, a Royal Commission in 1857 and a new Superannuation Act in 1859 that eventually removed deductions and standardised the benefit across the Service, as we have seen above.

The removal of a family claim was something that had been carefully thought-out and argued in the lead up to the 1859 Act. The 1857 Royal Commission on Civil Service pensions set out three reasons why they felt civil servants should receive a pension: firstly was the need to relieve the civil servant of 'anxiety respecting his future' by providing support should he become too old or infirm to work; secondly long service

should be rewarded as 'public opinion would not allow that such a man should be permitted to starve'; and finally it would be in the government's advantage that civil servants would not continue working after he has 'become incompetent to perform his duties' whether that was due to ill-health or old age to ensure the efficiency of government.[36] These reasons were also used to support the government's arguments against providing for family. Firstly, if the welfare of their family was causing a civil servant anxiety they should buy private insurance, noting that 'it cannot be doubted that those who would suffer anxiety on this subject would be likely to have recourse to this means'.[37] The individual was seen as responsible for their family and consequently should use private insurance to provide for them in case of their death. Secondly, they believed that public opinion did not support the idea of giving state assistance to the families of employees.[38] Finally, they felt there was no relation to the efficient workings of government and providing support for widows and orphans, and that as this was the most important reason for providing a pension to staff, family had no claim to it. As a result, the 1859 Superannuation Act focused on the relationship between employer and employee. The absence of a narrative of family in this context stands in sharp distinction to wider Victorian reinventions of the importance of family for social stability and moral regulation.[39]

Following the 1859 Superannuation Act the matter appeared settled. It was not, and the issue regarding families raised its head again towards the end of the century in ways that are important for the agenda of this volume as set out by the editors in their Introduction. Thus, in November 1896 a meeting was organised by the Post Office's telegraph clerks that brought together representatives from twenty-five Civil Service departments. The purpose of the meeting was to address the growing dissatisfaction with the 1859 Superannuation Act and its lack of provision for the widows and orphans of deceased civil servants. Mr A. S. Nicholson, chairman of the London branch of the Postal Telegraph Clerk's Association, chaired the meeting and called for a one-off payment for 'heirs-at-law of civil servants' if a servant died in service.[40] The meeting argued that this was justified because Civil Service pensions were deferred pay and consequently servants indirectly paid towards their pensions throughout their working life by receiving smaller salaries than they would elsewhere. Deductions were effectively made more subtly than they had been prior to 1859 but with the same impact on civil servants' ability to buy private insurance, and consequently they felt their families

had a right to some compensation from this money. Furthermore, there was a suggestion that this was provided by other employers and so, as Venables concluded, 'the Government of the richest country in the world should show a good example and not lag behind the enterprise of private employers and public companies'.[41]

This meeting was the start of what became known in the Civil Service as the deferred pay movement. Their campaign for provision for families was based on the principle of how the Civil Service pension was defined. A hint of the debates surrounding definitions of the superannuation that raged in the 1890s and 1900s were initially seen during a Royal Commission on 'Civil Establishments' that published two reports in 1887 and 1888. The Commission was wide-ranging; it collected evidence, and made suggestions, on the system of superannuation for the Civil Service's clerical staff. Its recommendation of introducing a 5% deduction that would be paid to the employee or their family, along with interest, upon leaving the service or death, was not taken up by government. The Commission did, however, demonstrate the ambiguity surrounding the definition of the superannuation for civil servants.[42] This is best represented by the evidence of Francis Mowatt, at this time permanent officer at the Treasury, responsible for granting pensions.[43] For Mowatt the definition related to how pensions were viewed and administered rather than calculated, and he conceded an alternative view, stating:

> I think the definition of deferred pay, though convenient, is not exact; because if it were adopted it would carry with it some consequences which are not recognised in our present system. If pensions were deferred pay it would be the absolute property of a civil servant. You must give it to him whenever and for whatever cause he retires, or if he should die in the service it would belong to his estate.[44]

Following the 1896 meeting, a committee of representatives from across the Civil Service was formed to lobby government. The evidence to the 1886 Royal Commission gave the committee various interpretations of the Civil Service superannuation, and with the support of the *Civil Service Gazette*, as well as the growing number of associations and groups that were forming within the Civil Service, they took action through memorials, articles in sympathetic newspapers and public meetings. Through their actions a Royal Commission was eventually set up specifically to re-examine the issue of Civil Service superannuation,

reporting its findings in 1903. Similarly to the 1887 Royal Commission report, the 1903 Commission recommended that some payment should be given to the widows and orphans of civil servants, but that the cost of the pensions should come from the servants themselves. A year's pay would be given to family members upon a servant's death. If a servant had retired before their death the family would still receive this payment of a year's salary assuming they had retired after forty years' service. However, if they had retired before forty years' service the family would only receive a sum if the retired servant had not been paid the equivalent of a year's salary through their pension. The family would receive the difference between the amount paid out in pensions and a year's salary. To pay for this additional benefit all pensions were to be reduced by a fourth from a fraction of one-sixtieth of their salaries to one-eightieth, ensuring deductions were not introduced and that the cost still lay with civil servants and not government.[45] The civil servants had, to an extent, achieved what they set out to do, establishing some recompense for their families, but this was not a formal acknowledgment of responsibility from the government, nor was it an acceptance that Civil Service pensions were a form of deferred pay, it was simply the redistribution of a benefit already given to government employees.

These events reveal an important aspect of wider attitudes towards family in Victorian Britain. Over the course of the campaigns, civil servants never argued against the typical middle-class workers' values that followed the Smilesian doctrine of self-help. They still believed that they had a responsibility to provide for their families.[46] Instead, they argued that the superannuation made it impossible for them to carry out this responsibility. Private insurance and saving-clubs were not absent from the Service. There is limited evidence of cooperative efforts amongst the lower class public servants in the Post Office characteristic of working-class benefit societies, but generally this type of behaviour was discouraged, and if performed done in secret.[47] The Post Office department did provide subsidised private insurance for its employees from the mid-1850s, building on an earlier fund for widows and orphans.[48] Yet, by the end of the nineteenth century it was evident that this scheme was not enough to end campaigns for more direct involvement of the British government for civil servant families. Paul Johnson has argued that different types of employment brought with them differing customs and practices, and the Civil Service was no exception.[49] Added to the middle-class ideals of self-help was an expectation of help and support from

their employer, the British government. This culture stemmed from having a workforce that encompassed a vast range of classes in varying roles and with varying salaries, combined with a history of reward through the loyalty of service or ownership of position. These workers were, in effect, part of a government family and the head of that family—parliament—had as much responsibility as workers for laying down the basis for long-term familial stability.

It may have been this construct and the belief in the responsibility of the employer that it embodied, combined with a varied experience of different grades and occupation within the Civil Service, which explains why the campaigns neglected an alternative potential argument about the role and value of family in the Civil Service, the role of family members in the working lives of Civil Servants. As the following section will outline this was a valid claim for employees of the Post Office working across the country within Post Offices as postmasters, postmistress, telegraph clerks and letter carriers. Family played an important role when workers were incapacitated due to ill-health or as part of the everyday efficiency of a small local post office, but this was never translated to family working towards state efficiency. Instead these roles are glimpsed through the superannuation applications of employees and supporting census data. These sources reveal much about the meaning of family in the Victorian period and implicitly and explicitly pick up the theme of the 'quality' of family life and kinship relations that can be found in most of the chapters in this volume.

The Familial Role in Postal Work

Despite the continued insistence by the government in the second half of the nineteenth century that family had no impact on the activities of their workforce, pension records suggest otherwise. Family members infrequently appear in the pension records of postal employees. Out of over 650 applications for 1861 and 1891 only a few mention a family member taking an active role in postal work and assisting the applicant in some way. However, their existence at all is extraordinary as this demonstrates an official acknowledgement of their role, sometimes paid sometimes not. This small number is suggestive of a much larger cohort of family members taking action to support or replace a family member by carrying out their public duty. Four case studies will be examined using records from the Postal Museum's archive and census returns to uncover

further information on the role of family in the working lives of each applicant.

One of the most obvious ways a family member could assist in the work of the Post Office was to physically take the place of an employee when they were ill. In July 1861, William Wales was applying for a superannuation allowance after ten years and one month's service as a rural messenger in Spilsby, Lincolnshire. At the age of only fifty-six, his retirement was the result of a disease of the lungs and he was recorded as having stopped working in May 1861. Nevertheless, his absences notes stated that William had been off sick for twenty-eight days in 1859 and 'since August 1860 he has been assisted by his son'.[50] William had clearly been sick for a long time but tried to keep working for as long as possible, perhaps to get over the ten-year service mark and be able to claim a pension. All pension applications recorded the amount of time an employee had taken off sick in the previous ten years, and it was not uncommon for some to have taken nearly a year off before officially retiring, though this was regularly accounted for in the subsequent pension that was granted. Furthermore, if a substitute had to be employed, the amount of pay the substitute received was normally deducted from the employee's wages. William Wales earned £36 10s and having been employed by the Post Office for ten years and one month could receive up to ten-sixtieths of his wages. He received exactly this in August 1861, amounting to £6 1s 8d per annum. No deduction was made for the length of time he was off sick, and no note was included regarding having to pay a substitute in his stead.[51] This suggests that the work of his son was accepted as William's work and consequently the authorities felt that no deduction was necessary. The complexity of the situation is apparent when looking at the 1861 census, where William Wales is listed as a Post Office messenger, and his son, Edward Wales, aged nineteen is listed as a sub-post office messenger.[52] The Post Office employed large numbers of part-time staff, who were considered unestablished employees; they did not have to go through the extended recruitment process, and were consequently not entitled to any of the benefits such as sick pay or a pension.[53] Edward Wales appears to have been one of these unestablished Post Office employees, but because he was related and lived with the employee he was substituting, the Post Office did not appear concerned about paying him separately. This sort of intra-familial support contrasts with the separation of work and family assumed in much contemporary commentary as outlined above, but also speaks to the quality

of family relations in a way that can normally only be found in the diaries used by Kim Price and Geoff Monks elsewhere in this volume.

John Trerise's son was similarly recorded as having taken over his father's duties as letter carrier around the Lizard area of Cornwall in June 1859. John was forced to retire due to consumption and his absence notes stated that 'since he [John Trerise] has stopped work in June 1859, his son has carried out his duty and collected his wages'. Though the application was dated August 1861, as with the case of William and Edward Wales, the work carried out by John Trerise's son still counted towards his pension, and, having started work in December 1844, he was granted sixteen-sixtieths of his wages.[54] In the 1861 census, John's eldest son, Joseph, aged seventeen, was listed as rural post messenger, not a sub or unestablished employee, suggesting he either did not see an importance in that distinction or considered his role as justifying the full title.[55] We know Joseph was not an established employee as this only happened in February 1863 two years after his father had been pensioned and died.[56] Joseph may have officially replaced his father on the walk from Mullion to The Lizard in 1863, but he was continuing a round he had been walking since 1859.[57]

It was due to family support that William Wales and John Trerise were able to remain officially in service and apply for a pension, though neither man was able to take advantage of this pension as both died shortly after receiving it.[58] Consequently it was the Post Office which gained the full benefit of the family cooperation and support, providing a seamless service and continuity in areas a considerable distance from the central offices in London, and in the case of the Trerise family providing a smooth transition of a new rural messenger. These are only two records of this practice that survive as it was recorded within the pension application, but it is likely that children were a useful way of ensuring the post continued to travel, particularly in rural locations.

It is perhaps unsurprising that the more frequent references to family within the Post Office pension records relate to postmasters and postmistresses. Alongside the introduction of the uniform penny post in 1840, the Post Office of the mid-nineteenth century was focused on growth, ensuring the post was accessible to as many people across the country as possible. An important part of this growth was increasing the number of post offices, and consequently a large rise in the number of postmasters and postmistresses. In 1840 there had been 4028 post offices across the country, but by 1854 this had more than doubled to

9973, each with an appointed postmaster or postmistress.[59] By 1861, the figure had reached 11,391 and continued to climb to 13,763 in 1877 and 21,311 in 1898.[60] Though the work of postmasters and postmistresses was regulated by the central office, postmasters had the ability to employ their own staff and enjoyed relative autonomy to run their post office as a family business. As Andrew Sutherland, the postmaster of Broadford in Scotland, had taken on other roles within the community including Inspector of the Poor and Factory clerk, his pension applications attempted to reassure the Treasury that these roles did not require much time and that any shortfall was covered by his wife.[61] Similarly to the treatment of the work of sons, the work of wives appears to have been accepted as the equivalent to that of the established employee. However, the status of women and the involvement of the family was more complex in the Post Office, as a number of pension records show.

Thus, Jonathan Welsby, the postmaster at Prescot post office was paid an allowance for employing his wife as an assistant. The allowance was included in the calculation of his wages and that of his pension.[62] This suggests that the Post Office and Treasury accepted the role of a postmaster's wife and may have offered some sort of salary, through her husband, if this work was viewed as supplementary and not just a substitute. In the 1891 census Jonathan's wife, Jane, is not listed as having any occupation.[63] This obviously does not mean that she did not work in the post office at all, but contrasts with a listing for Jonathan and Jane's daughter, Margaret who was listed as a sorting clerk and telegraphist.[64] Margaret Welsby was born in 1849 and by her early twenties she was working in the post office with her brother who worked as a telegraph assistant. Upon marrying a former telegraph clerk, Adam Broady, Margaret and her new husband lived with her family as Adam now took the role as postmaster's assistant. However, after Adam's death in 1882, Margaret applied to make her role official and was appointed on the Post Office establishment as a clerk and telegraphist at Prescot, her father's post office. Furthermore, upon her father's retirement Margaret became the official postmistress of the Prescot post office.[65] It is not entirely clear in the census or Post Office records how much work Jonathan's wife, Jane, did in the Prescot post office, but the role of an assistant was acknowledged in some capacity. In contrast the work of Jonathan's daughter, Margaret was only acknowledged because of her husband's death.

Marriage meant that many other women were unable to get their work acknowledged and to receive the benefits that would have been associated with it. This problem around the status of a working wife of a postmaster is exemplified in the case of Elizabeth Woodston, postmistress at Kettering. Elizabeth held and maintained her role as postmistress before and after her marriage. However according to Post Office and Civil Service rules, once married the employment transferred to her husband. In 1891, aged seventy-one, Elizabeth Woodston applied for a pension. The Post Office secretary trying to argue her case explained:

> On her marriage in 1859 it became necessary to transfer the Kettering office from Mrs Woolston's name to that of her husband, in order to meet the requirements of the then existing Law under which a married woman was disabled from holding the office of postmistress. The transfer, however, was little more than nominal. She continued to perform the duties much as before and indeed for some years prior to his death in July last Mr Woolston was too infirm to take any part at all in the active work of the Office. Thus Mrs Woolston was to all intents and purposes postmistress of Kettering from June 1854 to November 1890 and the postmaster general trusts that her claim to pension in respect to that period may not be prejudiced by a mere nominal transfer made in compliance with a legal provision which has since been annulled.[66]

The Treasury's response was blunt. It would not count her service during the time her husband was alive as she would have officially been an assistant postmistress and not an established employee. In addition, the time she worked as an official employee did not amount to ten years, and as she lost her position due to marriage, not because she was over sixty or too infirm to work, they did not consider her for a pension. Elizabeth Woolston had worked for the Post Office for over fifty years, thirty-one of those had been whilst she was married. Following the death of Samuel Woolston, the previous year, Elizabeth had attempted to gain some security for her in old age, and it had been supported by the Post Office officials. Yet, according to the Treasury the benefit of a pension was not Elizabeth's to claim, it was her husband's. This response left Elizabeth Woolston in a tough position. Being over seventy, she could not continue to work for the Post Office and so she had to leave the service with nothing to show for her fifty years' service. With no independent income, Elizabeth moved in with her son's family, where she remained

until her death in July 1914.[67] This sort of forced family fluidity resonates strongly with the cases analysed by Steven King in his chapter for this volume.

Through these four case studies it is possible to see the variety of ways families were let down by the Civil Service superannuation system. Through the roles of substitute or assistant, family members could take a position that was unestablished, so not subject to the benefits of officially working for the Post Office. These roles enabled the official or established employee to continue to work efficiently, either through a period of ill-health or to maintain the running of a local post office. However, as the unofficial family member could derive little advantage, apart from possibly experience, ultimately it was the Post Office and Treasury that benefited. The case studies described here are a reflection of the information contained within superannuation applications and it is likely census records may open up the role of families to a far greater extent. The 1908 Old Age Pensions Act is frequently depicted as changing the definition and representation of who deserved support from the public purse in old age.[68] It is no coincidence that a reformed Superannuation Act, including a small provision for civil servants' family members, followed in 1909. The concept of who was deemed acceptable to receive financial welfare had broadened, and though the government never acknowledged that the families of civil servants deserved this payment, it was willing to make the concession.

Conclusion

Between 1840 and 1910 the relationship between civil servants and the British government was a tug-of-war between old and reform ideas, which were crystallised in the campaign for changes in the superannuation system. Removing patronage and family pensions on the Civil List may have attempted to limit family as a site of privilege, but there was also a desire to maintain older ideas that relied on structures of loyalty, service and financial reward. Similarly to how the government managed the emerging financial markets and corporate governance, civil servants were handled through a mix of individualism and *lasses-faire* ideology with older ideas of collectivism.[69] On the one hand they were the picked men of their class with a range of individual benefits, but they were also unable to offer the opportunities to family that clerks in other industries

could through systems of patronage or contributory pensions and insurance.[70] They consequently chose superannuation as their battleground, able to persist with arguments of family ownership of a benefit that echoed of the pre-reform era, whilst also questioning their own ability to meet their self-help responsibility. Yet, through the examination of a number of case studies it is clear that on the basis of the idea of reward for service many family members of postal workers deserved recompense they never received.

Post Office pension applications clearly show that the relationship between family and the work of Post Office was more complex than the Treasury and government were willing to acknowledge. Contrary to the reasons stated against providing for civil servants' families, there is evidence that family members were important for the smooth and efficient running of the government machine, maintaining the postal network when relatives were sick or incapacitated. Furthermore, in the many thousands of post offices across the country family members were taking on unpaid or, at least, unestablished and unofficial roles. These roles were important enough to them and their identities that they would list them in the census, but their unestablished nature left them with no security or benefits from the Treasury.

Campaigners for old age pensions, such as the MP Henry Broadhurst argued that pensions should be a 'reward of the aged poor for the labour of a lifetime given to the nation', stating that this benefit was no different to Civil Service superannuation.[71] On this basis the family members of postal employees also had a sound claim on government but this was not voiced in any coherent way. Instead civil servants used the old age pension campaign as proof that their superannuation was defined as deferred pay and consequently their property that could be claimed upon by family. The 1909 Superannuation Act did eventually make some provision for families, but importantly, it did not acknowledge a definition of deferred payment. In doing so it opened up the possibility for family to be acknowledged in the Civil Service superannuation system, not necessarily defined as being owed by the government, but as a concession to reward the civil servants and viewed through the lens of the financial relationship between employee and employer. The Post Office pension applications have thrown light on this issue for only a handful of cases, but they do suggest that unofficial familial work was being conducted on a much larger scale and deserves greater attention and research. In this sense, civil servant campaigns for greater provision for families took the wrong line of argument. Rather than focusing on the deductions and

definitions of the salaries and pensions, there should have been a greater focus on the contribution family made to the working lives of government employees. Far from being the source of worry and stress, family supported and contributed the work of government.

These observations are, of course, important for the wider literature on the history of the family. The continued resistance of the state to recognising wider pension liabilities coloured the sense that the Post Office was an alternative family. The position of the state is in this sense juxtaposed with the attitudes of individual family members as revealed in the case studies used here. Particularly at times of stress (such as illness) but also in 'normal' times, dealing with the post was not infrequently a family affair. Individual families, in other words, collectivised the notion of family in a way that the state was unwilling to do and the sense of grievance from employees facing ineligibility for pensions must have been palpable. The quality of family relationships must, against this backdrop, have been strong and this sense of strength is also played out in other chapters for this volume. We have also seen that not getting a pension could change the nature and constellation of family arrangements, much as Steven King argues in his chapter. Above all, and whether the state was willing to recognise it or not, this crucial function of the Victorian state—the delivery of letters and information—made the individual family into a national family, something which has import for the way we conceive and define 'the family' in this period.

Notes

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3. See contributions to N. Pemberton, P. Thane, and N. Whiteside (eds.) (2006) *Britain's Pension Crisis: History and Policy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press).
4. The first Superannuation Act was in 1810. Further Acts were passed in 1822, 1824 and 1834.

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6. Thomas, *Postal Pleasures*, p. 81.
7. Tadmor, *Family and Friends.*
8. Thomas, *Postal Pleasures*, p. 82.
9. A. Trollope (1877) 'The Young Women at the London Telegraph Office', *Good Words*, 18, p. 378.
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12. F. J. Thompson (1957) *Lark Rise to Candleford* (London: Oxford University Press), pp. 408–414.
13. Ibid., pp. 445–447.
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15. P. Joyce (2013) *The State of Freedom: A Social History of the British State Since 1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pp. 200–201 and p. 26.
16. Evidence from R. M. Baring to 1856 Select Committee on Civil Service Superannuation.
17. J. M. Strange (2015) *Fatherhood and the British Working Class, 1865–1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pp. 25 and 38.
18. Thomas, *Postal Pleasures*, p. 2.
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20. See M. Daunton (1985) *Royal Mail: The Post Office Since 1840* (London: Continuum International Publishing), pp. 219–220. For further work on the Post Office and the marriage bar see H. Glew (2010) 'Women's Employment in the General Post Office, 1914–1939' (Unpublished PhD thesis, University of London, Institute of Historical Research), pp. 119–166; E. Higgs and A. Wilkinson (2016) 'Women, Occupations and Work in the Victorian Censuses Revisited', *History Workshop Journal*, 81:1, pp. 17–38.
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23. Ibid., pp. 71–72.
24. P. Harling (2006) 'The Powers of the Victorian State', in P. Mandler (ed.) *Liberty and Authority in Victorian Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), p. 29.
25. *Cobbett's Weekly Political Register* (London, UK), 30 August 1817, Issue 22.
26. E. N. Gladden (1967) *Civil Services of the United Kingdom, 1855–1870* (London: Cass), p. 41.
27. 'Rev. Dr. Morrison', *Hansard HC Debate*, 26 March 1844, vol. 73, cc.1574–87.
28. Reverend Dr Robert Morrison had gone to China as a missionary, but was later employed by the East India Company, transferring to the Crown as Chinese secretary when the Company's Charter had expired. He worked as an interpreter and negotiator but also authored a voluminous Chinese and English dictionary, as well as translations of the New Testament into Chinese. John Robert Morrison took up his father's role as Chinese secretary after his death and was viewed as having an important role in the Treaty of Nanking (1842), which ended the First Opium War, due to his knowledge and understanding of the Chinese language and people. See 'Rev. Dr. Morrison', *Hansard HC Debate*, 26 March 1844, vol. 73, cc.1574–87.
29. P. Harling (1996) *The Waning of 'Old Corruption': The Politics of Economical Reform in Britain 1779–1846* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), p. 110.
30. 'Superannuation Fund', *The Civil Service Gazette*, 1 January 1853, p. 10.
31. *The Civil Service Gazette*, 1 January 1853, p. 7.
32. Ibid. The return from 7964 men stated they had 5369 wives and 16,331 children of which 10,506 were under fifteen.
33. W. Farr (1849) 'Statistics of the Civil Service of England with Observations on the Constitution of Funds to provide for Fatherless Children and Widows', *Journal of the Statistical Society of London*, 12:2, pp. 103–124.
34. Letters were printed in *The Times*, 1 March 1853, p. 8; *The Times*, 3 March 1853, p. 5; *The Times*, 4 May 1853, p. 7; *The Times*, 22 November 1853, p. 8; *The Times*, 23 November 1853, p. 12; *The Times*, 20 October 1854, p. 10.
35. *Civil Service Gazette* reprinted in *The Times*, 9 December 1854, p. 10.
36. 1857 Royal Commission on the operation of the Superannuation Act, xi.
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40. *The Huddersfield Daily Chronicle*, 30 November 1896, p. 3.
41. Ibid.
42. PP 1887 [5226] Royal Commission to inquire into Civil Establishments of Offices of State at Home and Abroad. First Report, Minutes of Evidence, Appendix, p. xxi.
43. Mowatt would later rise to First Lord of the Treasury. See M. Wright (2004) 'Mowatt, Sir Francis (1837–1919)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, online edition), http://0-www.oxforddnb.com.catalogue.libraries.london.ac.uk/view/article/35137, accessed 16 November 2016.
44. PP 1888 [5545] Second report of the Royal Commission appointed to inquire into the civil establishments of the different offices of state at home and abroad, with minutes of evidence, appendix, & c, p. 156.
45. PP 1903 [1744] Civil service superannuation. Report of the Royal Commission on Superannuation in the Civil Service, p. xii.
46. P. Johnson (1985) *Saving and Spending: The Working Class Economy in Britain 1870–1939* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), pp. 8–9.
47. In 1846 there was an investigation to determine if a conspiracy existed among the lower orders of the Post Office, but instead it discovered the organisation and collection of unofficial funds and raffles to support workers who had been suspended or dismissed without pay. PP 1846 (693) Post Office. Copies of papers relating to the recent investigation at the Post Office respecting letter carriers and sub-sorters.
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55. Ancestry.com, *1861 England Census*.
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57. Ibid.
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59. 1854–1855 [1913] *First Report of the Postmaster General, on the Post Office*, p. 20.
60. 1862 [2984] *Eighth Report of the Postmaster General, on the Post Office*; 1878–1879 [C. 2193] *Twenty-fourth Report of the Postmaster General on the Post Office*; 1899 [C. 9463] *Forty-fifth Report of the Postmaster General on the Post Office*.
61. PMA, *Treasury Letters*, POST 1/229, p. 634.
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63. Ancestry.com, *1891 England Census* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2005.
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PART II

Family Processes

CHAPTER 5

Step Motherhood in the Nineteenth Century: Elinor Packe and Continuing Family Cohesiveness, 1900–1911

Geoff Monks

Overview

Research on the Victorian family has yielded contradictory perspectives on both its shape and size. There is a popular conception that the Victorian family existed as a large and extended unit with several generations living in one household, bound together by a sense of duty, affection and obligation.[1] Some historical research supports this viewpoint. Stephen Ruggles compared middle-class families in Wisconsin and Lancashire, arguing that the high Victorian period was the 'golden age' of the extended family.[2] This research, and that undertaken by Richard Sennett, found that between 20 and 30% of all middle-class households contained some form of extended family group. Single parent families or even lone individuals further complicate the picture.[3] Other research is at odds with this idea and as seen throughout this volume there is persuasive evidence that working-class and middling families lived primarily in nuclear groups. It has been estimated that 80% of all people in Britain

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lived in this type of unit, and only 10% lived with their extended family.[4] This did not mean that families existed in a vacuum, or that extended family networks were not important. Indeed Michael Anderson in his work on Preston found clusters of households with the same name and originating from the same area living in close proximity.[5]

Reconciling these perspectives is not easy, and the situation is further complicated by the existence of composite families brought together by death and remarriage. It is estimated that in 1850 around 19% of all marriages would end within ten years due to the death of a spouse. This figure would rise to almost 50% at the twenty-five-year interval.[6] Against this backdrop, men were more likely to remarry than women.[7] Jennifer Phegley suggests that of 1000 single men aged twenty-five to thirty-five, some 110–112 would marry in any year but the figure for widowers was much higher at 356.[8] Some of these men and women would remarry people who had not previously been married, while other unions would bring together a widow and a widower. In both cases, it is statistically likely in the nineteenth-century that at least one party would have dependent children.[9] It is unsurprising, as Regina Poertner also suggests in this volume, that these new blended families could be seen as disruptive. The Brothers Grimm for example in their revised edition of German fairy tales turned wicked biological mothers into stepmothers to soften the evil. They altered their narrative to ensure that they did not impinge on the reverence in which motherhood should be held.[10] Victorian novelists often took up the same theme, with step-parents exhibiting exaggerated personality traits and failings which in biological parents were often played down.[11] In the light of the changes made in the mid-century wherein the birth mother had been given at least a measure of legal sanction, it is not surprising that a stepmother might hold an ambiguous position both in the historiography of the family and in contemporary literature.[12] On the other hand, Christine Poulson argues that many women writers appeared sympathetic to the problems which a second wife might confront. When a widower married a younger woman, his wife could find herself having to care for and cope with another woman's children to exacting standards. Indeed, in some ways, the novel of the mid-Victorian period was often viewed as an advice manual. The second wife frequently appeared initially as an inexperienced and inept young woman but often this genre of books concluded with her success, overcoming the adversity and emerging as an accepted and successful stepmother and an integral part of a newly reshaped family.[13]

The historical record is perhaps more complicated, not least because second and third remarriages were relatively common, thus creating immensely complex family and kinship groupings comprising of existing children, new birth children, new and 'inherited' in-laws, multiple grandparents and various layers of fictive kin.[14] The families thus created emblematise the common themes of this volume including the fluidity of kinship connections, the porosity of family boundaries and the movement of stepfathers or much more commonly stepmothers and possibly step-siblings into new and reconstituted family groups. Judged against this backdrop, there is support for Gordon and Nair's argument that historians have placed too much emphasis on a Victorian family that is 'intensely nuclear' and inward-looking when in fact the opposite was often the case.[15] Yet, if stepfamilies with young and teenaged children appear frequently in the social landscape of the nineteenth-century the question of how these families were experienced remains remarkably thinly explored. This chapter thus reconstructs what happened to the links forged between a stepmother and stepchildren as they reached adulthood, and will examine how they continued after the death of their natural parent. In particular it will, through a case study approach using the diaries of Elinor Packe, investigate ongoing affiliation with stepchildren across both time and space. Historians such as Peter Laslett have concentrated on the idea of the nuclear family of father, mother and siblings living under one roof with the natural progression of the children forging new households and family groups of their own. The relationship between Elinor Packe and her stepchildren demonstrates the closeness of reshaped families, an area that is missing from the historiography. The chapter will begin firstly with an exploration of the sources used and survey the background to the Packe family themselves, before moving to examine the kinship links between a stepmother and her stepchildren and the ways in which these continued to develop even after they had left home.

Sources and Background to the Packe Family

Exploring textual sources from the past, historians, social linguists, genealogists and others who read historical documents often feel 'a sense of touching the past'. Nowhere is this truer than when working with 'ego documents' or first-person writings in the form of letters and autobiographical writing such as memoirs, diaries and travelogues.[16] When using

these sources, they should be examined for what they are: 'a frosted window to past communication'.[17] Corresponding through the written word allowed family members who had moved from the family home to continue to share details of life both at home and abroad. Letters exerted an emotional pull and David Gerber argues that a personal letter was an instant and personal artefact of an absent loved one.[18] Recipients of letters both then and more recently have often described the thrill of seeing through the writing on the envelope the writer's unique self. A personal letter is, however, simultaneously both a poor substitute for the missing loved one and a visual embodiment of that individual. It illustrates the absence but assists the correspondents in continuing to build on and develop relationships which might otherwise have been rendered fragile by long-standing absences. Gerber has questioned why immigrant correspondents should care so profoundly about both receiving and sending letters. He suggests that the giving and receiving of letters was firstly tangible evidence of their loved ones continued existence and secondly a mechanism for continued familial intimacy with those from whom they were separated.[19] The sight of hand-writing is in a sense reassuring. Emigrants embarked on a journey of reconfiguring their lives. They negotiated enormous physical and cultural spaces in order to hopefully achieve both prosperity and greater personal independence. Writing to relatives and kin networks left at home created a common theme in this narrative.[20] Indeed, the importance of receiving letters as a means of maintaining close-knit ties is reflected in Cara Dobbing's examination of patients in the Garlands Asylum as well as for the children who were taken in by the Waifs and Strays Society analysed by Steven Taylor in their respective chapters for this volume. Yet, ego documents such as the letters and diaries used here are not without their problems. As a source, diaries are without context. We often have no idea as to why a diary might have been started. The people who appear in their pages can be shadowy characters, so we need census, births, deaths and marriage index research in order to understand the relationships and incidents recorded. Some diaries are simply records of daily occurrences. And the use of these types of ego documents has meant that research has tended to concentrate on the middling strata of society as these are the people who felt the most inclined or had the time to both construct and reflect on their lives and ideas of kinship.[21] The current chapter is no exception. On the other hand, ego documents might be constructed as a record as close to

speech as non-fictional historical texts can be, and they undoubtedly provide a unique insight into an individual's thoughts and emotions.[22]

Elinor Isham married Henry Vere Packe in 1880, he was aged fifty-four she was ten years his junior. This was Henry's second marriage; he had been married Helen Sarah Bruce who had died at the age of forty-seven in 1877.[23] Together they had had ten children, four of whom had died in infancy often within months of their birth. Another son Robert Christopher had died at sixteen in 1877 just a few months before the family were hit with the death of Sarah herself. Henry was the Rector at Shangton in Leicestershire and the census reveals he was a man with sufficient funds to employ a number of servants including a governess for the children:[24] In the immediate days following his wife's death this would have ensured the smooth running of his household. As a group they were not unusual and death, as demonstrated by Kim Price in his contribution to this volume, was a constant factor in the lives of families for much of the Victorian period. Consequently, the Packe family had already faced considerable reconfiguration before Henry married for the second time. It would also have altered and changed shape on a regular basis as the boys (Edward, Horace and Vere) who were away at school moved in and out of the group during holidays and term time. Elinor herself was a spinster, and at the point of her marriage to Henry just Emily (aged fifteen) and Madeline (aged twelve) were at home full time. A governess also appears in the census return for 1881, presumably to educate the two girls. Henry Packe had not married a woman who was likely to add to his family (at forty-four Elinor was likely past childbearing age) or even necessarily to take care of his children. He had, however married his first cousin as the mother of Henry and the father of Elinor were brother and sister. It may be possible to surmise that family connections already existed and this made the transition to stepmother somewhat easier. In 1881 soon after her marriage the census records the family living at Henry's long-term home, the rectory at Shangton in Leicestershire. By the time of the 1891 census, however Henry Packe was ensconced in the Rectory at Lamport, Elinor's former family home. The couple would remain here until Henry's death in 1903 the house obviously being part of his living.

Like many of the families explored by Kim Price, Henry Vere Packe fitted into the old and traditional clerical profession. He had established a secure family living and his male children would forge successful careers of their own. In this instance the loss of a mother seems to have had

less impact than the untimely deaths of fathers which impacted on Price's Dundee families. The Packe's are not the working and farming classes explored by Iain Riddell in his chapter for this volume, but the connection between Elinor Packe and her stepchildren exhibits the same desire to remain in touch. The extended correspondence between different kinship groups allowed families to share in each other's lives and as the postal system improved with those who lived outside of Great Britain. Consequently, it is only as adults that we can observe the relationship between Elinor and her stepchildren. While the historiography looks scantily at stepfamilies in this period there is an almost complete lack of knowledge as to what happens to these family groups at adulthood.[25]

The Packe's and Their Interconnections

There is no doubt that marriage in an age when society emphasised the natural separation of the spheres gave many women both a sense of identity and worth.[26] In residential terms widows often appeared, as did Elinor Packe after the death of Henry Packe, as heads of households. For Elinor Packe widowhood must have had an intense impact for it meant the loss of the home which she had inhabited as both a child and as a wife, and by 1911 she, as will be seen later, was living in Surrey as head of the household and part of a wider extended family. Her diaries are not overly emotional and it would be easy to assume that the loss of her husband meant little but on the first anniversary in 1904 she simply recorded 'First anniversary of my sad loss'.[27] Elinor had not worked before her marriage to Henry Packe and the three years before his death which are covered by her diary indicate a life of relative ease spent visiting friends both locally and further afield. Throughout, her diurnal writings, which are in the main short and detailed the closeness and affiliations that she maintained with her stepchildren. All three male children appear as successful men. Horace after curacies in Hastings, Darrington and Georgetown left England and became chaplain to the Gold Coast Colony. This was just the beginning of a number of moves until he became Vicar of Suva in Fiji, although there would be one more final journey in his career. In 1907 he and his family settled in New Zealand where he took up the position of Vicar at Wakatipu. In 1913 and with promotion he became Archdeacon of Southland. Vere too would spend much of his working life far from home in the Falklands. Edward Henry settled in America. Emily (Emmie) too was successful as she pursued a nursing career,

appearing in the 1901 census at the National Temperance Hospital in London. Madeline or (Lina) remained unmarried and acted in many respects as a companion to her stepmother. Hence, Packe noted in 1906: 'Lunched with Lina Packe at 31 Cambridge Terrace. My Lina came home in the even'.[28] There is a distinct sense here of belonging. Her stepchildren were an integral part of the close family. While the relationship between these two connected women was close, it was not suffocating. Lina travelled and constantly, like her siblings, moved in and out of her stepmother's home and life as will be seen below. With a family so dispersed as the Packe's, Elinor was the one constant in England, a link against which the family could revolve. These networks though could be affected by external factors such as strikes at Valparaiso in 1907 which delayed the mail by more than two weeks.[29]

One of the best examples of the Packe connectivity is Vere Packe who is best known as the face of the Packe Brothers in the Falkland Islands. A failure to produce sons could be overcome by 'borrowing' male relatives. When Vere's uncles, who had bought major parts of the West Falklands and farmed at Fox Bay East and Dunrose Head, died without heirs Vere moved out to the territory to take up the reins of the family business in the late 1890s and married a local girl called Winifred Felton. Like many others who had settled on the Falklands, Vere returned to England in 1915 shortly after the start of the First World War. His name is on the passenger list for the Oriana and he arrived in Liverpool with his wife and five-year-old son in May 1915. This is a family that was constantly in motion, never settling anywhere overly long as exogenous factors and life-cycle events changed and reshaped the family across time and space. The importance of receiving letters from her family is evident in the Packe diaries. She recorded numerous letters which she wrote and received from the Falklands, Fiji, Queenstown in Ireland and the United States. Even today it can take around a week for a letter to arrive in the Falklands from England. Thus, receiving mail would have been exciting or the lack of them frustrating. The latter emotion is demonstrated by Elinor's comment on 6 November 1907: 'Letter from Vere by last post. No other from Falklands so disappointing'.[30]

Maintaining close links could have a profound impact on the shape of family life at home as seen through the marriage of Emmie Packe. In the 1891 census Emmie was recorded as a 'Professional Sick Nurse (certificated)' and in 1901 as a hospital nurse.[31] The nursing profession was not thought suitable as a job for a married woman, and this may explain

why she did not marry until she was thirty-eight. There is no sense in Elinor's diary as to how Emmie met Maurice Buckworth her future husband, but the introduction must have come through her brother Vere as Buckworth was also a sheep farmer in the Falklands. Iain Riddell in his chapter for this volume discusses the restriction of marriage partners for settlers in Manitoba, another locality which had imbalanced sex ratios. Problematically for small communities it was often difficult to find non-kin or those with a similar sociocultural and religious background to marry. It may well then have been that Vere's move to the Falklands provided an excellent opportunity for Maurice Buckworth to find a future wife. Emmie and Buckworth married in 1903 shortly after her father's death, and the closeness of the relationship with her stepmother is evident in the wedding planning. Elinor wrote, on 16 November 1903, 'went shopping with Lina & to see about music for the wedding'.[32] Before her marriage Emmie was nursing at the National Temperance Hospital in London and her stepmother was included in her wedding celebrations here too. She wrote: 'Tuesday. Hospital Nurses & Sisters came to see Emmie's presents'.[33] The wedding itself took place on 17 November with around forty-two people attending the reception. It was followed by a short but simple honeymoon in Bournemouth and the couple departed fairly rapidly back to the Falklands. Although Emmie was in her late thirties and well-past the optimum period of fertility, she quickly became pregnant.

Sibling kinship has been described by Leonore Davidoff as life's longest relationship, and it was therefore not unusual for her to want her sister present to help after the birth of the child.[34] The Packe's fortunately were sufficiently wealthy to make travel from England to the Falkland Islands possible. In order to be with Emmie during the latter part of her pregnancy, and to help afterwards, Elinor and Lina travelled to Liverpool in August 1904 where Lina was to embark on the 'Oripa'. Elinor spent half an hour on board before the ship sailed at noon. Although the diaries are not in any sense emotional, often reading as a mere statement of diurnal events, there are glimpses of the depth of feeling Elinor had for her stepchildren. On this occasion the diary reads: 'Sea smooth. Looked at Lina as long as she was in sight & then returned to the Hotel alone'.[35] Sending a much-cherished daughter and companion off on such a long and possibly hazardous journey must have been daunting. The correspondence between the two continued as and when it was possible on the journey south with Elinor receiving a letter on 29 August from

St Vincent.[36] Lina was not to arrive in the Falklands until mid-September, with Lina, Vere and Winnie (his wife) all writing to tell of her safe arrival. Although Emmie's baby had been born in late October it was not until late December that Elinor heard that the child had been called Madeline Elinor.[37] Lina did not return to England until May 1904 and Elinor wrote: 'Got Falkland letters & a wire from Lina today she would arrive at Euston at 1.40 I went to meet her & Mary Vaughan, both sunburnt & looking well'.[38]

Claudia Nelson argues that the presence of an unmarried adult sister could be a benefit to a household that already contained a wife since she could pay for the hospitality offered through helping to rear nephews and nieces or sharing the burdens of housekeeping.[39] In the case of Lina there is no sense from either Elinor or other family members that this attitude existed. It might be that because of their upper-class status Lina had independent means and therefore she had no need to seek financial support from either her stepmother or siblings but could move between the different family households at will as well as when family crises or events warranted. As a family the Packe's—stepmother, siblings and spouses—emblematically demonstrate the porosity of family boundaries consequent of kinship mobility. In this instance the movement was enormous as Vere and Winnifred; Emmie and Maurice; Eddy and Lilly (his first wife) and Helen (his second wife) move around almost constantly; England and the Falkland Islands being two common factors. In December 1908, for example, Lina was back in the Falkland Islands as her sister was once again pregnant. The outcome of a second pregnancy for Emmie was not so successful. Initially Elinor had recorded: 'Falkland cable received boy both doing well. Joyful news!'[40] This emotion, however, was to be short-lived. In January a letter from the Falkland Islands brought news that 'poor dear Emmie had been very dangerously ill but the Dr said she was out of danger on Dec 21st the baby was born on the 1st or 2nd at first it was thought he would not live but he got better'.[41] At the beginning of February a telegram arrived from the Falklands which revealed that Emmie was 'going on very well' which Elinor stated was a great relief.[42] Good news would be short-lived, as the child died on 3 March 1908. It was not until 19 April, more than a month and a half later, that this sad news reached England. What is evident though is that Elinor and the remaining family at home were not forgotten. The letters and telegrams which had always been frequent increased during this difficult period. Family identity and unity remained despite the

distances involved and the relationship between stepdaughter and stepmother was close-knit.

The Packe's were first generation migrants, although they all (except Horace) returned to live in Britain in later life. Historians argue that kinship links within this sort of group were the most easily maintained as they shared joint memories, in this instance of childhood. More recent research by Davidoff has suggested that being in the presence of brothers or sisters meant being able to relax in what she has called 'unconditional positive disregard'. Siblings remain an inextricable part of memory from a person's earliest world. Even in adult life, while siblings may fall out and have no contact they cannot formally divorce. As with the Packe's even when siblings take different paths they continue to be connected by an invisible thread that transcends both time and distance.[43] In our case, the strength of these ties was evident when the family, reconfigured again in 1908 when all the siblings, spouses and children (with the exception of Horace and his family) arrived in London from May onwards. The links between the siblings and their stepmother had remained strong and constant, and as the family grew it incorporated spouses, and then grandchildren. Elinor recorded a whole range of meetings and gatherings within this period. For example, on 24 June 1908 her diary records, 'Lily and the Girls & Emmie came to tea & we all went to the Chelsea Pageant' and all came to supper except 'E'.[44] This was a family group that appeared happy and content in each other's company and visited accordingly, with much coming and going. So for example, on 28 August: 'Lina went to Vere's Flat in the morng & stayed for the arrival of Maurice & Emmie from Wales'.[45] It was a time for siblings, aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, cousins and grandchildren to get to know each other again, and to reinforce and invigorate family bonds. Those forged through marriage were emphasised through the visit of Winifred's sister from Bath. Edward and Vere used the space to spend some time together shooting picking up their childhood bonds and continuing to develop their brotherly relationship through shared interests. In September the family group were in Lincolnshire and Elinor went with Edward's wife and daughter to Lincoln. While the following day the two brothers had formed part of a shooting party; '20 brace partridges & 29 hares'.[46]

This visit would reshape Vere's family more permanently as Robert Christopher (Bob) would not return with his family to the Falklands. As a nine-year-old he would be left behind at school when his family returned to their home. Elinor and Lina were to become common

factors in his life as they went to see him at school and he would then visit and stay with them during school holidays, bringing his friends as he did in 1909 when Elinor wrote 'Bob came back in morng bringing Buggy who stayed to lunch & tea'. That Bob formed part of her family is evident from the casualness of her comments when the following day she simply wrote 'Went with Bob in the morng to take Pat to the Vet'.[47] While Bob was in England he extended his family connections, getting to know and mix with his cousins who he would have been isolated from in the Falklands. Vere and Winnie came back in 1909 to see Bob. Despite it being an accepted practice to send sons away to school it must have been a wrench to have left him so far away. At the same time to have both Lina and their stepmother on hand to provide emotional support and a tangible link to his parents must have been a relief.

Relationships between brothers and sisters were as important as those between brothers. Vere and Lina were also able to rekindle their sibling relationship, going together to watch the Oxford and Cambridge cricket match and then on to the theatre staying with Mary Vaughan. While the siblings were in London Winifred, having spent some time with Elinor, went on to Grove Park to stay with her mother. There is perhaps one other reason why Winifred and Vere were back in England so soon, and this became evident in July when Elinor wrote: 'Winnie not well at 5 of a. m. Dr sent for & Nurse telegraphed for at 8. the letter arrived at 1. Baby boy born at 8.15 pm when we were at dinner'.[48] Outwardly this family were typical of Peter Laslett's nuclear family, each unit generally living in small groups of husband, wife and children. Under the surface, there is a different discourse as its interconnectedness criss-crossed a wide and diverse range of family relationships and kinship networks of spousal families. Together they evidence a much more extended range of family connections than is usually considered. Elinor Packe acted as an anchor. She manoeuvred and recorded all of the strands of family life and acted as the repository of family memories which she then shared out in her letters. She remained in this position until at least 1915 when the family (except Horace) began to return and settle in England. Her position as the family head is clear in the 1911 census when the enumerator recorded her as head of the household, with Lina her stepdaughter and Christopher Robert (Bob) her grandson and two female servants' resident in the same house.

Perhaps one of the largest re-configurations of the Packe family came with the early death of Edward's wife Lilly in late 1908. The sense of

impending tragedy came in a letter to Lina in which Lilly had stated that the doctors 'considered her in an unfit condition for an operation'.[49] Although there is no record of her death, there is a sense within the diary that she died relatively soon after the letter was sent. At this point, Edward and Lilly's eldest daughter Helen was in the Falkland Islands. She arrived at Liverpool in late March and Lina, who was packed and ready to go to friends in Exmouth, cancelled her plans and rushed to meet her niece.[50] Helen's stay in England was brief and she appears on the passenger list for the Baltic, which sailed from Liverpool on the 9 April 1909.[51] As the only single sibling, Lina once again moved into help her brother, travelling to New York and then on to her brother's in Kansas in November 1909. In her absence her stepmother managed her affairs and paid bills as necessary, illustrating that this family worked in an organised and collective fashion. Lina was away for some eight months and had written to say she was arriving at Liverpool on the 19 July 1908. Elinor's diary exhibits her delight at reuniting with her stepdaughter: 'Expected wire had come when there was a knock & ring soon after 12 so ran to the door & there was Lina!'[52] Apart from Horace who does not seem to have visited England after he and his wife sailed to Quebec in 1899, the rest of the Packe family moved around constantly. Even Edward and his new wife appear on shipping lists to the Falkland Islands. The constant letter writing between Elinor and her stepchildren and they to her was in turn probably mirrored between the siblings.

Conclusion

The Packe family as a close and meticulous microstudy highlights the contradictory perspectives of Victorian family life. Much of the research has considered middle, gentry and aristocratic families because there are the people who had the time to consider and reflect on their familial experience. These recollections highlight implicitly the problems that have been inherent in defining family. The Packe's, for example, appear on the surface to live in small nuclear family groups but in reality, their grouping is much looser and the borders of each unit, particularly among the adult siblings, more fluid and porous than has been previously considered. For example, Lina moved into and out of her brother's home in the United States and her sister's in the Falkland Islands in much the same way as the visitors in Steven King's chapter, staying for short or long-term periods. The only difference was the amount of

travel required. At home in England neither Elinor nor Lina were still for long. They visited friends and extended family members across their network. This was not simply for holidays; they appear as nursemaids and supporters during moments of crisis. Sometimes they stayed in the family home and sometimes in hotels in the vicinity where they could dip into and out of the lives of their friends and kin at will and on an ad hoc basis. The extent of these groups can be seen from Elinor Pack's diary in 1903 shortly after her husband's death, when within about a two-month period she recorded being in London, Northampton, Southbourne, Sandhurst and Wales.[53] There is no evidence that Elinor, unlike Lina and Emmie, travelled to meet family members outside of Britain. The Packe's were an extremely mobile and fluid family and the two sisters remained closely connected with each other and with their brothers Edward and Vere. As suggested by Davidoff these relationships transcended both time and distance. Horace is a more shadowy figure within the diary perhaps because of his missionary-type work in difficult to reach places such as Fiji and then New Zealand. Nonetheless, the connectivity between Elinor and this stepson continued through a verbose correspondence. Her diary records the letter written to as well as the letters received from him on a regular basis recording them in her diary as in June 1904 when she wrote 'Letter from Horace telling of the birth of another Girl'.[54] Horace does not appear personally in the diaries and the shipping lists suggest that he spent his adult life abroad mainly in the southern hemisphere. Likewise, there is little so far to suggest that any other family member made the journey to visit him.

The fluidity of the Packe family mirrors the wider family described by Steven King in his contribution to this volume. Henry Vere Packe, linked to the Ishams through his matrilineal line, followed a traditional profession into which he was followed by his son Horace much as with the professional families encountered in Kim Price's chapter. Edward, an engineer, was a member of one of the new professions while Vere took up the reins of the family business in the Falklands which had been owned by a member of his extended family. Census records reveal that this family was used to reconfiguring and reshaping itself from early on. The fact that they then become so dispersed adds an extra dimension to the processes of family life. The intimate and close relationship that existed between Elinor and her stepchildren challenges the nuanced narratives and discourses of wicked stepmothers. As Henry Vere Pack and Elinor were first cousins it is possible that many of these family

connections already existed and were built upon as she reshaped herself from cousin, to wife, to stepmother. Elinor was obviously successful in these roles. Her diaries demonstrate Elinor's role as a distributor of family news and events among her stepchildren. Barely a week or even a few days pass when she did not record writing or receiving letters from one of them. The grouping successfully reconfigured as spouses and offspring were added to the mix. The fact that this family was relatively wealthy and able to travel on a regular basis to meet up may well have added to its cohesiveness, allowing kin to reconfigure and reinvent their family bonds and identity over time.

The Packe's were a gentry family and this section of society alongside the middle classes has formed the basis for most studies into family history. Nonetheless, the microstudy approach taken here reveals much about family processes, kinship links, sibling relationships, stepmothers and the fluidity and porosity of family borders. The acquisition of spouses, spousal networks both matrilineal and patrilineal and the emergence of children all extended a family's kinship networks enormously. The names of the grandchildren provide evidence of the closeness of this family unit. For example both Edward and Emmie called their daughters Madeline Lina and Madeline Elinor respectively and Vere called his son Robert Christopher after his brother who died in his late teens. This process further cemented the new generation into a long-established family group. While the Packe families were essentially nuclear in composition, it is a definition that was much blurred around the edges. For example, the 1911 census revealed both Lina and Robert Christopher all residing in the same household as Elinor Packe herself. Although beyond the remit of this study, Emmie would move back in with her stepmother and sister once widowed and they appear together in the electoral rolls of the 1930s. Elinor's diaries are a timely reminder that family life is a process which alters and shapes and reshapes constantly. Importantly her diurnal jottings act as an important prism into the relation between a stepmother and her adult stepchildren and is thus an essential part of this volume opening up new ways of investigating the lives of families in Britain.

Notes

1. E. Gordon and G. Nair (2003) *Public Lives: Women, Family and Society in Victorian Britain* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press), p. 34.

2. See S. Ruggles (1987) *Prolonged Connections: The Rise of the Extended Family in Nineteenth-Century England and America* (Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press).
3. See R. Sennett (1968) *The Fall of Public Man* (London: Penguin).
4. K. Ittmann (1995) *Work, Gender and Family in Victorian England* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press), p. 158.
5. See M. Anderson (1971) *Family Structure in Nineteenth Century Lancashire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).
6. J. Phegley (2012) *Courtship and Marriage in Victorian England* (Santa Barbara: Praeger), p. 157.
7. See, for example, R. O'Day (1994) *The Family and Family History 1500–1900: England, France and the United States of America* (London: Macmillan).
8. Phegley, *Courtship and Marriage*, p. 158.
9. S. A. King and M. Shephard (2012) 'Courtship and the Remarrying Man in Late-Victorian England', *Journal of Family History*, 37:3, pp. 319–340.
10. C. Nelson (2007) *Family Ties in Victorian England* (Westport: Praeger), p. 41.
11. Ibid.
12. Ibid., p. 71.
13. C. Poulson (2007) 'Cinderella Revisited: Women Writers and the Stepfamily', in R. Hammerman (ed.) *Womanhood in Anglophone Literary Culture: Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Perspectives* (Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing), p. 65.
14. S. Mitchell (1996) *Daily Life in Victorian England* (Westport: Greenwood Press), p. 143.
15. Gordon and Nair, *Public Lives*, p. 34.
16. M. J. van der Wal and G. Rutten (2013) 'Ego-Documents in a Historical-Sociolinguistic Perspective', in M. J. van der Wal and G. Rutten (eds.) *Touching the Past Studies in the Historical Socio-Linguistics of Ego-Documents* (Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company), p. 2.
17. F. Martineau (2013) 'Written Documents: What They Tell Us About Linguistic Usage', in van der Wal and Rutten (eds.) *Touching the Past*, p. 129.
18. D. A. Gerber (2006) *Authors of Their Lives the Personal Correspondence of British Immigrants to North America in the Nineteenth Century* (New York: New York University Press), p. 10.
19. Ibid.
20. Ibid.
21. L. Davidoff (2012) *Thicker Than Water: Siblings and Their Relations, 1780–1920* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), p. 3.

22. See van der Wal and Rutten, *Touching the Past*.
23. See Phegley, *Courtship and Marriage*; P. Jalland (1996) *Death in the Victorian Family* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), particularly pp. 252–264.
24. Census return for Shangton Leicestershire 1871.
25. The historiography has concentrated on younger families see, for example, Nelson, *Family Ties*; Davidoff, *Thicker Than Water*.
26. Jalland, *Death in the Victorian Family*, pp. 231–232.
27. Northamptonshire Record Office (hereafter NRO), ZA3926, 6 April 1903.
28. Nelson, *Family Ties*, p. 145.
29. NRO, ZA3927, August 1907.
30. Ibid., 6 November 1907.
31. See https://www.ancestry.co.uk.
32. NRO, ZA3926, 16 November 1903.
33. Ibid., 17 November 1903.
34. Davidoff, *Thicker Than Water*, p. 2.
35. NRO, ZA3926, 4 August 1904.
36. Ibid., 29 August 1904.
37. Ibid., 4 August 1904.
38. Ibid., 22 May 1904.
39. Nelson, *Family Ties*, p. 100.
40. NRO, ZA3927, 6 January 1908.
41. Ibid., 26 January 1908.
42. Ibid., 3 February1908.
43. Davidoff, *Thicker Than Water*, pp. 1–2.
44. NRO, ZA3927, 24 June 1908.
45. Ibid., 28 August 1908.
46. Ibid., 15 and 16 September 1908.
47. NRO, ZA3928, 28 December 1909.
48. NRO, ZA3927, 24 July 1909.
49. Ibid., 27 December 1908.
50. Ibid., 22 March 1909.
51. Ancestry.co.uk.
52. NRO, ZA3928, 20 July 1910.
53. NRO, ZA3927, 1903.
54. NRO, ZA3926, 21 June 1904.

CHAPTER 6

Balancing the Family: Edward Wrench, Baslow G.P., c.1862–1890

Carol Beardmore

Overview

The idea that the Victorian family comprised of a large extended unit with several generations living under one roof, that were knitted together by ties of affection, duty, and obligation, has had surprising traction in the public imagination.[1] This is especially so when set against academic research in the 1960s and 1970s from Michael Anderson, Peter Laslett and others that established the centrality of the nuclear family in the British social fabric.[2] Yet, as the editors and other contributors to this volume show, the certainty of the 1970s has given way to an appreciation of the presence and importance of fictive kinship, the need to look at proximity of kinship groups rather than focus on the co-residential unit as defined in sources like the census, and the sheer (often short-term) fluidity of family form and function.[3] Against this backdrop, the question of how to conceptualise the Victorian family is particularly problematic. The solidification of a middle-class on the one hand and a residuum of

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the lowest ranks of the labouring sorts on the other, introduced family dynamics that were largely absent from the later eighteenth-century. New transport and communication opportunities had the potential both to spread families far and wide but also to keep them better connected in terms of the maintenance of functional kinship. The codification of the working year and the changing locus of work and leisure created alternative foci for family members and generated worries about the hollowing out of middling and poor families alike. On the other hand, firmer ideals of fatherhood became more ingrained in the public and private imagination during the Victorian period. Thus, Megan Doolittle argues that throughout the nineteenth-century fathers stood at the 'centre' of family, home and household as well as the wider relationships of the family in the outside world.[4] The protection of children was an integral part of the psyche of masculinity and adulthood; for fathers, this meant the providing for those under their authority and maintaining the emotional and physical integrity of families.[5] At the same time, the pressures on men in both these roles increased inexorably during the Victorian period.

One of these pressures was the separation of the domestic domain from the workplace during the nineteenth-century.[6] Early constructions of this fracturing in terms of separate spheres set a clear agenda. Essentially when men left home they entered a world of business and politics where masculine attributes of rationality, aggressiveness and intellectual power allowed them to thrive and prosper. A woman's place, however, remained firmly within the confines of the house and its environment, where she was expected to cultivate her 'moral and nurturing' characteristics. Motherhood had long been sanctified in religious discourses, but by the end of the eighteenth-century this role elevated mothers to that of moral guardians of the nation.[7] The idea of separate spheres has been challenged by commentators such as John Tosh—who has questioned the notional distinction between the observed working and public lives of men and their 'emotional and domestic selves'[8] and Catherine Hall and Leonore Davidoff, who show that public and private spheres were themselves not clearly defined spaces but instead frequently overlapped.[9] Kathleen McIlvenna has shown in her chapter for this volume how this overlap might work and how it might affect the meaning and form of the family in the context of the wives and children of postal workers supporting husbands and brothers. This situation also applied to doctors, where the boundaries of work and family life, and the work of a man and woman, were often blurred by symbiotic roles and the practice of doctoring within the house of the practitioner. In turn, doctors were,

as Kim Price also argues in his chapter for this volume, part of a wider group of professionals for whom making a successful career meant that balancing work and family life could be extremely difficult.

In this chapter, then, we will explore several key aspects of the Victorian family, including the relationship between work and the nature of the family, the construction of fatherhood in the professional family, and the quality of family relations at different career stages of the main breadwinner. In essence, we will investigate the family as processes in practice. To do so, the chapter draws on the diaries of Dr Edward Wrench, which begin in 1856 and continue until his death in 1912. Wrench married in 1861 and moved into general practice in 1862 and it is only the diaries from this point that form the basis of this analysis. As a source they remain under-researched not least because of the poor handwriting and their verbose nature which makes extracting information time-consuming.[10] Although there are many examples during the Victorian period of fathers' delighting in family life, Edward Wrench's diaries reveal the complete and over-arching emotional attachment he felt towards his home, professional life, family and patients in intricate detail. They reveal how the responsibilities of parenthood extended beyond childhood and the ways in which the closest of bonds formed, reformed, altered and changed as they stretched across both time and space. All in all, the diaries form a unique and incredibly detailed picture of family life, community medical practice, professional status, and commitments to wider family members. To provide essential context to the background of his life and work this chapter will begin by exploring how Wrench came to buy his practice. Secondly, it will then move to investigate the ways in which he and his wife worked together to establish and secure both his business and a happy stable family home. Thirdly, as will be seen for a doctor who had little therapeutic remedies to hand, Wrench had to balance his worries, anxieties, and fears concerning the more minor aspects of illness and disease to which his family were often subjected. Fourthly, as a single practitioner Wrench often stayed overnight with patients or travelled with them to the Continent which necessitated being away from home for long periods of time. The remuneration for these trips was often a welcome addition to his income, but emotionally they came at a price and it is against this backdrop that this chapter will survey how he managed his family commitments so that neither group felt neglected. Finally, the last section will examine the impact of terminal illness on the Wrenches as their three eldest succumbed to tuberculosis in their mid- to late-twenties.[11]

The Baslow Practice

Edward Wrench had studied at St Thomas's Hospital in London where he was Assistant Resident Accoucheur and in November 1834 joined the army, receiving a commission as Assistant Surgeon to the 34th Foot. He served in the Crimea where he was mentioned in dispatches for his 'courage, coolness and professional skill under very heavy fire at the Redan'. On his return to London, he was transferred to the 12th Lancers and consequently sent to Madras; the regiment were at Bangalore at the outbreak of the Mutiny. The regiment were involved in the march north through central India to prevent the mutineers attacking the south.[12] In 1862, now back in England and married to his cousin Annie Kirke, who was expecting their first child, he started to contemplate his future career and the creation of a stable family home. Based at Aldershot and considering his options Wrench began to look at private practice. Choosing a profitable medical practice was not necessarily easy in the crowded medical marketplace of the nineteenth-century.[13] Once qualified, finding patients to practice on was complicated as many people irrespective of class still relied on home remedies or patent medication which could be bought locally. It was still usual practice to call in the unqualified herbalist, midwife or bonesetter. Jeanne Peterson argues that many still perceived the doctor–patient relationship as 'the blind leading the blind'.[14] When choosing a doctor his style of speech, personal cleanliness and moral character were often far more important than his medical competence.[15] There is no doubt that private practice could be lucrative, but it was competitive and an insecure way to make a living.[16] Roy Porter has suggested that the small medical practitioner might not differ greatly from a small shopkeeper and to strengthen this idea it was not unusual for the surgery to be referred to as 'the shop'. Like any other shopkeeper, the doctor often spent his day dispensing his wares, usually a range of brightly coloured concoctions.[17] The highly competitive nature of medicine meant vying for rich and affluent clients alongside a whole plethora of untrained persons.[18] There were thus many issues to consider when choosing a practice: there should be ample patients of the right class within a manageable travelling distance from home and a range of public offices which offered the potential to monopolise medical care within the locality.[19] Added to this, Edward Wrench had to consider the need to find a suitable home for his pregnant wife.

Against this backdrop, a surgery at Baslow in Derbyshire seemed promising. It transpired that the practice was owned by a single doctor, Mr Condell, who was presently acting as the private medical attendant to the Duke of Devonshire. The practice was situated close to Chatsworth House and came with Park Lodge as a residence. At its peak, the concern had an annual turnover of £600 per annum, but in recent years this had fallen by half to £300, mainly because Condell, acting as the Duke's personal doctor, had frequently been required to accompany him on his travels away from Chatsworth.[20] His long absences meant that many of his patients had sought out other doctors who were readily available for consultations and more importantly close by. The asking price for the practice was £400, the first £300 to be paid immediately and the final £100 within eighteen months of purchase.[21] As a serving member of the army Wrench had a steady income and possible promotion but being a cautious man sought to ascertain whether a rise in rank was likely in the near future. Subsequently, Wrench visited the Director General and ascertained that there were 140 senior officers above him and that there no chance of promotion for at least three to four years within the present climate. Wrench assessed that in reality this was more likely to be at least double that and decided instead to build both career and livelihood outside the army.[22] Within ten days Wrench had visited Baslow to assess the potential of the practice and to investigate whether the house was suitable for him, his wife and soon-to-be-family unit. In fact, this aspect really pleased him and he noted: 'Enormously delighted with the house Park Lodge which is a beautiful stone Italian villa situated in a most picturesque spot at the gate of the park'.[23] The visit allowed Wrench to inspect the books and to ensure that he would be able to extend the work of his predecessor, establish that there was (now) little competition from other medical men in the area and that the work fell within a practicable radius. This latter point was important bearing in mind that all home visits and these were often the norm would have to be undertaken on foot or by horse. Consequently, by the 16 June 1862 Wrench had organised two months leave to 'go and see how I like private practice' and moved to Baslow, where he would reside and work until his death in 1912.[24]

Husband and Wife Working Partnership

Historically marriage among the middling-sorts provided important economic and social building blocks which formed the beginnings of new family units. On marriage men assumed fiscal and legal responsibility for both their wives and the children which were likely to follow. Implicit within the tradition of domesticity was the idea that wifely duties should include being a 'helpmeet' to her spouse. While this it has been argued gave her a central role within marriage it did not deter from the male 'sense of superiority' out in the public sphere.[25] For a budding GP his private and public life were closely interlinked and it was essential that any spare time was spent socialising within the local community, whether privately dining with potential patients, attending church, fetes and other similar events. For a young man setting out in practice his wife had a crucial role to play in his professional activities.[26] Children too, were open to public scrutiny their behaviour, characters, and appearance a visual symbol of their parent's moral code and general rectitude and integrity. It was not unusual for a wife to make up any deficit in income during the early years. The most well-known example comes from the diary of Harriet Cook, wife of William Henry Cook. Early in his career the couple had taken in her mother and invalid sister Charlotte who helped with the bills. In 1859 both William Henry's father and Harriet's mother died, although little came from the estate of the former. Harriet's share though of her mother's estate was £2745. To further supplement the family income Harriet began writing articles for educational magazines and books, receiving fees from £5 to £25. Monies became more forthcoming as William's medical standing improved and he was able to attract apprentices who were willing to pay for his expertise and training. Nonetheless, throughout their married life Harriet's own earnings were increasingly an essential part of the family income.[27]

The wife of a professional man was expected to ensure the smooth running of his home and to provide domestic harmony and stability, but for the GP's wife this often extended to his practice. She had an important role to play in the successful forging of local relationships and thus the approbation of potential patients through her interaction with church, schools and other charitable and social works. Spouses also played an important administrative role, answering the door, making out bills, and undertaking the ordering of medicines and supplies,

though it is not always easy to assess the full extent of family involvement in practice life as these extra tasks are hidden from view in diaries and letters.[28] Rural general practice was for Edward Wrench frequently gruelling and even when he had an assistant, without the support of his wife both in the house and practice, family life would have been untenable. Thus, despite having seven children and a number of miscarriages Annie physically helped in the practice and in order to spend time with her busy husband they would often travel together in the afternoons in a small wheeled contraption they called the tub.[29] This did not always foster marital harmony as illustrated in July 1865 when Annie who was driving would not overtake a chaise. The pair ended up arguing and Annie dropped the whip, and both were in a bad temper for the rest of the drive.[30] One area where they worked closely together was in the making up and sending out of the bills. Wrench like many others did this at the beginning of each new year. Although she had recently had their first child in 1863 Wrench's diary states, 'In the evening Annie helped me to make out my bills'.[31] This chore could be tedious and time-consuming but was a task that could be undertaken together and there is no doubt Wrench valued Annie's help. His diaries even hint that she was better than he at this most important of administrative tasks. Their closeness was illustrated in 1866 when she was in bed ill with a bad cold and he sat in her bedroom making out his bills, because it was something that they did together.[32] Another area in which they worked companionably during the early days of the practice was within the dispensary. For example, in May 1865 the pair worked together in the evenings relabelling the pharmacy bottles. Wrench was pleased with the overall effect and stated the bottles 'look very smart with the clean new labels'.[33] Outside the home Annie considered her husband's comfort and safety. The Peak District was often covered in snow and ice during the winter months. In January 1867 he wrote, 'Annie has made me a splendid pair of snow boots out of carpet they are rather gorgeous but very warm'.[34] While Annie's main responsibility was the house and children neither she nor her husband inhabited a clearly delineated space. Instead, and as Kathleen McIlvenna also finds in her contribution to this volume, family responsibilities were fluid and malleable. This has important implications for the meaning and closeness of the families of professional men, but also for the meaning of fatherhood, a theme to which we now turn.

Balancing Family Commitments

There has been a lack of emphasis on the role of the father within Victorian families possibly because parenting took place within the home and was obscured from public view. Thus, the emphasis by historians has in the main concentrated on the economics of fatherhood rather than on accounts of the emotional and physical support offered. John Tosh, on the other hand, argues that fatherhood was an integral part of masculinity, although the ideas of what it entailed both in the culture and practice of Victorian family life, were vague and unclear. Diaries such as those by Edward Wrench act as a prism through which to explore the quality of family life, the partnership of wives in the professional working life of a doctor, and the importance of family kinship networks. For if the private and public were two totally distinct areas of life then the care and raising of children lay completely within the responsibilities of the women in the household. If, however, domesticity was something to which both sexes 'laid claim' then fatherhood was part of a much larger commitment to the home.[35] Gordon and Nair suggest unsurprisingly that fatherhood both in the nineteenth-century and before was multi-faceted. Fathers could be strict but also indulgent and while duty and deference were important they could be informal and intimate.[36] Intrinsically part of his duties as a father revolved around this role as protector of his family and similarly to Kim Price's professional families and McIlvenna's postal worker families, shielding children from anything disturbing or threatening was a vital part of the role. This might include: financial problems, failure to maintain the family home and the onset of serious or fatal illness. The latter was very much on Edward Wrench's mind as his diaries reveal that despite, or perhaps because of, his medical knowledge he worried incessantly about his wife, children's and his own immediate family's health.[37]

Right at the beginning of his role as GP the difficulties of balancing family and practice are evident for Wrench. Thus, he worried over Annie's health as she neared her due date, hardly surprising when as Assistant Resident Accoucheur at St Thomas's Wrench must have seen numerous women die either during or shortly after giving birth.[38] After leaving Aldershot Annie had moved in with her mother at Markham as Wrench went to Baslow to get the house and the practice in order before his wife moved in. As the sole practitioner, he could not just leave his patients because as the 'new' doctor in the area he needed to prove his

skills and more importantly his reliability. Consequently, when his wife finally gave birth on 6 October 1862 he was hard at work, in fact it was only on returning from his morning calls that he was able to pick up the telegram announcing the news. This necessitated a two-hour journey by train and gig. His immense joy was palpable when he wrote in his diary 'I cannot describe the happiness of seeing my own child in dear Annie's arms it was the realisation of my fondest dreams and already appears a bond of union between us that nothing, but death can sever'.[39]

Despite his desire to protect his family accidents happened. In September 1864 Wrench took out a tooth for John Marsden and the fee of a shilling he gave to his eldest child Diana to 'put in the bank'. However, it appeared instead she had swallowed the coin. On asking the child what she had done with the coin 'she pointed down the throat and laughed'. As she did not appear to be stressed or the shilling trapped in her larynx Wrench decided the best option was to feed her 'bulky food or rice & wait'. Obviously anxious he consulted his friend and colleague Dr Branson who said that he would have given an emetic but Wrench thought 'it likely to go down better than up' stating 'I have little doubt it will not do more if so much harm as a plum stone often swallowed by children it was a very thin & light shilling and smooth'. Two days later the coin had not appeared, and this time Dr Branson recommended Castor Oil which equally had no effect. Eventually, the offending object appeared a week later without any inconvenience and causing no harm to the child, much to her mother and father's relief.[40]

One of the biggest crises faced by Edward Wrench was when smallpox broke out in the neighbourhood in 1864. Throughout the summer his diaries record his unease and apprehension concerning the spread of the contagion, recording in May 'I hear the small pox is coming very near us and is at Ashford, Sheffield and Wadshelf' although there is no doubt that the fear this generated was good for business as suddenly everyone wanted to be vaccinated.[41] It had long been recognised that smallpox had different and distinct forms which of course led to a range of outcomes. Some patients presented with a discrete but distinct rash with relatively sparse lesions. The virus in this case usually took a milder course and left little or any scarring in its wake. Mortality was usually 20% or less. Confluent smallpox was altogether a deadlier form of the disease. The virus's preference for sebaceous glands meant that in this more severe version the face was usually badly affected and led to extensive scarring and even blindness.[42] Death could occur with lightning

speed and even before the rash appeared, mortality rates of more than 60% were not unusual.[43] The disease first arrived in the Baslow area in late June when a young servant to a doctor working in Sheffield was sent home with smallpox. Wrench was not impressed and wrote 'a great shame for his master a medical man to send a case of small pox into this neighbourhood that has been so free from it'.[44] In December Wrench was called in by Mrs Brocklehurst at Curbar, who had been 'confined of twins' in late November at the same time her husband was in the house dying of confluent smallpox. The new-born twins had now contracted the disease and combined with being called to another case at Sill this was enough to convince Wrench that despite the risks he would vaccinate Mervyn although he was less than three weeks old.[45]

In May 1871 Willy was sent home from school with a bad headache and although he initially seemed better, two days later he became hot, restless and vomited and then the measles rash appeared.[46] This puzzled Wrench as he had already had the condition and in the end because of his rapid recovery it was supposed that he had contracted something more ordinary.[47] Wrench's original diagnosis was probably correct for ten days later he recorded 'Branson, Kirke & Baby with Measles, so we are a sick home'.[48] Within two days the five children who had had measles were convalescing and although on the one hand Letitia appeared to be sickening on the other Diana and Ellen seemed to have escaped. As none of the children appeared to be seriously unwell Wrench was much amused by their different attitudes:

> Diana made light of it & was quite indignant at it being suggested that she should have someone to sleep in her room. Tish on the contrary wanted everyone to wait on her she certainly was the worst & suffered from much excessive nose bleeding. Ellen was only snuffly.[49]

There is no doubt that when sickness hit Wrench had to balance his knowledge and lack of means to often treat his family against panic and pragmatism. As will be seen later when this chapter considers the death of Edward and Annie Wrench's three eldest children from TB, there was an emotional element to treating one's own family that at times was almost unbearable and yet needed to be overcome to ensure the right decisions were made. Having children of his own whose lives he cherished and protected gave Wrench an empathy with the families he visited, but seeing others lose their children for a multitude of reasons must have given him an even greater desire to protect his own.

Affection for non-biological children could also evoke strong emotional responses, something which we might expect from the work of Naomi Tadmor on the importance of fictive kin.[50] One case, for instance, was that of Wrench's niece. John Henry and Flora Kirke, Annie's brother and sister-in-law left their daughters Kathleen and Ellen with the Wrenches as they travelled to and from India. While Edward classed this as a great responsibility he stated, 'I think it is both our duty & for our children's benefit to undertake it'. For educating and clothing the two girls the Wrenches were paid £100 per annum.[51] The monies allowed the family to employ a French governess which benefitted all the children.[52] Kathleen was Edward's favourite and on her seventh birthday on 8 May 1871 he recorded in his diary 'I have seemed to love the child much more since I know she is not as well provided for as I thought. I'm sure I could soon look upon her as a Daughter and should find no difficulty in providing for her if necessity should arise'.[53] This links closely into the discussions around stepchildren in this volume and demonstrates how step-parents might come to regard their blended families.

The Impact of General Practice on Family Life

To be successful in general practice meant being readily available for patients when needed and this meant that whenever at home work impacted on daily life, family crises and social events, an issue to which we now turn. Thus, within an increasingly crowded marketplace Anne Digby argues that professional survival depended on finding and exploiting 'local niches'. At the centre of practice life, was diversification and the ability to adapt to local circumstances.[54] While these were undoubtedly important, being on call twenty-four hours a day was essential, especially when tending high paying aristocratic families. Unless a local doctor was prepared to drop absolutely everything with immediate effect another practitioner might be called in and business lost. Some idea of what a practice entailed and how this might affect family life could perhaps be determined from advertisements such as those placed in the *British Medical Journal* (hereafter *BMJ*). For example, in 1864 one such advert stated that £100 allowed the purchase of 'An unusual opportunity' for 'any energetic well qualified gentleman'. On payment of the purchase price he could 'enter upon a practice of £400 a year in a rapidly increasing suburb'. It further reiterated that there was 'No serious opposition'.[55] A lack of other doctors in a locality could both encourage and deter a prospective buyer. Consequently, this meant there was

great scope for expansion but of course no-one to help out during busy periods, to consult with on difficult cases or available to cover the practice during absences thus making holidays out of the question. In 1865 another advert for a practice in Devonshire stated that 'expenses' were small and with 'one horse only being required' hinted that the distances travelled were relatively low.[56] By contrast, the practice bought by Wrench had a radius of some four or five miles and ensured that he frequently travelled fifty miles a day.

Anne Digby suggests that town and rural practices required specific characteristics. Those who worked in urban situations obviously lived in larger communities and to be ultimately successful the inclination to hold public office, a tendency towards administrative duties and bags of physical energy were important skills. Country doctors, on the other hand, were often expected to turn out whatever the event, wedding funeral, fete, prayer meeting, and social event as well as for medical visits. A doctor in a scattered community needed to be visible and to maintain a high-profile position which exhibited all the best moral, ethical and honourable characteristics of a professional man. Besides these attributes a country GP needed to be able to think quickly and to show initiative in tricky situations, as well as physical resilience when travelling in all weathers across moors and open spaces to reach sick patients. At times, as will be seen below, this meant staying at patient's homes for hours or even days on end, travelling with aristocratic patients on the continent for health purposes and making the most of any opportunity which arose to consolidate the practice.[57] Making the most of any opportunity often meant the difference between profit and mere survival.

Edward Wrench's diaries are a rich source of detail on the ways in which his working life impacted on his family and it is intended here to give an emblematic sense of how this worked in practice. Right from the start, as detailed above, his wife went back to her mother's house to have their first child as Park Lodge was in no state for her to go into labour. As Digby hinted to be successful in rural practice, an intuitive sense of where and when to participate was essential. Annie herself was an important part of the process. When weather, pregnancy, and children permitted, one way to spend some time with her husband was for Annie to accompany him on his afternoon rounds. One such occasion took place in January 1864 when Wrench recorded, 'A lovely spring like day with S. wind and a bright sun. I took Annie in the tub to see Mrs Hall whilst I saw several patients including Mr Cottingham who

has just returned from London'.[58] Together they also participated in a wide range of community activities which boosted their visibility in the neighbourhood. For example, both were involved in a range of Penny Readings such as that which took place on 31 January 1868 when some 230 people were present.[59] It was usual for Edward to read and Annie to sing, later the children became involved putting on plays at friend's houses and in the Baslow Hydropathic Institution where Wrench was practitioner in residence. Annie and then the family's involvement within the community was an important visible sign of his character, an exhibition of the stability of his marriage and family life and a measure both of his status and position within the area.

With Edward's mother and father in London and Annie's mother at Markham in Nottinghamshire it could be a juggling act with the medical practice and a growing young family to see even the nearest and closest of kin, in effect hollowing out the wider kinship group. It was thus not unusual for Annie to take the children on her own and for Edward to take short infrequent breaks to London although these became more common as the children grew and went to the capital for school. In the early days of their marriage Edward struggled while Annie was away being 'loath' to part with both her and the children. Patients too had to be taken into consideration when planning time away and in January 1864 he wrote 'I have a great longing to go to London to see my dear parents &c and show them my children, but it is impossible to do so until Mrs Hall is delivered'.[60] Midwifery was lucrative but time-consuming.[61] Obstetrics was profitable both in terms of ante-natal care and at the time of confinement.[62] It was, however, onerous as women could not be left when close to their due dates for fear they would call in another doctor which could have long-term financial implications for the practice. Even when established and with an assistant Edward wrote 'I devote myself to my work and take scarcely any holidays'.[63] The situation changed somewhat in the 1870s when Wrench began to travel as the private doctor of some of his more lucrative patients.

Mr Cottingham who was the Duke of Devonshire's land agent decided to partake of a three-month tour of Europe in 1876. How or why Edward Wrench came to go with them is somewhat unclear from his diaries but as the Cottingham's were to cover all his expenses it was presumably to act as their private doctor as well as a seasoned travelling companion. All in all the trip to France and Italy was intended to last some two months and Edward recorded on 2 February 1876,

the day of departure, that Annie had travelled with him to the train station at Rowsley and behaved very bravely at the thought of his long-expected absence from home.[64] Although Edward's diaries provide an interesting insight into travelling in Europe and elsewhere during the later nineteenth-century there is no room within this chapter to discuss the details in any depth. The Cottingham's had designed an itinerary of travel and thus the couple was able to keep in touch by letter, Annie sending the local gossip, practice and family news and ensuring that Edward continued to worry that she was overworking herself.[65] The excitement of travelling to places such as Rome and Pompeii did not lessen Edward's homesickness and he wrote on 26 March 'Annie very busy cleaning but still has time to think of me. She is seldom long out of my thoughts'.[66] When Annie telegrammed that his mother was seriously ill, although it was suggested that there was no need for him to return, his commitment to his family and his homesickness tipped the balance and he took the decision to cut his travelling short.

Early 1887 saw Wrench off travelling again this time as the private doctor to Lord Edward Cavendish who later the previous year had become very unwell with suspected lobar pneumonia. Wrench noted 'there is no crepitation but some dullness over left base of lung, sputa streaked' and the patient presented with a 'persistent high temperature'.[67] By January the following year, the conclusion of Wrench and the two doctors called in to provide further consultation on the case was that there was no tubercle present but instead 'Bronchitis, congestion & lung abscess'.[68] Doctoring aristocratic patients was lucrative[69] and GPs, like others in the medical profession, needed to be entrepreneurs and to make the most of any opportunity to promote their skills.[70] Even before travelling with Lord Edward to Cannes, the Duke (his father), presented Wrench with a cheque for £200 for his professional attendance.[71] On 7 February the party set off towards the South of France eventually arriving in Cannes a week later, where Wrench spent a week ensuring that Edward was settled, had suffered no ill-effects from the travelling and was continuing to improve before departing towards home. Despite already being away from home for some time while on his way to Lausanne Wrench met Mr and Mrs Horton who had been caught up in a severe earthquake in the Turin area and agreed at a fee of £3 3s a day plus hotel expenses to stay on and care for her until well. Annie was obviously beginning to feel the strain and on March 9 sent him a telegram which stated, 'Come home many patients & cows ill'. This was enough to galvanise Wrench into action and he was home within forty-eight hours.[72]

Without doubt the biggest impact on family life for the Wrench family was the possibility of Edward being called out at any time of the day or night. As the success of his practice was commensurate with the attention paid to his patients it was fortunate that Edward enjoyed the work and recorded in 1872 'my practice is most engrossing I really hardly have time to eat & tonight [ate] my dinner while my horse was being changed, being sent for to Wadshelf in a hurry and kept there all night'.[73] Even a wife in labour did not have precedence over the patients' needs. On the night of the birth of their final child and with the birth imminent Edward was called out at 1 a.m. to see Ben Broomhead who had fallen off a wall. It must have been a speedy visit for his diary continues 'I gave her [Annie] chloroform for the last 20 minutes but she never lost consciousness' and the baby was born at 2.30 a.m.[74] A long day doing the rounds and being tired was no excuse not to go when sent for. In the diary entry for 14 May Edward wrote:

> [I] was going up to bed when I was sent for to Mrs Batemans of Lumberdale. I fell asleep near a dozen times going there. Found her suffering from face ache for which she kept me till 2 besides all her household. Slept there and left at 9 this morning.

Edward's own illnesses rarely got in the way of his attending patients. He frequently recorded comments such as 'not very well Bilious and overworked, so of course sent for to Mrs Barker, Rowsely, Fox and Nesfields'.[75] One of the rare occasions when Edward was confined to the house occurred in 1863 when his hand became so infected that at one point he wrote 'In great danger of losing the use of my hand if not my life'.[76] Not even the pending death of one of his own children prevented his continued attention to his patients particularly the Duke of Devonshire. In the past, Edward would probably have spent the night at Chatsworth but instead returned home to sit with Letitia who was to die some two weeks later of tuberculosis. While he worried incessantly about his children when young the biggest tragedy which was to fracture and reshape this family was the death of his three eldest children when they reached their late twenties.

All of Edward and Annie's children who were born live survived into adulthood, but then in 1889 first Mervyn and then Letitia contracted tuberculosis followed by Diana in 1892/3.[77] Throughout the early part of 1889 Mervyn had been unwell. Edward was anxious as his temperature had a tendency to spike in the evenings a common occurrence in TB. As the diagnosis became clearer in May 1889 Edward wrote:

> I keep up a bright expression for the sake of others but my eyes are full of tears when I am alone. God grant that my forebodings may not be as dark as they seem…[78]

In early 1890 Mervyn, although not well, did at least seem to be stable with 'right side [of chest] clear. Left cavity dry, not very large'. Letitia, however, was rapidly worsening with an 'abscess at the base of right lung'. All doubt as to her condition was finally removed on 3 January 1890 when Edward received a letter which revealed that her 'sputum was full of tubercle bacilli' and his diary stated 'Alas – we must abandon all hope – I go about my work with my eyes full of tears and feel as if I had nothing more to work for'.[79] Throughout 1890 Edward and Annie were to watch both of their beloved children succumb to TB. During the months preceding their deaths, Edward continued to work where possible in the practice but spent many hours at night sitting with his son and daughter taking turns with Annie and her sister Harriet. While Victorian medicine had little therapeutic medicine or power to cure the disease it was compensated with a remarkably good record of terminal care, providing comfort and palliative management and this Wrench was able to use to ensure his children were comfortable and pain-free.[80] Despite the neglect of his patients, when he returned to work full in August his fears that he like many old men might be supplanted by younger ones proved groundless.[81]

For a while after the death of Letitia and Mervyn life for the Wrench family began to return to a familiar pattern with the surviving children busy building lives and careers and Edward and Annie concentrating on the medical practice. This period of relief was however short-lived and in October 1892 Diana became unwell and although he wrote 'she not does not look poorly [she] has a very irritable cough'.[82] At first it appeared she had merely contracted a bad cold, but her chest had a considerable number of rales all over it and thus began to raise Edward's anxiety. It was not long before he began to consider that perhaps another of his children had contracted TB. In March he escorted Diana to Eastbourne in the hope that a change of air would help but on her return two months later it was blatantly clear that she was seriously ill. On 30 May Edward finally plucked up the courage to examine her chest and found his 'worst forebodings' to be true. The diary entry reads: 'The left side is very dull and the right is not free, add to this her laryngeal troubles which has almost destroyed her clear merry voice and

I feel there is no hope of recovery'.[83] Like her two siblings the disease progressed rapidly and on 2 August Edward visited his daughter in the morning to explain that there was no hope of her surviving the disease but could not bring himself to do so. He returned again in the afternoon and with renewed courage was finally able to tell her the truth. He said Diana 'bore it well & said she wanted to know for she wished to give many last wishes to Charlie' her husband.[84] The diary entries for 1893 gives a detailed account of the ways in which TB exhausted the patient and for Diana 'her incessant cough' gave her no rest, its progress was relentless. Finally, on 15 August she died, and the grief exhibited by Edward was palpable within his writings. There can be little doubt that Wrench's masculine identity was intricately bound by fatherhood. The close ties of the Wrench family and in particular between the three siblings are evident in Diana coming home to help care for her brother and sister.[85] After Diana's death Wrench returned to his work and found some solace in his medical practice. This was emphasised on New Year's Eve when he wrote: 'Called up twice last night my constant occupation no doubt makes me happy & grateful of this sad year'. After the loss of their three eldest children both Edward and Annie and their remaining children had to reshape and redefine their familial ties and relationships. While the death of children was more common in the first five years of life TB had little respect for age or class and this tragedy illustrates the fragility of life and the fluidity of family form. The impact of death on professional families and the way in which it reshaped families is further examined by Kim Price in his contribution to this volume. This chapter concludes here in 1893 but Edward Wrench's diaries and practice continue until his death in 1912.

Conclusion

For a GP during the latter half of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth-century, practicing medicine remained a family affair. This arm of the profession was unlike hospital consultants, and doctors continued to work much as their forebears had from a surgery within the family home. While in general working life was to become increasingly separated from the domestic sphere, for medicine this would not happen until the late twentieth-century. For the GP his daily work had a significant impact on his family life, patients had to come first and thus in order to satisfy both groups he had to quickly learn to balance the scales

so that he was able to meet all his commitments. While Edward Wrench lived in a nuclear family very much of the type described by Peter Laslett, this did not mean that it was static. It was fractured by the inclusion of his nieces who lived with the Wrench's for several years, and the comings and goings of extended family members and friends albeit for brief periods, including periods of nursing for his sick children. These observations resonate well with those of Steven King later in the volume. When considered among the more fractured family landscape of the other chapters it builds on the themes of this volume by illustrating the complexities of family life.

With the working life of Edward Wrench there is a blurring of the definition of spheres. Annie's responsibilities while predominantly that of keeping house and bringing up children was not her only role. She played an important part in the practice itself not least because her visible presence in the community meant that she too could attract patients for her husband to 'doctor'. Wrench moved in and out of the domestic sphere. He took his sons and daughters to school, dealt with errant servants, worked with Annie in the dispensary, and compiled the accounts. The children would in adulthood split and move to America and New Zealand, but the kinship bonds formed through their family unit ensured they remained a close-knit group. We know little about the way in which professional men balanced their work and family life and Edward Wrench's diaries provide a unique and incredibly detailed account of life in Derbyshire in the late nineteenth-century. Missing from the diaries are mentions of family friction. They both understood that together their commitment was to their family and to their patients. Their identities were intertwined with parenthood, work and social life each balancing the other to form a successful married partnership, parents and medical practice.

Overall Wrench's diurnal writings provide a deep sense of the nature of kinship, not just with his own children but with his own and his wife's wider family kinship networks. With his parents there were short- and longer-term trips to Baslow and Wrench's much briefer ones to London and visiting Annie's mother at East Markham. As the editors argue in the introduction families were fluid entities and like the visitors in Steven King's chapter for this volume servants, governesses, family friends, and members of their close and wider kinship webs moved in and out of the family group. While Peter Laslett would argue that this was in essence a nuclear family grouping, in reality it is something much more complex, shaping and reshaping almost continually. The servants while not

technically family were in Wrench's eyes his responsibility to protect and support, remaining almost quasi-teenage members of the group. At its head was Edward Wrench a family man and doctor who through his work came into daily contact with the fragility of family life. When tragedy hit his own family, kinship and sibling networks formed the nursing team and they worked closely together as the family shape and size was shifted through factors that were uncontrollable. Edward Wrench's diaries reveal a father who had a close and loving relationship with his children. While he worried about earning sufficient funds to educate, feed and clothe his growing offspring, his diaries reveal a man who enjoyed his children's company, and revelled in their achievements.

Families by nature are complex units and despite having a wide understanding of the demography of the family, the mean age of marriage, the number of children likely to be borne to a given couple and an awareness of different life-cycle stages we still lack a comprehensive understanding of the development of the family.[86] The historical prism, that is the diaries of Edward Wrench, provides an example of one type of family group. Other examples in this volume will illustrate alternative forms of family life but there is no doubt that Edward Wrench was a man who cared deeply for his family, was not afraid of his emotions and strove hard to ensure they received his full attention despite being an extremely busy medical practitioner. The ability to balance a working, social and family life remains as important today for medical professionals as it was for Wrench and his life stands as an example of how it can and could be achieved.

Notes

1. E. Gordon and G. Nair (2003) *Public Lives: Women, Family and Society in Victorian Britain* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press), p. 34.
2. See, for example, M. Anderson (1971) *Family Structure in Nineteenth Century Lancashire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press); P. Laslett (1988) 'Family, Kinship and Collectivity as Systems of Support in Pre-industrial Europe: A Consideration of the "Nuclear-Hardship" Hypothesis', *Continuity and Change*, 3:2, pp. 153–175.
3. The Wrench family who are the focus of this chapter fit this model of fluidity particularly well, although it is not a central feature of this chapter. Although extended kin in the form of brother's sisters, parents, aunts, and uncles who came to stay, visits were brief lasting no more than an expected week or two at the most. For more on this issue see the chapter by Steven King later in the volume.

4. M. Doolittle (2007) 'Fatherhood, Religious Belief and the Protection of Children in Nineteenth-Century English Families', in T. L. Broughton and H. Rogers (eds.) *Gender and Fatherhood in the Nineteenth Century* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan), p. 31.
5. Ibid., p. 32.
6. J. Tosh (1999) *A Man's Place: Masculinity and the Middle-Class Home in Victorian England* (London: Yale University Press), pp. 13–14.
7. See, for example, Gordon and Nair, *Public Lives.*
8. J. Tosh (2005) *Manliness and Masculinities in Nineteenth Century Britain* (Harlow: Pearson), p. 5.
9. L. Davidoff and Catherine Hall (2002) *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class 1780–1850. Revised Edition* (London: Routledge), p. xvi.
10. The shortest diaries so far transcribed are around 12,000 words and the longest in excess of 60,000.
11. Mervyn, 6 May 1890; Letitia, 15 August 1890; and Diana, 15 August 1893.
12. Royal College of Surgeons (2013) 'Wrench, Edward Mason (1833–1912)', http://livesonline.rcseng.ac.uk/biogs/E003656b.htm, accessed 28 March 2017.
13. A. Digby (1994) *Making a Medical Living: Doctors and Patients in the English Market for Medicine 1720–1911* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press). In particular chapter 2, 'The Context of Practice'.
14. M. J. Peterson (1978) *The Medical Profession in Mid-Victorian London* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press), p. 90.
15. Ibid., p. 91.
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29. The children of Edward and Annie Wrench were born as follows: Diana, October 1862; Mervyn, November, 1863; Letitia, February 1866; Branson, June 1866; Kirke, December 1867; Francis, August 1869; and Annie (aka Nancy), July 1873; see UNSMC, Wr D 29.
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31. UNSMC, Wr D 8, 1 January 1863.
32. See UNSMC, Wr D 11, 5 January 1866.
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53. Ibid., 8 May 1871.
54. Digby, *The Evolution of British General Practice*, p. 261.
55. Anon (1864) *British Medical Journal*, 1:174, p. 488.
56. Anon (1865) *British Medical Journal*, 1:222, p. 338.
57. See Digby, *The Evolution of British General Practice*, pp. 263 and 269.
58. UNSMC, Wr D 8, 21 January 1863.
59. Digby, *The Evolution of British General Practice*, pp. 100–106.
60. UNSMC, Wr D 9, 20 January 1864.

61. Digby, *Making a Medical Living*, p. 254; Loudon, *Medical Care and the General Practitioner*.
62. Digby, *The Evolution of British General Practice*, pp. 99 and 120.
63. UNSMC, Wr D 13, 17 June 1868.
64. UNSMC, Wr D, 2 February 1876.
65. See UNSMC, Wr D, 19 February 1876.
66. UNSMC, Wr D 21, 26 March 1876.
67. Ibid., 26 December 1876.
68. UNSMC, Wr D 32, 3 January 1887.
69. Digby *Making a Medical Living*, especially 'Medicalisation and Affluent Patients'.
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71. UNSMC, Wr D 32, 6 February, £200 represented approximately 20% of Wrench's annual turnover in the practice.
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73. UNSMC, Wr D 17, 19 February 1872.
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78. UNSMC, Wr D 34, 11 May 1889.
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80. P. Jalland (1996) *Death in the Victorian Family* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), p. 77.
81. UNSMC, Wr D 35, 17 August 1890.
82. UNSMC, Wr D 37, 11 October 1892.
83. UNSMC, Wr D 38, 30 May 1993.
84. UNSMC, Wr D 38, 2 August 1993.
85. The closeness of siblings is explored in L. Davidoff, *Thicker Than Water*.
86. See Tadmor, *Family and Friends*.

CHAPTER 7

The Family and Insanity: The Experience of the Garlands Asylum, 1862–1910

Cara Dobbing

Overview

The early work of Peter Laslett and Michael Anderson suggested that the nuclear family form dominated the landscape of British society from the early modern period into the twentieth century. Whilst acknowledging that such families were potentially enmeshed in what Iain Riddell elsewhere in this volume calls a 'web' of kinship, these early writers believed that the basic constraints of demography militated against this web being either extensive or highly functional.[1] More recent writers, including many of the contributors to this volume, have suggested both that family boundaries were more fluid than Anderson or Laslett suggested, and that in practice families were adept at maintaining functional coherence even over great distance. Through the work of Di Cooper and Moira Donald, Barry Reay and Steven King it can be more clearly understood that 'family' must be understood as a process rather than a fixed entity.[2] A core part of this process was the circulation of members of the actual and fictive kinship group and, through personal visits, letters or the formation

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of new households, the maintenance and re-formation of affective and practical family ties.[3] Nowhere are these features more prominent than in the support of kin members who were sick. For middling families it is clear that illness (including childbirth) could result in the circulation of patients, the arrival of fictive, blood or legal kin for nursing, and the exchange of numerous letters and visits that helped to foster effective kinship relations.[4] The same sorts of experiences can also be traced for the sick poor.[5]

Against this backdrop, the lunatic relative occupies an odd liminal place as someone who both put pressure on the integrity of families and the harmony of family relations, but also someone who was an exemplar of the functionality of kinship in terms of the ubiquity of family care of lunatics before the 1845 Lunacy Act began to shift the locus of care to the county asylum. The literature surrounding the history of mental illness and its institutions is, of course, considerable.[6] The 1845 legislation, made it mandatory for each county or borough to have its own pauper asylum financed by county rates, and these institutions have been of particular interest to historians.[7] However, the resulting research has tended to be somewhat inward-looking, and consider solely the asylum itself as the primary receptacle of care. In practice, however, family and kin had a potentially complex role in the management, containment, admission, and discharge of lunatic patients, particularly for the poorer classes of nineteenth-century England. The widest sense of family is seen most clearly in their role in admitting a mentally ill relative to the asylum,[8] and also their instigation in some situations of their discharge.[9] By the latter half of the nineteenth-century, as the county asylum network grew and the recovery rates of these institutions became publicised, the family became increasingly willing to admit their relatives.[10] In turn, the shift from the family home to the asylum, dramatically altered the environment in which an individual was treated. For the majority of those who entered the county lunatic institutions the nourishing diet, exercise, and recreational pursuits offered were dramatic improvements from the conditions they were used to outside the institution. In the event of discharge back to the family home, even if a patient was considered recovered, they could soon quickly relapse to their former mental state; and the negative effect of the family home was a major concern for doctors.[11] Added to this was the fact that the family could themselves be the cause of a relative's mental illness. Common in the admissions were cases of maltreatment by the family, as they failed to constructively cope with the

display of socially unacceptable behaviour, which had detrimental effects on the health of their relatives.[12] None of this, of course meant that lunatic kin were wiped from family memory, that regular contact with asylum patients was shunned or that the combination of kin, friends, and neighbours often responsible for initial admission were not consumed with the guilt of their actions.[13]

This chapter, then, explores the family and kinship dynamics surrounding those with mental impairments.[14] In particular, it focuses on the dependent or nearly dependent poor (a new departure for this volume) viewed through the lens of the records of the Garlands Asylum, the county lunatic institution for Cumberland and Westmorland. Three key issues will be explored: Firstly, the chapter will assess the role played by the family and kin in instigating treatment of a relative, whether in the home, or through admission to an asylum. Doctors and staff of the asylum placed an important (if under-researched) emphasis on family testimonies, something that can be seen in admission documents where equal space was allowed for medical practitioners and relative's observations.[15] Kinship links were also important in deciding if, and when, to discharge relatives, suggesting the ongoing maintenance of family relationships between the pauper inmate and their families. Second, then, the chapter will explore how family relationships were maintained whilst a patient was resident in the asylum, with a particular focus on writing letters and visits to the institution, both of which were recommended by the asylum doctors. Finally, the ways in which the family itself could cause the onset of mental unrest in their relatives (both directly and indirectly), will be examined, including the incidence of hereditary conditions, pregnancy, and domestic abuse.

Family as Instigators of Care

When a relative initially became unwell through physical or mental causes, the family often provided the first level of support, and only if it became clear that domestic solutions were not enough would admission to the asylum be sought. The most common triggers for the admission were violence on part of the patient (to themselves or others), damage to property, other forms of unmanageable behaviours, and so-called 'changes of life'.[16] The involvement of the family in asylum committal is evident from the reception order, which was a document necessitated by the 1845 Act to be filled out by two doctors testifying the display of

mental illness of an individual, and which provided space for two statements indicating this 'insanity'.[17] These were usually provided by the relieving officer, asylum doctor, local practitioner, or workhouse attendant, and by a close relative who had witnessed the person's condition first-hand.[18] The 'indications of insanity' were recorded as direct quotations and used as a comparison as treatment progressed. One example from the Garlands records, was Roger G admitted in May 1902, aged nineteen, suffering from mania. At the time of his admission he was living in Gilsand, Brampton, under the care of his aunt Susannah, and sister Mary Jane, itself evidence of the porousness of family boundaries at times of sickness. Susannah relayed the statement to the relieving officer on Roger's admission document: 'he has been very violent for a day or two. He threatened her this morning and became very violent'.[19] This was his second bout of mental illness, and he was previously treated at home two years prior for around six months. The fact that this time his relatives had chosen admission to the asylum reveals that his behaviour must have deteriorated, beyond that with which the family could cope. It is also possible that their circumstances had changed, and their ability to cope with Roger's behaviour had diminished for reasons unstated on his admission documents. Whatever the reason, it is clear that the family stood at the heart of the admission process.[20]

The family also played a significant role in the decision to discharge patients from the asylum. Relatives were required to sign an obligation form, for those deemed not yet recovered, making them responsible for any behaviour which may harm themselves or others when their relatives were released. In 1871, Dr Thomas Clouston, medical superintendent of Garlands (1863–72), explained that the process of requesting a patient's discharge was 'always followed here in suitable cases, and where the custodians seemed suitable…the person who removes a patient is required to sign the obligation…to take care of the patient'.[21] It was a major concern of doctors that the environment from which a patient came to the asylum could cause them to relapse once they were placed back in those circumstances. For instance, Mary C, who was only sixteen on admission to Garlands in November 1884, was considered for discharge after six weeks of treatment. Due to her age, the doctors saw it beneficial for Mary to be transferred to a local home for girls of similar temperament, to learn a useful trade to prepare her for adult life. However, Mary's mother refused, and instead requested that she be

discharged home.[22] Permission had to be obtained from the asylum for any discharge. At the core of this system lay reputation because the act of discharge meant the patient had recovered. For families the admission and then discharge undoubtedly changed kin dynamics, as they first reformed after the loss of a family member and then re-configured into an old or new shape depending on who the patient was and their role post-discharge within the family.

The reasons for requesting the removal of a relative were numerous and situational. Hilary Marland has noted that in the case of wives and mothers, they were more likely to be removed as they were needed to carry out their previous domestic duties, such as upkeep of the household and childcare.[23] For example, Maria S was admitted in June 1892 suffering from mania after the birth of her ninth child. Following nine months in Garlands her husband 'was anxious to try her at home', and she was discharged on 13 March 1892. With nine children to look after ranging from the ages of one to fifteen, Maria's husband William was clearly failing to cope with working as an engine fitter and completing all the domestic tasks usually carried out by his wife. Without doubt some of the older female siblings would have helped with the household chores and childcare, but he obviously felt that he needed his wife home and that nine months in the asylum was enough to bring about her recovery. However, Maria's removal had a detrimental effect on her health, and she was readmitted to Garlands just two days later, where she remained until her death in 1908. Under these circumstances, the family unit would have to adapt to coping without an integral member of its framework. Either the siblings would have to take on the matriarchal role, or William would have had to pay for domestic help to fill the vacuum left by Maria's absence. As she was admitted as a pauper, it can be assumed that William did not have the means to pay for staff, and it is clear from census material that his children remained close, as the oldest of his four children still lived with him in 1911.[24] Thus, Maria's family altered the household structure to compensate for her absence, bringing the remaining members closer together, much as we also see in the chapters for this volume by Geoff Monks and Maria Cannon. The fact that her husband clearly kept in close touch with the asylum and actively monitored her progress also speaks to the connectedness of the kinship group, and it is to this issue that the chapter now turns.

Maintenance of Family Ties

Historians researching Victorian lunatic asylums have long suggested the importance of familial links once a relative had been admitted. The empirical evidence for this assertion has, however, been extremely sporadic, and confined to the experience of the middle and upper classes. As others have also noted in this volume, this class focus in part reflects the fact that poor people were both less likely to leave sources behind, and those sources are less likely to have subsequently been preserved. In the context of mental illness, letters written by, for or about patients provide a potentially important insight into the level of contact maintained with family members once confinement had taken place. Such sources are, of course, scarce. Indeed, many of the letters which were kept were ones which indicated the nature of a person's condition, either through the expression of delusions from the patient themselves, or from the relatives providing further examples of symptoms displayed by the patient before admission. This added to the accuracy of diagnosis but tells us little about family connectedness.[25]

Nonetheless, some sources do survive and they have a totemic importance. Asylums were often some distance from the family home and thus potentially isolated the patient from their kin and communities. After the introduction of the penny post in 1840, letter writing had become more accessible to the pauper classes, and was an important method of communication, as Kathleen McIlvenna also points out in her contribution to this volume.[26] In turn, the exchange of letters was viewed by staff and doctors in the asylum as assisting recovery, because the family could offer a more in-depth level of emotional support and one with which the patient could identify.[27] Additionally, relatives provided access to life on the outside, and were often the only link to a world temporarily off limits.[28] Thus, families were encouraged to write frequent letters to their relatives in the asylum as these would provide a welcome distraction to the patient, with news of their local town and familiar surroundings. In a sense, this anchored the patient within their own kinship groups and ensured that an identity of shared memories was not just maintained, but deepened and grew. By contrast, letters written by patients were censored by doctors, in case they included any distressing or abusive material which would worry the family on the outside.[29]

Within the surviving letters for the Garlands Asylum it has been possible to highlight the emotions involved in maintaining contact with loved ones. One example is James N, admitted to Garlands in October 1899 as a 'stray lunatic' wandering at large.[30] He was found in Carlisle, and was believed to have escaped from a Scottish Asylum only a few days before. James was listed as single and nothing was known about him or his relatives. However, the letter attached to his case notes, was addressed to 'dear flower', it expressed how sorry he was for not being in touch as he had been detained in Carlisle. James went on to invite the unnamed recipient to come and visit, as it had been five months since they had last met. The fondness for his 'flower' is clear in the tone of the letter, but so too is James' illness, as he signed the letter 'professor N', when he was listed as a labourer.[31] The letter was kept as a symbol of James' delusions and confused state, but the connectivity to kin or fictive kin is clear.

Another example is that of a letter attached to the record of Joseph D, who was admitted in January 1897 suffering from melancholia. Joseph's letter was, like many of this genre, sentimental. He expressed clear emotion at being detached from his family, writing in the first instance to 'George' with a plea that he come to visit. This sort of emotional framework is mirrored in the way that emigrants of the sort analysed by Iain Riddell and Kim Price elsewhere in this volume talked about family fracturing and absence.[32] Joseph also had contact with other family members, stating on one occasion that he had written to his father who had told him that another male relative, 'Timothy', was coming to see Joseph the following week. In his turn, Joseph wondered why George could not accompany him on his visit to Garlands. He goes on to tell 'George' about how he is getting on in the asylum and that he had recently been suffering from rheumatism. Joseph signs the letter 'your affectionate brother', demonstrating that his family connectivity still mattered despite George's lack of communication with him in the asylum.[33] These two examples demonstrate the importance of emotional attachments in the continuation of family relationships whilst under care in an asylum.[34]

Letters were also used as a means of communication between the asylum doctors and the family, thereby linking care and family commitment together. Their continuing role is apparent from the letters that have survived between the two parties. The family would send additional information about the nature of the behaviour of their relative before

committal, providing much more detail than was given on the admission documents. This relationship was important as doctors would have an increased chance of identifying the supposed cause and condition from the information given to them by the family.[35] One example was found attached to the case notes of Ann S, admitted in January 1866 from Cockermouth suffering from mania. The letters were addressed to Dr Clouston, and written by her husband, John. They contain important information regarding Ann's state before coming to Garlands. He detailed Ann's violent convulsions after the birth of her three children, the last of which was born in 1863, thus attributing her condition to pregnancy and the trauma of three successive births. At the end of one of his letters, John included a note to the infirmary indicating what he believed to be the cause of his wife's insanity:

> P.S: Infirmary
> The want of outdoor exercise. The want of attention at last confinement, and finally the use of tobacco.
> If such would cause this sad affect – I know of nothing else.

He stated to Clouston that there were no cases of insanity in Ann's family, acknowledging the common belief that this was a hereditary condition (examined later in the chapter).[36] Although the letters from Clouston in reply have not survived, a sense of the relationship between doctors and families can be ascertained, in which they relied on each other for information pertaining to the welfare of the patient. Certainly, there can be little doubt that the family were viewed as an important link by medical professionals.

In addition to letters, visits from family and friends were considered beneficial to a patient's mental state. Dr John Campbell, medical superintendent at Garlands (1872–98), noted in his annual report of 1886 that:

> I am more and more convinced, as my experience extends, of the value of visits from relatives in many cases of insanity. To be left without the sight of a relative or friend, without a cheering word from home, in an asylum among strangers, is enough to make a desponding patient more desponding, a patient tending to dementia more ready to lose interest in all mundane matters. I strongly advise frequent visits to such cases, as I believe they will benefit by them.[37]

Intriguingly, the Garlands archive contains a 'patient's friends' book, which reveals the frequency of visits to particular patients. Although limited to the period 1900–1904, this book provides a great insight to the maintenance of family contacts whilst a person was a patient at the asylum. A full examination of this document is beyond the scope of this chapter, but two broad observations might be made. First, since Garlands jointly served the counties of Cumberland and Westmorland a significant proportion of patients (and subsequent visitors) travelled some distance to receive treatment. The largest portion of visitors came from the area around Carlisle, suggesting a travelling distance of between five and forty miles. Visitors who lived in Westmorland comprised a mere 3% of total visits, suggesting that patients from this county were at a disadvantage in terms of maintaining contact with their loved ones.[38] Indeed, the great distance separating Garland's patients from their families, meant that visits, for some, were rendered impossible.[39] For those relatives who *could* regularly travel, the frequent contact could reinforce the role of the patient within his or her kinship group and continue to promote the connectivity of the familial affiliations. In many respects visits allowed the patient to remain part of a small nuclear group despite their continued absence. They were gone but not forgotten.

A second observation centres on the type of visitor recorded in the visiting book. An examination of the first 100 entries for each year, gives of a sense of the relatives with the strongest familial ties by examining those who visited most often. Table 7.1 shows that from this sample, the

Table 7.1 The Relationships of first 100 visitors to patients in the Garlands Asylum for the years 1900–1904[a]

	Spousal		*Sibling*		*Parental*	
	Wife	*Husband*	*Brother*	*Sister*	*Mother*	*Father*
1900	14	8	10	19	11	3
1901	8	10	10	21	7	6
1902	18	11	4	24	7	6
1903	11	14	5	20	19	1
1904	13	16	10	7	9	4
Total	123		130		73	

Source Garlands Visiting Book, 1900–1904
[a]CACC, *Patient's Friends Book 1900–1904*, THOS 8/4/24/1

largest portion of visitors were siblings of patients (26.3%), closely followed by spouses (24.9%). The prevalence of siblings picks up Catherine Davidoff's ideas that these relationships in the past have often been taken for granted. In fact, this type of kin network is often the strongest as 'they know you so well'.[40] This theme of sibling support is picked up by many other contributors to this volume, including Geoff Monks, Iain Riddell, and Kim Price. Surprisingly, the smallest percentage of visits was made by parents of patients (14.8%), perhaps because they were too old or infirm to travel long distances.

These themes are perhaps emblematised by the case of Matthew C. He was admitted to Garlands in April 1899 suffering with mania. From January 1900 up until his death in December 1901, Matthew was visited by various members of his family on twenty-eight separate occasions. On nineteen of these, Matthew was met by his wife, Hannah, seven were visits from his siblings—three brothers and one sister—and two were by his sons, the youngest of whom was only eight years old. Frequent visits from his family would have reinforced his role as a husband, brother, and father and created a level of continuity as well as comfort and support. In this case all of his family, except one brother, lived within a five-mile radius of the asylum—that is within one day's walking distance. For other patients, visitors came from much further afield and where they could not, as we have seen, letters might be a substitute. Whilst not all families remained connected within the asylum there is clear evidence that many did remain closely involved in the lives of their relatives in the asylum. On the other hand, and as Regina Poertner has also shown in her contribution to this volume, family connections were not always harmonious and the chapter will now examine how, in certain cases, family relationships could be destructive and detrimental to a patient's mental health.

Family as the Cause of Insanity

Three key areas have been identified within the patient records of the Garlands Asylum that suggest that the family could cause, or exacerbate, a relative's condition. First, the common factor, in diagnosis, associated with the family, was the hereditary nature of mental illness. Asylum doctors identified a link between generations of the same family and the occurrence of mental disturbance, but they could not provide any definitive proof as to its existence in certain conditions.[41] An individual's hereditary predisposition continued to be cited in the admission records, and a person's

family history was thoroughly researched on committal. Statements such as 'father weak-minded' or 'maternal aunt present here' are common features of the admission records and were considered an important indication as to the cause of a patient's mental breakdown. Mental illness therefore was a familial tendency and understood and diagnosed through an exploration of family history. This was reinforced by Clouston:

> The facts of nature compel the physician to see that purely mental and moral qualities and mental defects are transmissible from parent to child and prepare him for the great part that…[hereditary] plays in psychological development and in mental disease. It has not yet been proved statistically whether a man's features or the acuteness of his moral sense are most apt to be transmitted to his children or grandchildren, but I am strongly of opinion that the latter will be found to be equally so with the former.[42]

One example of a patient displaying hereditary tendencies was Sarah G, admitted to Garlands in May 1894 suffering with melancholia. Sarah was cited as having a hereditary predisposition to mental illness due to the fact that her brother, John B, was present in Garlands at the time of her committal, and also because their father, George, had committed suicide.[43] When comparing the two sets of case notes to determine any similarities in their conditions, there seems a large disparity in their illnesses. Sarah was described by Dr Campbell, five days after admission as:

> dull and reserved and has a most unhappy expression. She says that for the last 8 months she has felt miserable and that during that time she has had strong impulses to end her life. She is in weak bodily health, thin and in poor condition.[44]

In contrast, John B was suffering from mania in his second stay at Garlands, which caused him to behave very differently to Sarah. Dr. Campbell remarked on 9 May 1894 that:

> His appearance, manner, mode of speaking and conduct are all different from what they were when he left this as well. He is excitable, does everything in a sudden manner. He is at present foolishly pleased with everything…looks as if little would make him have an attack of excitement. He was restless and noisy last night. He says the people outside persecuted him and his daughter. He is in average bodily health, but has nervous twitching of face.[45]

Whilst there is little similarity in their mental states, the siblings reflected the contemporary understanding of hereditary illness. Asylum doctors had highlighted the clustering of mental illness in certain family trees, but they could not fully explain how, and why, or indeed predict what form an inherited illness might take.

Second, insanity brought on by childbirth or lactation, was a common cause of illness.[46] There was of course no understanding of post-natal depression. Pregnancy, particularly, when involving illegitimacy, was a period of great pressure and anxiety for the mother. Illegitimate births revealed illicit sexuality, mothers suffered because they bore the burden of rearing the children alone.[47] In England illegitimacy was irreversible and it was the woman who bore the stigma of bringing a child into the world without a father.[48] This could drive women to mental breakdown, and cases such as these frequently ended up in asylums. One example from the Garlands is Eleanor W, admitted on 9 August 1910, aged twenty-one, sixteen months after the delivery of her first child. She was listed as single, and added to her case note was the following letter from a local practitioner, remarking on a rumour that she had recently been pregnant:

> The people in Langdale say that up to Friday week, she was apparently pregnant, judging from her figure, but on Saturday week, there was a marked change and from being swollen, her figure suddenly became normal and she put on a pair of corsets. The common report is that she was about 6 months pregnant, but whether that was so or not I am unable to say. However on Saturday week she commenced to menstruate and has continued unwell ever since. On the Friday she was out hanging clothes and when she came in a person remarked how frail she was, she said she had been frightened by a pig. I never examined her as I only saw her about three times, and the only information I had was from neighbours, the girl herself denying that she had been pregnant; and said she had been regularly unwell for three months, since she began after suckling her child, and this was confirmed by her mother. Whether there has been a miscarriage I cannot say, but I think you should know about the rumour, as it may have something to do with her case.[49]

From this letter it is clear that the incidence of rumour within the area where Eleanor lived had been extremely damaging; indeed, enough for a practitioner to get in touch with the doctors in the asylum to inform them of the intrigue surrounding her possible pregnancy. Eleanor already had one child outside of wedlock, one more would further tarnish her,

and her family's reputation. There is a possibility that she induced the miscarriage herself and blamed her frailty on being 'frightened by a pig'. Although abortion was illegal, it was practiced unsurprisingly on a frequent basis as a method of contraception.[50] There is no evidence that Eleanor had attempted to abort her child, but from the tone of the letter to the asylum, it seems that there was some degree of mystery surrounding her illness. On admission, she was described as being a 'poorly nourished young woman', and that her condition was caused by worry. After a short period in Garlands, she was discharged recovered back to her family on 22 December 1910.

Finally, an additional cause of insanity attributable to a patient's family was domestic violence; as Marland argued, the family home was for some 'a dreadful place to be'.[51] In responding to domestic violence people revealed their opinions about the ideal roles of men and women in both society and the family. Feminine qualities, it was believed, had the ability to defuse occasions of difficulty and tension and thus successfully avoid becoming targets of male violence.[52] The idea that women were therefore in part to blame for a man's conduct could have an adverse effect on her sense of well-being. The motives for violence within the home have varied little over the years: jealously, poverty, sexual frustration, and alcohol all being contributory factors.[53] Domestic violence is not overtly mentioned in the Garlands source base but is nonetheless part of the unwitting testimony of the admission records. This was evident in the case of Ellen H, admitted 15 December 1893, stated to be suffering from mania brought on by menopause. On admission, Ellen was described as 'very emaciated', and as having 'numerous small bruises over both arms, also on knees, thighs and legs; small bruise over lumber region of back'. From the extent of her injuries, it was clear that she was the subject of abuse, and it seems most likely that this was from her husband, John, as noted in her case record for 10 June 1894 which read; 'she says she is to sue for a divorce and that she will not live with her husband again'. In November 1894 it was noted that she would not reply to letters from home, and that she did not speak in a reasonable manner about her husband. Interestingly, shortly before Ellen was discharged recovered back to the family home in July 1895, it was noted that 'her husband stated that he thought she was in her normal mental state and he was anxious to have her at home'.[54] Although domestic violence was not explicitly mentioned, it is apparent from close inspection of Ellen's case notes that she was unhappy at home, and did not want to

live with her husband. Whether or not her continuing assertions to the asylum staff that she did not wish to go home because of her domestic situation, were the reason that John insisted on her removal home, can only be assumed. However, Ellen's poor state on admission is indicative that she had been the victim of some violent contact, and when piecing the evidence from the case notes together, this leads to the conclusion that this was received at the hands of her husband. It is clear, then, that as well as providing care for their mentally ill relatives, in some circumstances, the family were also the perpetrators of a mental breakdown. They could be an abusive vessel from which a patient was released when coming to an asylum, rather than a caring unit which always held the best intentions of its relatives in its motivations.

Conclusion

Family care of the insane has proven a difficult area for historians to research. The lack of surviving material, in the form of diaries, letters, and so forth, especially for the pauper classes, is problematic. Nonetheless, as the family remained in control of the care of their relatives in times of mental illness, it is important to consider their role in the decision to commit their family members to the asylum. Using the Garlands records, the events which brought families to the institution can be pieced together. The admission records provide first-hand quotes from relatives as to why they considered their husband/wife/daughter/son to be mentally unwell. Cross-referencing the biographical information recorded on the admission documents with census material, birth, death and marriage certificates, a picture of the social circumstances from which these patients were drawn can be constructed. Thus, through the surviving records, this chapter has provided examples which portray the comprehensive background in which the lunatic asylum was operating during this period. This avenue of exploration has not been conducted in such detail by other researchers, providing a deeper understanding of the involvement of relatives in this process.

Existing literature of the lunatic asylum has not completely dismissed the involvement of the family in the care of the insane. Their role in admitting a mentally ill relative, and the decision to discharge them back home, has been examined. However, what happens in between the point of admission and discharge remains a neglected area. Through the use of letters, and statements in the patient casebooks, this chapter has gone

some way to address this. It is clear, from the examples, that the role of the family once their relative was a patient in the asylum, remained important. Although the asylum doctors actively treated the patient, it was the family which they relied upon for detailed information. In addition, this chapter has demonstrated how maintaining relationships with the family was an important aspect of asylum life, as they continued to offer a base of familial support. This reinforces the connectivity of families, and the importance of kinship, as has been examined elsewhere in this volume, notably in the chapters of Geoff Monks and Iain Riddell. For the literature concerning asylums, evidence of such relationships have not been forthcoming, and those which have, only portray the experience of the middle to upper classes, and not that of paupers.

Contrary to the portrayal of previous works, the lunatic asylum could provide a place of refuge in times of domestic upheaval which were damaging to an individual's mental health. Through a nourishing diet, a rigid regime, suitable employment, and regular exercise in the open air, the treatment at Garlands rehabilitated patients to their former health. These conditions were a great departure from their overcrowded, chaotic, and in some cases, abusive home lives. Poverty and hardship experienced in the domestic setting, sometimes exacerbated by loved ones, provided the precursor to asylum admission. The exploration in this chapter of how the family themselves caused mental illness signals a departure in the examination of the underlying triggers of insanity in this period. Previous studies have confined their examination of this to the mental upset onset by pregnancy and childbirth, and through inherited conditions. This chapter has gone further by examining the patient case records to read between the lines to ascertain the actual causes, rather than the given ones by the asylum doctors. Domestic abuse was never explicitly blamed for mental unrest, but it is apparent. The voices of the patients which emerge from the notes recorded by the asylum doctors are a great source of the truth of the life from which they had been admitted, and the damage this had caused to their health.

The importance of understanding the treatment of the mentally ill in the period as a constantly shifting entity, has been reinforced, and will cause others to view it as such in future research. This is also true of the understanding of the role of the family in the process. Relatives were not static beings always reacting to adversity in the same way. Regarding the family as a stable unit is wrong, and when researching the domestic situation, it must be remembered that it was made up of several actors all

with constantly shifting motivations and fortunes. This porous nature of the domestic unit has been a common theme throughout the volume, and has been explored particularly with regard to the migration of family members in the chapters of Iain Riddell, Steven King, and Kim Price.[55] Simply stating that the family reacted in a certain way has led to a misconception of the nature of their involvement. Future research of this area must take into consideration the pressures acting on the domestic household at any given time to fully understand its decisions and actions to provide an accurate account of the actual role in the treatment of its mentally ill members in the nineteenth-century lunatic asylum.

Notes

1. See P. Laslett (1988) 'Family, Kinship and Collectivity as Systems of Support in Pre-industrial Europe: A Consideration of the "Nuclear-Hardship" Hypothesis', *Continuity and Change*, 3:2, pp. 153–75; M. Anderson (1971) *Family Structure in Nineteenth Century Lancashire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).
2. D. Cooper and M. Donald (1995) 'Households and "Hidden" Kin in Early-Nineteenth Century England: Four Case Studies in Suburban Exeter, 1821–1861', *Continuity and Change*, 10:2, pp. 257–278; B. Reay (1996) 'Kinship and the Neighbourhood in Nineteenth-Century Rural England: The Myth of the Autonomous Nuclear Family', *Journal of Family History*, 21:1, pp. 87–104; S. A. King and M. Shephard (2012) 'Courtship and the Remarrying Man in Late-Victorian England', *Journal of Family History*, 37:3, pp. 319–340.
3. E. Gordon and G. Nair (2003) *Public Lives: Women, Family and Society in Victorian Britain* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press), p. 52.
4. See M. James (2006) 'A Georgian Gentleman: Child Care and the Case of Harry Tremayne, 1814–1823', *Family and Community History*, 9:2, pp. 79–90; D. Helm (2016) '*"The Beauty of a Sick Room"*: Family Care for the Dying in the English Upper and Middle Class Home c.1840–c.1890', *Family and Community History*, 16:2, pp. 100–112.
5. See A. Gestrich, E. Hurren, and S. King (2012) (eds.) *Poverty and Sickness in Modern Europe: Narratives of the Sick Poor, 1780–1938* (London: Continuum).
6. For some starting points see A. Scull (1979) *Museums of Madness: The Social Organization of Insanity in Nineteenth-Century England* (London: Allen Lane); L. D. Smith (1999) *"Cure, Comfort and Safe Custody": Public Lunatic Asylums in Early Nineteenth Century England* (London:

Leicester University Press); K. Jones (1960) *Mental Health and Social Policy, 1845–1959* (London: Routledge).

7. Jones, *Mental Health and Social Policy*, p. 8.
8. C. Smith (2006) 'Family, Community and the Victorian Asylum: A Case Study of the Northampton General Lunatic Asylum and Its Pauper Lunatics', *Family and Community History*, 9:2, pp. 109–124.
9. D. Wright (1999) 'The Discharge of Pauper Lunatics from County Asylums in Mid-Victorian England: The Case of Buckinghamshire, 1853–1872', in J. Melling and B. Forsythe (eds.) *Insanity, Institutions and Society, 1800–1914* (London: Routledge), p. 98.
10. R. Adair, B. Forsythe, and J. Melling (1999) 'Families, Communities and the Legal Regulation of Lunacy in Victorian England: Assessments of Crime, Violence and Welfare in Admissions to the Devon Asylum, 1845–1914', in P. Bartlett and D. Wright (eds.) *Outside the Walls of the Asylum: the History of Care in the Community 1750–2000* (London: Athlone Press), p. 162.
11. M. E. Kelm (1994) 'Women, Families and the Provincial Hospital for the Insane, British Colombia, 1905–1915', *Journal of Family History*, 19:2, p. 180.
12. H. Marland (2004) *Dangerous Motherhood: Insanity and Childbirth in Victorian Britain* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan), p. 148.
13. L. Davidoff (2008) 'The Family in Britain', in F. M. L. Thompson (ed.) *The Cambridge Social History of Britain, 1750–1950, Volume 2: People and Their Environment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), p. 85.
14. Garlands was built to jointly serve the pauper lunatics of Cumberland and Westmorland, and was named Garlands after the estate the Asylum was constructed on. It was situated three miles out of Carlisle in Cumberland, C. Dobbing (2016) 'An Undiscovered Victorian Institution of Care: A Short Introduction to the Cumberland and Westmorland Joint Lunatic Asylum', *Family and Community History,* 19:1, p. 3.
15. See S. J. Taylor (2017) *Child Insanity in England, 1845–1907* (London: Palgrave Macmillan), p. 40.
16. M. Finnane (1985) 'Asylums, Families and the State', *History Workshop Journal,* 20:1, p. 137. David Wright stated that 'confinement was predicated upon the desires of families to care for and control dependent and violent relatives', D. Wright (1997) 'Getting Out of the Asylum: Understanding the Confinement of the Insane in the Nineteenth Century', *Social History of Medicine,* 10:1, p. 137. Changes in family life included the death of a carer, loss of work, the marriage of a child or a remarriage of a mother or father. Also, distinct periods of one's life, such as, adolescence, pregnancy, menopause and old age, were considered times of increased pressure, in which, in some cases, the family failed to cope successfully. Anderson, *Family Structure*, p. 136.

17. Insanity was the umbrella term which referred to mental illness. This was further broken down into 'lunacy' and 'idiocy'. The former used to define curable manifestations of insanity, such as mania and melancholia, and the latter used to categorise individuals suffering from long-term, incurable conditions. Wright stressed 'the permanence of idiocy in differentiating it from lunacy', C. P. Philips (1858) *The Law Concerning Lunatics, Idiots and Persons of Unsound Mind* (London: James Wildy), pp. 1–2, in D. Wright (1998) 'Familial Care of "Idiot" Children in Victorian England', in P. Horden and R. Smith (eds.) *The Locus of Care: Families, Communities, Institutions, and the Provision of Welfare Since Antiquity* (London: Routledge), p. 188.
18. D. Wright (2001) *Mental Disability in Victorian England: The Earlswood Asylum, 1847–1901* (Oxford: Clarendon Press), p. 48; Taylor, *Child Insanity,* p. 175. Akihito Suzuki has heralded this as a signal that the working-class narrative was preferred to that of medical professionals, as those in contact with the patient for the majority of the illness were more closely acquainted with it, A. Suzuki (2004) *Madness at Home: The Psychiatrist, the Patient, and the Family in England, 1820–1860* (Berkeley: University of California Press), pp. 41–42.
19. Cumbria Archive Centre Carlisle (hereafter CACC), *Reception Orders 1902*, THOS 8/4/1/44.
20. Also stated by Smith, 'Family, Community and the Victorian Asylum', p. 110.
21. CACC, *Annual Report 1871*, THOS 8/1/3/1/9, p. 16.
22. CACC, *Female Casebook 1884–1888*, THOS 8/4/40/1, admission no. 2630.
23. H. Marland (2002) 'Getting Away with Murder? Puerperal Insanity, Infanticide and the Defence Plea', in M. Jackson (ed.) *Infanticide: Historical Perspectives on Child Murder and Concealment, 1550–2000* (London: Athlone), p. 229.
24. Ancestry.com, *1911 England Census* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2011.
25. Psychiatry as a specialist area of medicine was in this era in its infancy. The asylums provided a theatre for training for psychiatrists—or alienists as they were more commonly known. As a result, superintendents were not accurate in their diagnosis of patients, and throughout this chapter, all diagnoses and classifications of conditions cannot be considered to be entirely reliable, due to the infancy of the profession. A. Shepherd (2014) *Institutionalizing the Insane in Nineteenth-Century England* (London: Pickering and Chatto), p. 41.
26. M. Lyons (2007) '"Ordinary Writings" or How the "Illiterate" Speak to Historians', in M. Lyons (ed.) *Ordinary Writings, Personal Narratives: Writing Practices in 19th and Early 20th Century Europe* (Oxford: Peter Lang), p. 27.

27. Marland, 'Getting Away with Murder?', p. 243.
28. G. Mooney and J. Reinarz (2009) 'Hospital and Asylum Visiting in Historical Perspective: Themes and Issues', in G. Mooney and J. Reinarz (eds.) *Permeable Walls: Historical Perspectives on Hospital and Asylum Visiting* (New York: Rodopi), p. 9.
29. J. Hamlett (2015) *At Home in the Institution: Material Life in Asylums, Lodging Houses and Schools in Victorian and Edwardian England* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan), p. 16.
30. *Carlisle Journal*, 24 October 1899.
31. CACC, *Male Casebook 1897–1900,* THOS 8/4/39/4, Letter attached to patient case record, admission no. 4800.
32. For instance see D. A. Gerber (2006) *Authors of Their Lives the Personal Correspondence of British Immigrants to North America in the Nineteenth Century* (New York: New York University Press).
33. CACC, *Male Casebook 1897–1900,* THOS 8/4/39/4, admission no. 4356.
34. See (1998) 'Case Notes, Case Histories, and the Patient's Experience of Insanity at Gartnavel Royal Asylum, Glasgow, in the Nineteenth Century', *Social History of Medicine*, 11:2, pp. 255–281.
35. C. Coleborne (2010) *Madness in the Family: Insanity and Institutions in the Australasian Colonial World, 1860–1914* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan), p. 56.
36. CACC, *Casebook 1865–1868*, THOS 8/4/38/2, Letters attached to patient case record, admission no. 421.
37. CACC, *Annual Report 1886*, THOS 8/1/3/1/24, p. 15.
38. CACC, *Patient's Friends Book 1900–1904*, THOS 8/4/24/1.
39. M. Finnane (2003) 'The Ruly and the Unruly: Isolation and Inclusion in the Management of the Insane', in C. Strange and A. Bashford (eds.) *Isolation: Places and Practices of Exclusion* (London: Routledge), p. 99.
40. L. Davidoff (2012) *Thicker Than Water: Siblings and Their Relations, 1780–1920* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), p. 1.
41. E. Shorter (1997) *A History of Psychiatry: From the Era of the Asylum to the Age of Prozac* (New York: Wiley), p. 28.
42. T. S. Clouston (1904) *Clinical Lectures on Mental Diseases* (London: J & A Churchill), p. 2.
43. Suicide, or a desire for self-harm, was cited as an indication of insanity. See A. Shepherd and D. Wright (2002) 'Madness, Suicide and the Victorian Asylum: Attempted Self-Murder in the Age of Non-restraint', *Medical History,* 46:2, pp. 175–196.
44. CACC, *Female Casebook 1892–1895*, THOS 8/4/40/3, admission no. 3939.

45. CACC, *Male Casebook 1893–1897*, THOS 8/4/39/3, admission no. 3925.
46. Accounted for 8.2% of the total admissions, 1862–1872, CACC, *Annual Report 1872*, THOS 8/1/3/1/10, p. 18.
47. G. Frost (2016) *Illegitimacy in English Law and Society, 1860–1930* (Manchester: Manchester University Press).
48. See also G. Frost (2014) 'The Kindness of Strangers Revisited: Fostering, Adoption and Illegitimacy in England, 1860–1930', in R. Probert (ed.) *Cohabitation and Non-marital Births in England and Wales, 1600–2012* (Basingstoke: Palgrave), pp. 125–144; A. Blaikie (1998) 'Scottish Illegitimacy: Social Adjustment or Moral Economy?', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 29:2, pp. 221–241.
49. Letter to Dr Fullerton from William Allen attached to the case notes of Eleanor W, CACC, *Female Casebook 1909–1913*, THOS 8/4/40/8, p. 96.
50. P. Knight (1977) 'Women and Abortion in Victorian and Edwardian England', *History Workshop Journal*, 4:1, pp. 57–60.
51. Marland, *Dangerous Motherhood*, p. 158.
52. For wider context see G. Frost (2009) '"I am Master Here": Illegitimacy, Masculinity and Violence in Victorian England', in L. Delap, B. Griffin, and A. Wills (eds.) *The Politics of Domestic Authority in Britain Since 1800* (Basingstoke: Palgrave), pp. 27–42; G. Savage (2007) '"A State of Personal Danger": Domestic Violence in England, 1903–1922', in K. Watson (ed.) *Assaulting the Past: Violence and Civilisation in Historical Context* (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Press), pp. 269–85.
53. E. Foyster (2005) *Marital Violence: An English Family History, 1660–1875* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), p. 3.
54. CACC, *Female Casebook 1892–1895*, THOS 8/4/40/3, admission no. 3872.
55. For literature concerning migration see M. Anderson (1971) 'Urban Migration in Nineteenth Century Lancashire: Some Insights into Two Competing Hypotheses', *Annales De Démographie Historique*, 16, pp. 13–26; C. Pooley and J. Turnbull (1998) *Migration and Mobility in Britain Since the Eighteenth Century* (London: UCL Press); C. Pooley and S. D'Cruze (1994) 'Migration and Urbanization in North-West England, c.1760–1830', *Social History*, 19:3, pp. 339–358.

CHAPTER 8

Conceptualising the 'Perfect' Family in Late Nineteenth-Century Philanthropic Institutions

Steven J. Taylor

Overview

The cult of domesticity and the Victorian science of Eugenics have done much to emphasise the importance of blood ties in linking families together. In reality, however, many nineteenth-century children were brought up by people other than their biological parents. Throughout this volume we have seen how new kinship and fictive kinship networks could be created by combining existing groups into reconfigured families. There is also plenty of evidence of the provision of broadly conceived foster care provided by relatives, family friends, and other individuals.[1] Thus, as Carol Beardmore shows in her chapter for this volume, Edward Wrench took into his own home, his wife's nieces and cared for them alongside his own children over a period of many years. The number of children brought up outside Peter Laslett's nuclear unit is hard to estimate. George Behlmer perhaps gets closest to providing the scale of fractured families through his suggestion that of those living

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in Lancashire and East London, around one-third would have lost one parent (and 10% both) by the age of fifteen.[2] It is therefore unsurprising that step-parenting, fostering, and even single parenting were major topics of discussion during the Victorian period. More widely, Victorian society collectively worried (much as modern commentators do) about the fragility of family units, with 'nomadic husbands' who moved from family to family, alcoholic parents, wandering wives, and working-parents all featuring in social investigations from the 1860s.[3]

At the core of these contemporary observations and concerns was an underlying sense that children were being failed by family and kin and that such failure might have fundamental consequences for the social fabric of a future Britain.[4] Fears about national efficiency and potential decline loomed large.[5] The active response to such fears can be seen in the rise of Victorian institutions and charities which were tasked (by donors) or tasked themselves with the identification, support, and sometimes removal of vulnerable children in/from their family context.[6] This is not, of course, a new observation, but new opportunities to analyse the records of some of these bodies offer us a way to rethink the nature, shape, and meaning of the working-class family in the Victorian period.[7] This chapter, then, explores how middling and elite philanthropists conceived and constructed the poorest of working-class families. More specifically the chapter asks the questions: what were the characteristics of perceived problem families? To what extent did ideas of the 'perfect' family influence middle- and working-class attitudes towards children? How did philanthropic reformers attempt to reconceptualise the working-family? And were these redefinitions and reconceptualisations resisted? The answers to these questions are complex but bring the nascent middle-class construct of nineteenth-century family life into view and allow evaluation of how working-people reacted to these impositions. Through a close case study of one of the great charitable institutions of the late nineteenth century—the Waifs and Strays Society (hereafter WSS)—it is possible to bring new perspectives to a set of familiar but unresolved questions.

Founded in 1881 by Edward de Montjoie Rudolf, the WSS developed as a singular element of the late nineteenth-century child-saving movement, or child-rescue as it was also known, that sought to improve the circumstances of orphaned, deserted, mistreated or vulnerable children. At this time, there were numerous societies and charities dealing with the needs of the young; Thomas Barnardo founded his first home for

children in 1869, as did Thomas Stephenson after talking to children living underneath the arches of Waterloo Station, London. In the same year Maria Rye began sending disadvantaged youngsters to Canada in an attempt to raise them from the poverty of urban England. The presence of the words 'saving' and 'rescue' in the mission statements of many of these charities and in the rhetoric of those who drove them suggests these organisations believed broadly in removing children from undesirable family and environmental situations and shaping them into independent and productive individuals. Rudolf, however, was unlike his child-saving peers. He was particularly suspicious of those who aligned with no particular denomination or religious creed, such as Barnardo who offered a protestant upbringing in non-denominational surroundings.[8] Rudolf's approach as the manager of a national philanthropic organisation was more cautious than that of his contemporaries. The more controversial Barnardo, for example, actively promoted the action of 'philanthropic abduction', that is removal from the family home or kinship group for the good of the child, an endeavour never endorsed by the WSS.[9] Also the WSS was distinguished from other child-saving societies by Rudolf's philosophy that the management of the institutional 'homes' that he oversaw was to be devolved to local bodies rather than controlled by the central organisation. Rudolf was clear that the actions of the WSS represented the church in action and not the founder.[10] By 1902, the WSS had expanded rapidly and was operating ninety homes across the country (including receiving homes in every Anglican diocese) that cared for 3071 children.[11] The objective of this chapter is not to focus too much on the mechanics of the organisation. Excellent research on it already exists.[12] Instead it is more concerned with how ideas of the 'perfect' family were forged and presented to children that were under its care and control.[13]

Thus, while the immediate 'improvement' of a child's circumstances was the initial goal of the WSS, its long-term objective was to alter the mentality and habits of the working-class and by extension help to eradicate endemic life-cycle poverty. As F. M. L. Thompson argues, ultimately institutions such as this sought to bring reinforcement to what they saw as a disintegrating and collapsing system which had hitherto ensured social order and stability.[14] At the heart of this traditional society was the family, therefore, much of the work of this and similar philanthropic organisations was premised on the idea that family structures and domestic bonds between the poor were limited and needed to be

strengthened.[15] This has led historians such as Lydia Murdoch to argue that philanthropy adopted a system of cottage homes in order to instil the idea of a respectable 'family' in a constructed and controlled environment. Such an approach served to legitimise removal while undermining the biological structures of working-class households.[16] Philanthropy, similarly to Poor Law relief after 1834, assumed a didactic role within the broader welfare landscape of the late nineteenth century.[17] If we accept this premise then it is vital to develop a better understanding of the 'family' that the organisation wanted its young subjects to replicate in their adult lives. While Murdoch and others have explored this approach for other institutions more generally, a new insight can be obtained through examining how the philanthropic ideal was imposed on the children who were admitted to the WSS with some form of physical or mental impairment. In this instance the WSS is particularly useful because it was not a 'sentimental' charity founded specifically to advance the care and needs of the child 'cripple'.[18] A sample of 300 children that were in the care of the WSS between the years 1881 and 1900 have been distilled from the extant records and is used here to investigate how philanthropists constructed the idea of the family unit and relationships within it.[19] In this endeavour the 'disabled' child, often thought to be excluded from an independent future, offers a particularly useful lens for constructing family backgrounds, exploring ideas about future adulthood (including future reproductive potential), and social concepts of those who were 'different' to the majority of the population. As well as organisational casefiles, letters written by poor parents to the WSS, and internal documents of the organisation are used to demonstrate how in some situations middle-class 'reformers' engineered the break-up of working-families in order to promote and instil their own perceptions of what a family should look like. At the heart of these efforts was the middle-class belief that 'in order to be saved, children had to be transplanted to a new kind of domestic space'.[20] The question of what intellectual, scientific, economic, and political influences were prominent in shaping the attitudes of the charitable classes towards working-class families in London and beyond at this point in time is one that requires more attention, both in its own right and for what the answers to such questions tell us about the place of children within working-class families more generally.

The Nineteenth-Century Context

Welfare and medical reform were not conceived in a vacuum but shaped by contemporaneous attitudes and discourses over the family that were themselves influenced by numerous ingrained contemporary ideologies in the Victorian period. These are an important backdrop to the mission of the WSS. Religion underpinned, for example, philosophies of separate spheres and domesticity. Imagery portrayed women as the 'angel in the house' and pushed them into the role of moral guardian both of the family and the nation.[21] The association of women with the home and men with the outside world has led to assumptions that have shaped into the public and private.[22] The role of the father in Victorian society is much vaguer but it was assumed that the public world was dominated by masculine values of competition and achievement. Victorian fatherhood was bound up in economically providing for the family.[23] Male working-class parents might well have found it difficult to live up to the standards set by the affluent classes and a mother could not necessarily remain at home. Influential Parliamentary commissions in 1840 and 1844 reported that 'neglectful and incompetent slum parents' were undermining the moral training which children were receiving in Sunday schools. So powerful was the disapproval towards the home and family life of the poor it is not surprising that middle-class reformers sought to actively re-configure families into something more like their own.

More widely, Samuel Smiles published the enormously influential *Self-Help* in 1859. Geared towards encouraging its readers towards an independent and prosperous life Smiles argued in *Self-Help* that 'the spirit of self-help is the root of all genuine growth in the individual'.[24] It was immensely popular and in its first year sold more than 20,000 copies. By 1904, the year that Smiles died, over a quarter of a million had been sold. By popularising the idea of state intervention or dependence as enfeebling, Smiles' work reached a receptive audience with the British middle-class who were becoming increasingly involved in civic life following the Great Reform Act (1832) and the Poor Law Amendment Act (1834). *Self-Help* particularly chimed with the ethos and philosophies of the latter legislation which depicted notions of the idle able-bodied man as a drain on ratepayers and society. The focus on individualism was inevitably attractive to those working in public life and the principles were taken and applied to the working-class and poorer elements of the population as part of the Poor Law crusade which began in 1869 and will

feature in more detail below. Yet these principles were not just imposed through the mechanics of the Poor Law by a dominant middle-class; they were also reworked and adopted by activists from within the aspirational elements of the working-class who invested in the ideal of productive able-bodied men providing for their families. For them the self-help philosophy was intimately embedded within working-class political aspirations for suffrage that took form from the chartists through to the Labour Party.[25] Thus independence formed 'the bedrock of men's claims to citizenship, countless self-improvement schemes, and were ingrained in working-men's rhetoric about self-respect and independence'.[26] This subsequently resulted in fathers, and their role in the family as provider, becoming fixed in the wider nineteenth-century discourse associated with self-help and conducting independent lives.

In a curious historical symmetry, Charles Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* was published on 3 October 1859, the same day as Smiles' *Self-Help*. Darwin's text and its ideas about evolution and survival of the fittest requires no introduction and the influence it had on his cousin, Francis Galton, has been well documented.[27] Prior to Darwin, ideas about degeneration and proto-eugenic discourse were essential elements in redefining ideas about working-families and the environments in which they lived. Galton argued in his work *Hereditary Genius* (1869) that character traits in humans were transmitted from parent to child. He raised concerns about more 'respectable' classes marrying later in life and having fewer children while the poor and 'undesirable' appeared to be promiscuous and breeding without check. He feared that 'the race gradually deteriorates, becoming in each successive generation less fit for high civilisation'.[28] In 1883, Galton coined the term Eugenics and initially called for people of above average intelligence to bear more children in order to 'improve' the human race. However, at a national level, the experiences of military defeats in the Zulu War (1879) and the issues surrounding soldier recruitment during the Boer War (1899–1902) meant that relationships between families and the state in the late nineteenth-century were reshaped around ideas of national efficiency and 'improving' the circumstances of the poor.[29]

By 1869, ten years after *Self-Help* and just as ideas of degeneration were beginning to gain traction, the President of the Poor Law Board, George Goschen, issued a directive that called for greater cooperation between Poor Law Unions and the Charity Organisation Society. Known as the Goschen Minute, it stated that charity should take responsibility

for those in work that required supplements to wages and that the Poor Law should deal exclusively with those that were truly destitute. The objective was to cut Poor Law expenditure and prevent unscrupulous applicants from among the 'unrespectable' working-poor from claiming simultaneous help from charity and state bodies. At the heart of the Goschen Minute was an attempt to abolish Poor Law out-relief by dealing with those that genuinely required help inside the institutional space of the workhouse. The Charity Organisation Society took up the mantle of investigating poverty and assessing need with the objective of changing the behaviour of individuals living in poverty, while Goschen stressed that the poor should plan for future crises and need through the use of friendly societies, sick clubs, and saving accounts.[30] In this restructuring of welfare policy that signalled the beginning of the Poor Law crusade against out-relief we observe the infiltration of *Self-Help* individualism into the management of both state and voluntary bodies designed to relieve those in need. Furthermore, the change in policy also redefined working-families as devious, idle, and dependent and thus they required deterrence and direction for their own benefit by a paternal state.

By the late nineteenth-century the influential discourses of Smiles and Galton, in combination with the actions of Goschen, had broadly redefined perceptions of poor families as a danger to national development. Inevitably they were conceptualised as a threat to the economy, themselves, and society more generally. At its softer end, this train of thinking can be seen as integral to the work of Octavia Hill, the granddaughter of Dr T. Southwood Smith and member of the Charity Organisation Society, who took an interest in improving the homes of poor families. In her most influential work, *Homes of the London Poor*, she lamented: 'The people's homes are bad, partly because they are badly built and arranged; they are tenfold worse because the tenants' habits and lives are what they are'.[31] She devoted her life to improving the standard of housing in London and proclaimed 'I feel most deeply that the disciplining of our immense poor population must be effected by individual influence; and that this power can change it from a mob of paupers and semi-paupers into a body of self-dependent workers'.[32] The influence of self-help ideology and degenerative discourse is undeniably evident here, but also the belief from the 'respectable' elements of society that it was their duty to educate and bring about change in those living at society's margins. In turn, Hill's idea of the family served to reinforce the middle-class ideal of a 'bread-winning' father figure and a domesticated mother, as outlined

in the overview. The dwellings that she provided were not given as an act of charity but designed to maintain working-class pride and return a profit. She was adamant 'that a working-man ought to be able to pay for his own house'.[33] It is in this rather gloomy intellectual and social climate that ideas about the family were shaped within the walls of the WSS homes. Children, in their turn, came to be emblematic of the task faced by social leaders. The Poor Law crusade against out-relief created a vacuum in welfare provision that was filled by the 'child-saving' movement spearheaded by figures such as Rudolf, Barnardo, Thomas Stephenson, and Maria Rye. This movement, in combination with the growth of elementary schooling, introduced in 1870 and made compulsory a decade later, made children living in poverty and with mental and physical disabilities more visible and open to public scrutiny and assessment than ever before.[34] Voluntary organisations, such as the WSS, were in a unique position to manage the needs of these individuals and at the same time directly able to demonstrate the ideals of the family that they wanted to promote. It is to this matter that the chapter now turns.

The Experience of the Waifs and Strays Society

The children admitted to the care of the WSS were subsequently constructed as the potentially dependent poor. Because their need was often amplified by disability, they were perceived as the individuals most unlikely to break the cycle of generational poverty. When admitted into the care of the WSS each child was accompanied by an application form that included information such as name, age, address, details about parents, date of baptism, schooling, and a testimony of need, usually completed by a prominent person within the local community (often the parish vicar but also middle-class charitable visitors) who knew their domestic circumstances and could attest to their welfare requirements. Cara Dobbing has traced a similar form that was used to provide information on patients when they were first admitted to the asylum, in her chapter for this volume. The data from these applications, alongside internal Waifs and Strays communications, letters to the society from parents/carers/potential employers, and medical assessments will be used to identify how poor families were imagined in the records of the WSS and to explain why children were thought to be better placed in care rather than left in their homes.

Before the WSS had even opened its doors to the public the influential emigration agent Maria Rye wrote to Rudolf 'to press upon you the importance of making the *girls* a first point…People will tell you the girls cannot be helped—cannot be found—but this is all nonsense, and they need the help a thousandfold more than the boys'.[35] There is no evidence of the impact that this letter had on Rudolf—he had never met Rye—but within the work of the WSS we can observe an interesting approach when it comes to gender. Annie Skinner has conducted a quantitative analysis of the whole WSS archive and found that 42.2% boys and 57.8% girls were admitted into the organisation.[36] Within the wider data she identified 270 cases that included the Charity Organisation Society's involvement in the application. In these there was a split of 55% boys to 45% girls that suggests a greater concern among the philanthropic class about rectifying the habits of future able-bodied males.[37] The sample of impaired children used here, however, sees a reverse in the situation with it being made up of 79% girls (237) and 21% (63) boys. The core difference between this smaller sample and the wider cohort is, of course, impairment and explanations for why the sample is so heavily weighted towards girls need to be explored.

Within the homes of nineteenth-century working-families female children occupied a unique and vital place. They contributed to the maintenance and cleanliness of the home while providing important childcare duties that provided space for parents to work and boost the domestic economy.[38] Furthermore, these skills were transferrable which also made girls useful valuable commodities in both the charity home and workplace, with their behaviour considered to be more manageable than that of boys.[39] In addition, there were persistent fears about the moral fibre and vulnerability of young girls living in close proximity to urban vice and the supervision of their bodies within the respectable domain of the charitable home was considered an important element in preventing the reproduction of bad heredity. If the impairments of the girls within this sample could be ameliorated, managed, or rectified with the aid of philanthropy then future independent workers and respectable mothers might be produced.

By examining the medical conditions that children were living with when entering the care of the WSS (Table 8.1) we can observe that physical impairment and associated conditions were the core issues that the organisation dealt with. Paralysis, missing limbs, disease (most commonly 'hip disease'), physical deformity, and restricted mobility accounted for

Table 8.1 Medical diagnoses of children admitted to the WSS

	Frequency	*Percent*
Mental disability	33	11.0
Impaired eyesight	22	7.3
Paralysis	24	8.0
Deaf	13	4.3
Missing limb	20	6.6
Disease	29	9.6
Malnutrition	9	3
Physical deformity	110	36.6
Restricted mobility	40	13.3
Total	300	100

Source CSA, Waifs and Strays Society Casefiles

almost three quarters (74.3%) of the disabled children coming to the WSS. While these might appear debilitating conditions, the records reveal concerted efforts to enable the children to become useful in the work place and be shaped into future independent adults and thus economic supporters of the family. The occupation of tailoring was one that was frequently sought for boys in the care of the WSS. For girls the most frequent occupations were domestic service (21.3%), machine knitting (14.7%), and some were placed in positions as sewing maids, dressmakers, and laundry workers. Some boys were found positions in the merchant navy, pattern shops, and grocery stores. On the whole these were respectable and stable trades that were rarely listed among the occupations of the children's parents. Edward B., for example, entered the care of the WSS at the age of seven in November 1895.[40] His mother had died from puerperal fever in 1893 leaving five children, four boys and one girl, of which Edward was the eldest. Upon admission he was said to have a deformed knee and hip and he used an orthopaedic boot to help improve his mobility. In March 1905 he was apprenticed to a tailor in Clapham but wrote to the WSS a year later reporting that his orthopaedic boot needed replacing. The WSS responded positively stating 'we must be prepared to help [Edward] B. with his boot' and they wrote to him telling 'him to have done what is necessary'.[41] A new boot was made and supplied directly to the boy at a cost of £2 1s 2d, the monies being paid by the charity.[42] As a consequence of this support Edward was able to remain in his position and he contacted the WSS again in December 1912 to report that: 'I am still in the shop tailoring

and very comfortable in my digs'. In the same letter he reveals that he was still in contact with his siblings and that they would all be together for Christmas.[43] Although removed from his home Edward's family ties obviously remained part of his life and this suggests that even to the poor, kinship mattered in terms of belonging and continued to provide emotional support.

Despite the supposed low status of the families who had children cared for by the WSS, potential vice or criminality in the domestic background was recorded in only 9.6% of cases. When there were instances of interaction with the criminal justice system it was not the actions of children, but the adults responsible for them that were recorded. At the most extreme end of the scale were individuals such as Charlotte H. whose mother had died and whose father was executed for the murder of her elder sister.[44] More often though, criminality referred to low-level crime such as proximity to prostitution and examples will feature in the case studies that follow later in this chapter. Contact with the welfare resources of the Poor Law occurred more regularly than criminality, with 23.5% of children having had some interaction with the state. This is still a relatively low figure that might be a consequence of two factors; firstly, the impact of the Crusade against out-relief that saw the truly destitute managed in workhouses and secondly, a middle-class sentimentality towards children that did not want to see them tarnished with the stigma of pauperisation from a young age.

An exploration of representative case studies helps to build a more detailed picture of how family was represented, within the WSS. Margaret C. was admitted from the home of her aunt in Leeds at the age of seven in September 1889.[45] She was described as an 'orphan' fit for emigration and was subsequently detained in an Industrial School.[46] The information included on her casefile makes it immediately apparent that Margaret was not an orphan in a modern sense.[47] Her mother had died from a stroke before her admission but the father was alive and in reasonably close contact with Margaret. It was noted on her admission documentation that he 'greatly' objected to her emigration.[48] Furthermore, the Industrial School detention order noted that he was a labourer 'who had not been convicted of any offence and seems fairly respectable'.[49] From the admission documentation a story emerges of the father having little more than an economic interest in the upkeep of the child with decisions about welfare being left to Margaret's aunt who was a widow and made a living through washing and nursing. In many respects,

Margaret is typical of many of the families in this volume, her home life was fractured through a set of circumstances, in this case death, and her father needed to work to cover her upkeep. A single female within her kinship group took up her care very much in the traditional nurturing role of women within the domestic sphere. It can be argued that in this instance the father fulfilled the popularly perceived masculine role of caring about, rather than for, the child. For the WSS these complicated domestic circumstances proved to be a source of friction. It was the philanthropic belief that the family 'are not at all able to care for her properly' but the aunt proved quite obstinate and, to a certain extent, made life difficult for those who wanted to offer Margaret external assistance.[50] Miss S Whitehead who completed the admission documentation complained that she was unable 'to get the child to see a doctor as her aunt wont let her go and her father dose [sic] not seem to have any control over her at all'.[51] The ties of this family group are evident in the fight they put up to keep the child, but they were unable to prevent Margaret's admission to the St Chads Home and her subsequent emigration to Canada in May 1897. Margaret's lived life highlights the complexities of domestic arrangements and the survival strategies deployed by working-families in the late nineteenth century.

A further example of the WSS imposing their ideals onto the family life of the poor is demonstrated by Clara B., aged nine, and her brother Alfred, who were admitted to the care of the WSS in 1883. Like Margaret they were deemed 'orphans' fit for emigration but in this instance both parents were still alive and in contact with the children.[52] The father was disabled, having lost both of his feet in an unspecified accident, and it was noted that he was only capable of earning a small sum and was of 'thoroughly drunken in habits'.[53] The children were, however, living with their mother who had co-habited with another man for a while but was now believed to be a prostitute. Obviously these were far from ideal circumstances in which to raise children, and the mother's occupation in particular provided a cause for concern, even though it was assumed and based on little more than speculation. If the circumstances are considered objectively, it could have been possible that prostitution was the only way to raise the money to feed and clothe her offspring considering the reduced earning capacity of the father, who we have already seen was cast in role of provider within the Victorian ideal. Moreover, the situation takes on a further degree of complexity when towards the end of the admission testimony it was recorded that

the mother was 'both deaf and dumb'. Unsurprisingly, the WSS quickly concluded that Clara needed to be removed from her family and moved to Canada to start a fresh and more wholesome life. But before these actions could be implemented, the supposedly 'deaf and dumb' mother wrote a letter requesting that her daughter visits her once more before being sent as a child migrant. Mrs B. stated 'I put my signature on the paper and I am very glad that the Lady is going to take her and I hope that she will be a good girl and mind all that is said to her but I should like her to come home and see me before she goes away'. The letter is legible and displays a degree of literacy that would be unexpected in a person said to be 'deaf and dumb'. There is no evidence that it was written by a third party on behalf of the mother. Here we witness an attempt at what might, in the present-day, be called social engineering. The children were healthy and able-bodied, but the family were clearly not 'desirable' and would only act as bad influences on their moral character. The father was drunk, mother potentially a prostitute, and, even if not, she was a lone parent caring for two children with only a meagre income. Interestingly, the mother accepted the intervention of the WSS and she understood and acknowledged the legality of the contract that she had signed, but broader representations of family and home still loom large in her correspondence.

The mother's insistence on seeing the child before departure sparked a discussion within the management of the organisation. For a child to see her biological mother one final time before being sent to Canada does not seem too extreme a request, but the WSS replied that 'we cannot send the child to her, but will if she wishes it get her to write a farewell letter'. For nineteenth-century philanthropy, the breaking of family ties was essential to rescuing children and improving the poor. The family unit was thus deemed a toxic element and the WSS was concerned that the mother may still hold enough influence to sway the child's opinion and disrupt the planned emigration. Sentimentality was denied to poor families in these situations, even if it meant a mother never seeing her child again. Clara was sent to Canada on 23 April 1885 without having final contact. Once settled, rather than excelling in her new surroundings, she was said to be 'getting along only fairly' and consequently demonstrating the child rescuer's argument that emigration was the best way to improve children and working-families as flawed.[54]

Wider societal narratives about working-class families could gain rapid and firm traction. In the case of Mary Jane T. the application form has

not survived but there is an array of correspondence and other documentation that helps to piece together the child's narrative.[55] She was admitted to the Harrow Home operated by the WSS in April 1888 and was said to be 'quite deaf' and also visually impaired.[56] Her father was not in constant employment and earning 'just about as much as will find him in food and lodging and no more'.[57] All of the children that have been discussed so far have the shared experience of the father not being meeting the self-help expectation of provider that was so central to Victorian mind-sets. Within the admission material there is no mention of the mother. Mary's application was instigated by William Robert Barclay, the vicar of Harrow whose wife had paid £12 for her care while with the WSS. Rev. Barclay sent a letter to Rudolf in 1889 that stated: 'her father called here lately desiring to know where she was, I told him, also saying that from his dress & appearance, I judged that he now would be able, and ought to pay for her'.[58] Initially here we see an expectation that the father should provide for his child but not necessarily be responsible for her everyday welfare or well-being. Barclay continued, 'He spent the day with his child, and those who have the care of her, having two meals at their cost and not offering any payment. I now put the matter in your hands, feeling sure that the Society would not wish to release a father from his duties'.[59] Here we see that the time spent with his daughter seems secondary to the fact that he failed to offer any payment for the meals that he consumed while there and his unwillingness to assume the role of provider for his offspring. Family ties come across as unimportant and of little value to the child herself. We have an example of a father trying to act as a parent in the modern sense without any recognition of this fact from the charity. The overwhelming concern was with economics and making sure the father, who appeared to be capable of paying, actually did so. The attitudes displayed by the Rev Barclay resonate with other professional men of the sort analysed by Kim Price in his chapter for this volume.

However, the situation was complicated by the role of the Barclay's as benefactors for the child while she was under the care of the WSS. The following letter, included in full, from Rachel Barclay to Rudolf is revealing:

> Dear Sir
> Being now nearly 85 years old, feeling my strength decrease, I am reminded that my days are drawing to a close. I have for 6 years paid for

> Mary Jane T (1290) now in the Home here, she will be 11 years old next Jany. I should now prefer paying a sum of £100 for the support and care of her for the future; rather than a yearly one; while I live I shall take a warm interest in her, and when I am summoned hence by Almighty God I doubt not that my granddaughter Adela Joyce who is the secretary to the Home here will continue it, please do not publish my name in the report, but merely put "a friend". I enclose the money.
> Believe me to be yours truly
> Mrs Rachel Barclay[60]

There is much to dissect in this correspondence, but we see a substantial amount of money provided for the care of the child in what appears a Dickensian act of kindness. Rachel Barclay explicitly stated that the money was intended for Mary Jane T. but there was some ambiguity over whether the money should be transferred to the child if she was to leave the care of the WSS, a situation that Rudolf quickly sought to clarify. Writing after the death of her grandmother, Adela Joyce replied to the WSS:

> … we believe that her intention was that the whole of the money should be given to the Society. She never said anything quite definite on the subject, but we believe that this was her wish and that she did not intend any surplus which may be left over to be given to Mary T.[61]

Thus while the child was supported by a wealthy benefactor this was only while she remained in the charge of a respectable organisation such as the WSS. Here the biological family of the child were thus side-lined and even when the father attempted to fulfil a paternal role he was chided for his failure to adequately provide for the child or himself. Following the investment of Rachel Barclay he also retreated into the background of the organisation's thinking and ultimately Mary Jane was put out to service in 1891 eventually moving to Cheshire to "better" herself. It is unclear how much of the £100 was spent on her care and well-being.

A final case study emblematises the wider arguments of this chapter. Charles R. was eleven-years-old when admitted to the charity from his home in Lowestoft in 1886.[62] Here we see why the term impairment is better suited than disability—he was said to be 'lame and blind of one eye. He goes about with a crutch with great rapidity and is full of spirit. Very intelligent, fond of reading, generally at the head of his class

very anxious to be "a good scholar" in order to earn a living…very bad home influences'.[63] Charles was, however, at risk because 'his lameness is owing to the neglect of his mother and I am told the loss of his eye came from her carelessness'.[64] We therefore encounter a good (albeit in their view impaired) child in a bad family and one ripe for removal. The rhetoric, however, does not match up to the reality if we dig a little deeper. Question 17 of the application form asked 'Has he ever attended day school?' The answer is 'has attended as a rule all his life'. This was still a time when the nature of compulsory schooling was contested by working-people and therefore his presence and success in school must have been with parental support.[65] Furthermore, the application notes that 'his mother would pay something for his support'. Perhaps she recognised his impairments and that the best way to secure an apprenticeship would be with the support of the charity. He was admitted to the St Nicholas Home for crippled children where we lose track of his journey after a couple of years.

Conclusion

Victorian philanthropists made little or no attempt to understand working-class family structures and the cultures that transcended their own ideals of what constituted 'the family unit'. Instead they sought to shape the lived experiences of poor children into something acceptable to the middle-class ideal of family. Socialisation of removed children sought to re-educate these young minds into a set of expected and accepted forms of behaviour. Influenced by the ideas of Samuel Smiles, the WSS and its sponsors believed that families should be hardworking and thriftful and where (as often) this was not the case individual families and family members were constructed as neglectful, harsh, obstinate, uncaring and interested in gratification through base senses while doing material and moral harm to children.[66] Inside philanthropic institutions for children the idea of the family was consequently re-imagined into what a respectable working-family should look like and linked firmly with ideas of domesticity and responsible citizenship. In many cases, as we have seen through the life-stories analysed in this chapter, this re-imagining involved the retrospective elimination of family ties; the absence of parents in admission documents is evident even though less than a third of children admitted were orphans.[67] For many philanthropic actors, the separation of children from their family was essential if such children

were to be reconfigured and fashioned into responsible citizens and consequently mothers and fathers. In turn, the homes provided by the WSS were designed for the poor who could not easily be improved, the truly undeserving in the eyes of charity, and the best hope for change was breaking the cycle of poverty and eradicating what were considered dysfunctional family units. Parents and extended family became a danger to the development of youngsters and from the records of the WSS we acquire a sense of the emphasis on making the children independent and productive in their future lives regardless of impairment or disability.

These broad themes arising out of a study on the WSS matter for the wider agenda of this volume in three ways. First, they confirm the sense of Steven King and Iain Riddell in their chapters that the shape and meaning of 'family' were essentially imagined, by those from within and those from without kinship and fictive kinship groups. Ties of blood, law or contract were powerful, but over the long term such ties could be disrupted by changing individual relationships or, as in the case of intervention by philanthropists, by a re-working of families from outside. Secondly, while Geoff Monks, Regina Poertner, Iain Riddell, Steven King, Kim Price and others point forcefully to the reconfiguration of family forms, meanings and boundaries by events such as re-marriage, deaths, or illegitimate births, this chapter introduces a new and powerful late nineteenth-century force in the engineering of family, the philanthropist and the institution. This chapter, in other words, changes the focus from forces working within the family to those working from without. Finally, while the focus of this work on the WSS has clearly been on the long-term removal of children, particularly children with impairments, from the family context, there is also much underlying evidence for the continuing power of family ties. Parents did not always meekly give up their children, just as families did not always or usually lose touch with relatives who ended up in the Garlands Lunatic Asylum that is the focus of Cara Dobbing's chapter for this volume. The fact that some children were spirited away in an underhand fashion also speaks to the sense that, for the most ordinary of families, ties of emotion and belonging are more important in locating the meaning of the Victorian family than are simple calculations of size and structure.

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Notes

1. C. Nelson (2007) *Family Ties in Victorian England* (Westport: Praeger), p. 145.
2. Quoted in ibid.
3. G. Frost (2008) *Living in Sin: Cohabiting as Husband and Wife in Nineteenth-Century England* (Manchester: Manchester University Press); G. Sims (1889) *How the Poor Live and Horrible London* (London: Chatto & Windus), p. 37. The papers which form this book were originally published in *The Pictorial World* and *The Daily News*.
4. S. Koven and S. Michel (1993) *Mothers of a New World: Maternalist Politics and the Origins of Welfare States* (London: Routledge); S. Koven (2004) *Slumming: Sexual and Social Politics in Victorian London* (Oxford: Princeton University Press); K. Ittman (1995) *Work, Gender and Family in Victorian England* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press); and C. Lee (2012) *Policing Prostitution, 1859–1886: Deviance, Surveillance and Morality* (London: Pickering & Chatto).
5. L. Bland (1995) *Banishing the Beast: English Feminism and Sexual Morality 1885–1914* (London: Penguin Books); B. Schillace (2013) 'Curing "Moral Disability": Brain Trauma and Self-Control in Victorian Science and Fiction', *Culture, Medicine, and Psychiatry*, 37:4, pp. 587–600; V. Heggie (2008) 'Lies, Damn Lies, and Manchester's Recruiting Statistics: Degeneration as an "Urban Legend" in Victorian and Edwardian Britain', *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences*, 63:2, pp. 178–216.
6. See the essays included in P. Mandler (ed.) (1990) *The Uses of Charity: The Poor on Relief in the Nineteenth-Century Metropolis* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press); also P. Shapely (2000) *Charity and Power in Victorian Manchester* (Manchester: Chetham Society); and R. Humphries (1995) *Sin, Organized Charity and the Poor Law in Victorian England* (Basingstoke: Macmillan).
7. The preservation of the Children's Society Archive with support from the Wellcome Trust has opened new avenues to explore the past of experiences of children and allows deeper insights into lived experiences of both individuals and families.
8. J. Stroud (1971) *Thirteen Penny Stamps: The Story of the Church of England Children's Society (Waifs and Strays) from 1881 to the 1970s* (London: Hodder and Stoughton), p. 30.

9. J. Parr (1980) *Labouring Children: British Immigrant Apprentices to Canada, 1869–1924* (London: Croom Helm).
10. P. Higginbotham (2017) *Children's Homes: A History of Institutional Care for Britain's Young* (Barnsley: Pen and Sword), p. 106; J. Stroud, *Thirteen Penny Stamps*, p. 44.
11. J. Stroud, *Thirteen Penny Stamps*, p. 52.
12. See A. Skinner (2015) '"Voices of the Visitors": An Exploration of the Work of the Charity Organisation Society in Oxford, 1878–1880', *Midland History*, 40:1, pp. 74–94; A. Skinner and N. Thomas (2018) '"A Pest to Society": The Charity Organisation Society's Domiciliary Assessments into the Circumstances of Poor Families and Children', *Children & Society*, 32, pp. 133–144; L. Jackson (2000) *Child Sexual Abuse in Victorian England* (London: Routledge); and H. Ward (1990) 'The Charitable Relationship: Parents, Children and the Waifs and Strays Society' (Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Bristol).
13. See F. M. L. Thompson (1981) 'Social Control in Victorian England', *The Economic History Review*, 34:2, pp. 189–208.
14. Ibid., p. 206.
15. L. Murdoch (2001) 'From Barrack Schools to Family Cottages: Creating Domestic Space for Late Victorian Poor Children', in J. Lawrence and P. Starkey (eds.) *Child Welfare and Social Action in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries: International Perspectives* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press), pp. 147–173, p. 158.
16. Ibid., p. 161.
17. M. Doolittle (2009) 'Fatherhood and Family Shame: Masculinity, Welfare and the Workhouse in Late Nineteenth-Century England', in L. Delap, B. Griffin, and A. Wills (eds.) *The Politics of Domestic Authority in Britain Since 1800* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan), pp. 84–110, p. 93.
18. It did interact with organisations such as the Invalid Children's Aid Association, so that it might provide the best care and, where possible, treatment for the young. For more on orthopaedic charities, see A. Borsay (2006) 'Disciplining Disabled Bodies: The Development of Orthopaedic Medicine in Britain, c. 1800–1939', in D. Turner and K. Stagg (eds.) *Social Histories of Disability and Deformity* (Abingdon: Routledge), pp. 97–116.
19. Orphan was a subjective term and open to interpretation for more, see L. Murdoch (2006) *Imagined Orphans: Poor Families, Child Welfare, and Contested Citizenship in London* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press); L. Peters (2000) *Orphan Texts: Victorian Orphans, Culture and Empire* (Manchester: Manchester University Press).
20. Murdoch, 'From Barrack Schools to Family Cottages', p. 151.

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PART III

Reconstituting the Family

CHAPTER 9

Negotiating the Blending of Families: Tension and Affection Between Step-Parents and Children in Early Modern England

Maria Cannon

Overview

In the life cycle of the early modern family, its moment of creation, its birth as an entity, was marriage. The ties created by marriage were solidified by the birth of children who would go on to marry and form new families themselves in time. However, many people in early modern Europe married more than once or married someone who had been married before.[1] An individual entering into a marriage and the symbolic birth of a new family could well have still had the remnants of their previous family in their lives. These family members, be they children, in-laws or other kin, needed to be found a place in or around the 'new' family.[2] In this context, the figure of the 'wicked stepmother' is an enduring stereotype passed down through the folk tales and fairy tales of this period as a warning for what could go wrong when a person did not accept a

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blending of old and new families. A 1626 printed version of 'The Fryer and the Boy', also known as 'Jack and his Stepdame' told the story of a family where the stepmother wanted to send her husband's son away.[3] She is described as 'a cruel step-dame full of pride, who is most curst to me' and wished death on the boy by poisoning his food.[4] It was when they did not meet their caring responsibilities that stepmothers were represented as wicked and hateful in folklore and conduct literature. This stereotype of the self-serving step-parent was found in both genders as stepmothers and stepfathers were alleged to disadvantage the stepchildren in their care.[5]

Until recently, few studies have focused solely on stepfamilies. Lisa Wilson suggests that 'Despite or perhaps because of stepfamilies' ubiquitousness, historians have all but ignored the unique experience of such families', either including them in broader narratives of family life or assuming that they were different.[6] A new edited collection by Lyndan Warner on stepfamilies in early modern Europe has highlighted the range of work now being conducted into diverse family types and opens up new avenues of research and questions about the range of family experiences in the past.[7] This chapter, then, forms part of a burgeoning field of research by questioning the enduring depiction of the early modern family as a rigid, nuclear type.[8] It draws on ideas such as those of Leonore Davidoff, who has argued for 'reconceptualising *family* as a process', where relationships are flexible and vary across the life cycle and life course.[9] More widely, the approach is informed by the 'sentiments approach' to family history identified by Michael Anderson, in which we must understand the family as a set of shared cultural practices and understandings.[10] Historians' interest in this approach has, Will Coster suggests, been renewed by the emergence of the field of the history of emotions.[11] Several theories put forward by the history of emotions scholars can be usefully applied to the study of family life in the past. Barbara Rosenwein's 'emotional communities' approach, for instance, suggests that individuals could be part of multiple communities, tied together by shared assumptions and expressions.[12] Taken down to the micro-level of the individual family, the composition of different remnants of families to form a new blended family could bring together these sorts of emotional communities. Combined with William Reddy's theory of emotional regimes, which describes how communities use and manage emotions using emotive phrases, a focus on the negotiation of family bonds within blended family structures can shed a light on how emotions were managed in practice but also on wider questions about the meaning of family and kinship explored throughout this volume.[13]

The research in this chapter thus draws together theoretical approaches to the family and emotions as cultural concepts, with examples of how these concepts manifested in reality. Katie Barclay argues that how families self-identified was crucial to their operation and the way they formed emotional connections.[14] Blended families were composed of individuals of different ages, genders and social ranks who did not always share ties of blood or name, even if they were regarded by society as part of the same family network. This meant that developing emotional connections to manage their shared responsibilities and reputations was crucial. The chapter broadens our understanding of how families were constituted and reconstituted in (mainly) sixteenth-century England, analysing the choices and actions of step-parents in the early modern English family. It shows that while step-parents could indeed neglect or abuse the children who they were required to include in their new family, they could also be practically and emotionally supportive as they negotiated the management and maintenance of positive relationships in these fluid and flexible family forms. The chapter uses personal source material—legal papers and letter collections of aristocratic and gentry families—to trace the intimate detail of the processes by which families made efforts to build relationships and work under one family strategy. They at least attempted to harmonise and act within one set of rules and expectations when building and maintaining their bonds. Crisis points arose, as in all families, when individuals transgressed from family expectations and duty and broke the new emotional relationships that they had formed. The stereotype of the wicked step-parent provided an example of how not to manage the blending of families and many did try and avoid this scenario.

The chapter begins by contextualising contemporary concerns about the remarrying widow but shows that remarriage had benefits for women and men and that it could be an active choice made to support children. It goes on to consider how step-parents could legally damage a stepchild, and there are certainly examples of legal disputes in blended families. However, there is also evidence of legal support for young stepchildren, especially from stepfathers. Mothers often remarried because of the protection and support a husband could provide for their children and, even without pressure from his wife, it was sensible for a stepfather to ensure the success of stepchildren who were now part of his family. The final part of the chapter demonstrates that although the blending of families gave individuals a chance to form unique kinship bonds, there was also a sense of cohesive family identity and responsibility.

It uses correspondence between members of blended families to show examples—often lifelong—of the care, support and interest often shown between step-parents, children and siblings. In this sense, the chapter speaks to three of the core themes of this volume: the fluidity of family forms, the porosity of household and family boundaries, and the meaning of family and kinship to those involved in these networks and processes.

The Remarrying Widow—Why Marry Again?

Throughout the early modern period, aristocratic men increasingly tried to place limits on the financial provision of their widows, as Regina Poertner has also shown elsewhere in this volume. They often stated in their wills that wives would have control of jointure lands (land owned jointly by the couple that the longest lived was entitled to) until they died, unless they remarried, when they would forfeit them.[15] The intention was to make sure widows had ample maintenance, not that they would maintain independent wealth through their jointure lands at the expense of their children.[16] Barbara Hanawalt argues that the English practice of generous dowers and a widow's freedom to choose a new husband undermined the strength of the patriarchy and patrilineal ties, which explains why aristocratic men would plan to curtail such freedom.[17] When trying to garner support from Thomas Cromwell in support of her claims against her stepson in the late 1530s, aristocratic widow Lettice Peniston noted her status as 'desolate widow' and stressed that she intended to remain one for the rest of her life.[18] Presumably she thought this claim more likely to win her the support of a powerful patron as she adhered to the idealised status of the perpetual widow. Later in the sixteenth century, Anne Newdigate drew on similar tropes of the perpetual widow when requesting the wardship of her young son. Vivienne Larminie describes that one of the 'trump cards' she played was to make clear that she had rejected the possibility of a second marriage, believing that this would be a selfish act and one which would defraud her children.[19] It was still a concern in the early seventeenth century as found in Walter Raleigh's *Instructions to his Sonne and to Posterity* where he advised his son to 'leave thy Wife no more then of necessitie' because, even if their children were provided for, another man would benefit from his estates.[20]

Under these conditions, it might seem difficult to understand why a woman would remarry. There was certainly literature at the time that advised against it either directly or through satirical verse.[21] Stephen

Collins refers to the 'almost universal opposition to the remarriage of widows', as writers throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries worried that widows would disinherit children from their first marriage in favour of those from their second, or, conversely, that they would only be marrying to provide for their children and have no affection for their new husband.[22] In his will of 1593, Rowland Hayward warned his wife, the mother of their several young children, against marrying a man 'that shall not be careful' with his money.[23] It is possible to infer here that he saw the potential problems in a second marriage that might not benefit his children. Men could also feel anxiety at the prospect of remarriage. Richard Rogers described second marriages as 'dangerous' in his diary in 1588 and saw potential problems if his wife died, such as care of his children and the fear of losing the friendship of her kin.[24] Friends and kin were also able to see problems in a remarriage. In the 1530s Roger Dennis, a trustee of the will of Honor Lisle's first husband, Sir John Basset, wrote to her after her remarriage suggesting that he and the other feoffees should handle his affairs for the sake of her children.[25] Edward Whotton wrote to his widowed sister in 1550 advising her not to remarry mainly because, as she was too old to have more children, a man would only be interested in her for financial reasons and then she would find it hard to keep from him inheritance meant for her children.[26] Thus, remarriage was a concern for a woman's wider family who wanted to preserve the interests of her children and stop another man exploiting them.[27]

However, remarriage was *not* unusual in early modern society. An accurate statistical analysis of exactly how many people married more than once is difficult to achieve. Peter Laslett estimates that 25% of marriages in early modern England were remarriages, although his analysis omits some categories of blended families and reflects the inconsistencies of his original source material.[28] Nevertheless, it is clear from a broad range of sources relating to family life that the disapproval found in conduct literature was either ignored, or not that influential as remarriage was common in all social classes.[29] Unlike in other aspects of advice found in conduct literature, for example the advice presented to children encouraging filial obedience, there was a divergence between advice and individual practice. It is possible that the negative portrayal of remarriage, particularly for women, was in reaction to its frequency in society.

Marriage provided security for most women and children and was seen as the natural state for women. Barbara Todd's work on the stereotype of the remarrying widow argues that women remarried on the basis of three

main factors: opportunity, necessity and preference, showing that a widow's agency was a major factor in the decision to remarry. Although this 'agency' could be merely necessity, Kimberly Schutte supports Todd in her analysis of women remarrying below their social class, showing that, unlike in their first marriages, many widows had more freedom to choose a new partner and could marry for love.[30] Barbara Harris's analysis of the chosen burial locations of aristocratic women notes that the relatively high number of women who chose burial with a second, third or fourth husband means they, 'may have felt their greater emotional attachment to that husband' than to a higher-ranking husband, or the father of their eldest son.[31] There is certainly evidence of affection between couples in their subsequent marriages. Despite warnings from some contemporary writers of the difficulty that a man might have in making a widow forget 'the manners and qualities of her first husbande', correspondence between husbands and wives often display close relationships, regardless of whether it was their first marriage, or a subsequent one.[32] Where there was marital discord this seems to be down to the personalities of the individuals, not the fact that they were remarried.

There is accumulating evidence that couples were no less likely to have an emotionally satisfying marriage if either or both had been married before. But even if not for love, a widow might choose to remarry for legal protection. An aristocratic heiress in her own right, Anne Clifford lived as a widow for more than six years from 1624 to 1630 but chose to remarry 'for the Crossing and disappointing, the envie, malice and sinister practices of my Enemyes' who she believed had tried to rob her of her lands.[33] Men were likely to consider marrying a widow for various reasons including her proven ability to bear children, her personal wealth or her family connections. For example, Edmond Paston wrote to his younger brother William in c.1480 suggesting a possible marriage match for him with a widow ten years his senior with two children. He thought the match a good prospect because the widow had inherited money from her first husband and her children were provided for.[34] Margaret Pelling's research has challenged existing ideas that women needed to remarry to ensure economic security by showing that men were victims of the inequalities found in the patriarchal system too, and also needed a partner to ensure financial stability.[35] Warner's survey of family portraits shows an ambivalence towards remarriage where first wives, second wives and their respective children were all shown together in depictions of blended families.[36] Both men and women could see the

benefits of remarrying and were able to reconcile the potential problems with them. It was possible to manage life in a blended family to ensure it benefitted all those it incorporated. This process was not always without conflict and for many families, negotiations of authority endured throughout the life cycle of the family. However, it *was* possible. The remainder of this chapter demonstrates the strategies families used, firstly through legal arrangements, and secondly through the building of emotional relationships in their everyday lives.

Step-Parents and the Law: Stereotype and Reality

There were legal implications for the remarriage of any individual in early modern England. Widows would usually bring their dower lands, the portion of land that they had brought to the marriage and were entitled to keep, as well as jointure land, to their new marriage.[37] Nevertheless, remarriage could cause legal confusion and some of the fears for children were grounded in reality. Although there were concerns about the well-being of children after their parent remarried, Hanawalt argues that the number of children was not a major factor in the decision by individuals over whether to remarry, and few historians have focused on the effects of remarriage on a child's legal position.[38] Margaret King's work on the history of childhood argues that historians need to acknowledge the changing configurations of household that could affect the life of a child but the history of childhood rarely considers the implication of changes in family structure to the lives of children or the experience of parenting.[39] With her focus on wives and widows, Harris acknowledges the potential for conflict in the majority of aristocratic wives' second marriages where they often occupied roles of guardians of their offspring and legal executors of their deceased spouses, which would be further complicated if their new husbands also had children from previous marriages or they had more children together.[40] A remarriage could prompt a renegotiation of authority and of resources within the family, much as Geoff Monks also finds in his contribution to this volume. In c.1640 Thomas Thynne made his second wife, Catherine Howard, the executor of his will, although also left a condition on this. He stated that she was to 'remise and release unto myne heire […] All her dower and title of dower which she may claime therein, or to any parte thereof' and that if she did not do so, would no longer be permitted to act as executor.[41] He also foresaw potential disagreements between her and his overseer which

he hoped could be 'composed and arbitrated'. Thomas's heir was his eldest son, James, from his first marriage to Maria Touchet who had died around thirty years previously, and he must have had some concern that his wife would not give up her claim to her stepson's estates.[42] However, even though he appeared to have some concerns over his wife's ability to execute his will to his specifications, he still preferred to give the job to her over others.

Such concerns about wives retaining control of lands at the expense of their stepsons were based on real cases. After her husband Sir Robert Lee died in 1539, Lettice Peniston entered into a lengthy dispute over his will with his heir, her stepson Anthony. Robert had granted Lettice the manor of Briddesthorpe and all of her jointure lands for the term of her life, on the condition that she released claim on her dower lands to Anthony. Robert seemed to have anticipated some dispute between the two as he specified that Anthony was to be his sole executor as long as he carried out all the conditions, particularly the bequests to his wife Lettice and other children.[43] That Lettice was Anthony's stepmother, not his birth mother, altered the dynamics of authority in this case. Using this case and others, Harris notes that women were more likely to face difficulties in taking possession of their jointures from heirs who were not their sons, particularly on an emotional level where 'stepsons may well have resented the women who took their mother's place in the family'.[44] In a recent overview of the legal rules governing stepfamilies in English law, Tim Stretton suggests that material resources 'could be a key marker of familial affection' and so the law played a role in shaping family dynamics.[45] In this case it certainly appears, both from Robert Lee's conditions and the behaviour of Lettice and Anthony after his death, that the two did not have a close relationship, exacerbated by the property rights and overlapping claims on the Lee estates.

Anthony initiated a Chancery case against Lettice over the detention of the deeds of various manors and lands and the dispute between them is, as mentioned above, documented in letters to Thomas Cromwell.[46] Cromwell had positions in the major departments of government, including the Chancery and was a close friend and adviser of Henry VIII. In February 1539, both Lettice and her childhood friend Sir Francis Bryan wrote to him to plead her case. Bryan described her as Robert Lee's 'poor wife' and in this initial letter Lettice described herself as both 'sorrowful' and desolate', asking for Cromwell's help if

anyone 'would wrong her', presumably in a legal sense where he had the most power to intervene on her behalf.[47] Anthony was also influential at court and a friend of both Cromwell and the King himself, leading to Cromwell ordering that Lettice must abide by Robert's will and should release her dower and other items which she held, including household stuff and plate that had belonged to him and should be passed to his heir.[48] Lettice's second marriage had given her financial and legal influence over her husband and stepson, and responsibility for her own biological children. The overlap of her concerns and responsibilities as an individual as well as a mother and stepmother brought her into conflict with her stepson, who was acting in a legal capacity as the head of his immediate family and did not appear to regard her as part of it. This case certainly supports the idea that bequests to widows were intended to be fair and sufficient for their maintenance, but no more.

Stepmothers, then, certainly did have the potential to harm the inheritance of their stepchildren and thus create deeply fractured family relationships. In the 1590s in the Willoughby family, a father damaged the prospects of his children by his second marriage and his wife continued to exploit them after she died. After Sir Francis Willoughby married his second wife, Dorothy, there is evidence that his children resented her presence, with descendant Cassandra Willoughby noting that 'from the old papers one may believe that Sir Francis neglected all his children, and made it his chief care to raise a great sum of money for his lady'.[49] Francis died in 1596, leaving Dorothy pregnant, and she used her pregnancy to exploit her position further. Francis's heir, his son-in-law Percival, had a troop of guards stationed on the Willoughby estate, which she had inherited in right of her unborn child, to monitor who came to visit her. Dorothy was delivered of a daughter who died in her first year, but afterwards kept much of the land and goods she had inherited from Francis and took these to her subsequent marriage a few months later, leaving Percival with debts and mortgages to pay off to support the suits he had launched against her.[50] Cassandra Willoughby's younger brother had disagreements with their stepfather over family finances in the 1680s which may have influenced her recording of the incident, but also shows it was an enduring issue in family life.[51] Fluid family boundaries could thus destabilise family relationships, much as Steven King also finds in his chapter on the nineteenth-century family later in this volume.

Equivalent concerns about the role of the stepfather were usually in relation to his legal power over his stepchild, although these were less readily seen in popular culture of this time. As Collins shows, allegations were made against stepmothers who sought the disinheritance of the children of their first marriage in favour of those from their second.[52] The unease over the role of the stepfather was linked to this with the concern being that he would not protect their prospective wealth rather than that he would ill-treat them. Joel Hurstfield's survey of the Elizabethan Court of Wards shows that some contemporaries considered that a child might actually be better off being sold to a guardian who planned to marry the ward to his own child, therefore tying them into their own family, rather than a stepfather who would be less concerned about their welfare.[53] This assumption that a stepfather would not care for his wife's offspring must have been decided on the basis of individual cases, but it is telling that this consideration existed. Heather Dubrow agrees, showing concerns that stepfathers were more likely to be a threat to a child's material well-being than stepmothers.[54] In 1602, Lady Dorothy Wharton wrote to the Earl of Rutland that her husband was destroying woodland that was due to her son as part of his inheritance. The land was in the forest over which the Earl had control and she pleaded him not to allow the felling and sale of her son's woodland. Robert Cecil, as the head of the Court of Wards and Liveries from 1599, wrote to the Earl soon after to ask him not to grant the licence to Lord Wharton before he had checked that the felling of the woods and sale of the land was not prejudicial to the ward.[55] In this case, the Court of Wards stepped into protect the child's inheritance, against the actions of his own stepfather, something his mother also had to petition to stop.

However, for some widows, the act of remarrying could be a crucial strategy to ensure the legal protection of their children. Their support in favour of their children's causes could be taken on by their new husband and there is ample evidence to show how remarriage could benefit the legal position of a child.[56] In c.1515 Richard Elyot took a case to Chancery with his wife Elizabeth and stepdaughter Dorothy Codrynton against the father of her deceased husband.[57] As her stepfather, Richard helped represent Dorothy's interests at court in an attempt to force Christopher Codrynton to convey the lands he had promised to be settled on her after her marriage to his son. Richard Elyot also remembered his stepchildren in his will.[58] For younger children, protection often came in the form of legal guardianships. In the event of a father's death, the guardianship of heirs under the age

of twenty-one passed to the monarch who could then sell the wardship for profit. For these younger children, wardships were often bought by their new stepfathers. As wards were at the mercy of their guardians, who had a large amount of influence over their estates, education and marriage, it was often seen as beneficial to keep a wardship within a family.[59] This could mean within a stepfamily. It is likely that Honor Lisle had control over her eldest son John Basset's wardship after the death of his father, as it had been purchased by a family friend, but her second husband, Arthur Plantagenet, Viscount Lisle, still made sure to purchase it after their marriage in 1528. Mothers often sought their children's wardships themselves so the motivation behind a stepfather taking on a wardship is clear. Women usually wanted the protection of their children entrusted to a male relative or friend whom they trusted to have their best interests at heart. This helps to explain why stepfathers would be entrusted with wardship responsibilities and shows how, ideally, they were supposed to represent their wards. Arthur Lisle took a leading role in his stepson John Basset's case to inherit the Beaumont lands of his father, which took place over several years.[60] Both he and Honor were in contact with lawyers in London about how best to proceed to further his claim, and the decision to send him for legal training as part of his education is likely to have been linked to this need to arrange his financial affairs.[61] As his stepfather and guardian, Arthur's role in promoting his stepson's interests would have been expected and seen as appropriate, although it was his mother who was credited by the King with 'the pains' she had taken over the issue.[62]

The legal implications of a remarriage for children is a complicated picture, but not one that is dominated by 'wicked' step-parents. Wealth was an important factor in the behaviour and potential legal power of step-parents to financially harm their stepchildren. Aristocratic stepfathers, and sometimes stepmothers, were often in a position of legal control over significant land and property held by their stepchildren. However, the relational and emotional ties experienced by many blended families meant that ensuring their well-being and financial protection was often part of the wider family's success and prosperity, as both Kim Price and Geoff Monks also suggest in their contributions to this volume. Remarriage linked families, and it was generally not advisable to ensure the failure or ruin any of its constituent parts. Women and men were aware of the risks of remarriage, but many chose to take them with the many possible benefits, for themselves and their children, in mind. Family as process was thus played out keenly in these instances.

Affectionate Bonds in Blended Families

There is much evidence of affectionate ties between members of stepfamilies in their day-to-day lives, a theme also taken up by Geoff Monks for a rather later period in his chapter for this volume. Although there was an understanding of the different relationships between biological parents and children, and step-parents and children, families rarely referred to these distinctions in correspondence. All the members of a blended family had to be found a place within the new structure and the success of individual members was indicative of the aims of the family as a whole. David Cressy describes kin accumulation as cumulative with subsequent marriages expanding the number of people an individual could call on for help.[63] His model of the 'egocentric system' of kin argues that each individual formed the hub of a unique kinship network that could be utilised.[64] The remarriage of a parent created a composite family in which there were many different types of relationships and so different nuances of duty and obligation. Each individual who was part of this family could, as Cressy suggests, have a unique set of kinship bonds to other members. However, there is much evidence to show that these families made efforts to build relationships and work under one family strategy. His concepts sit well within Rosenwein's framework of the 'emotional community' where the members of a blended family formed part of a new community where goals and responsibilities were managed. The final part of this chapter adds to the new research area in the history of parenting which is framed by emotions and seeks to understand manifestations of emotion in the kin group and thereby the more complex bonds which underlie simple labels such as 'the family'.[65] By using correspondence between members of blended families, the ways in which individuals described and managed their own kinship network can be identified. As described by Reddy, 'emotives' are phrases and expressions that can induce action and manage community goals.[66] Considering emotions as a practice highlights the ways in which individuals expressed their emotional states and used them to influence the behaviour of others. The language used, and behaviour described in correspondence within blended families, demonstrates the mechanisms by which members developed and maintained affectionate bonds and turned notional into effective kinship.

Even when blended families were engaged in legal disputes, they might still attempt to maintain cordial familial bonds. In the 1570s Anne Bacon continued correspondence with her stepsons Nicholas and

Nathaniel Bacon, her husband's sons from his first marriage. As heir, Nicholas Bacon inherited the bulk of his father's estates and entered into a legal dispute with his half-brother, Anne's eldest son Anthony, over the lease of some land he had inherited from his father. Anne corresponded with Nicholas at this time, emphasising their family connection, 'Yow being the sonne, and I the wyff, and now the weedoe of the same good father and husbande' and expressing the hope that they could be friendly the next time they met.[67] In this letter she somewhat hesitantly offered advice to Nicholas about how he should conduct his affairs and counsel, but the tone is very different from that of her letters to her biological sons with whom she was very forceful in giving advice.[68] Anne herself had been in a similar position as a girl. As an illegitimate child, she had a mother and stepmother living at the same time and differences can be seen in the way she addressed her letters to them, taking a much more formal and deferential tone to her higher-status stepmother.[69] In a later letter, she referred to treatments that Nicholas had taken for gout, suggesting similar ones for Anthony who also suffered with the condition, thus implying some knowledge of her stepson and his everyday life.[70] Katy Mair states that Anne continued to fulfil her stepmotherly duty, such as by sending letters of formal congratulations when her stepson Nathaniel's daughter was christened.[71] Although Anne primarily worked to advise and support her biological sons, she played an active role in maintaining relationships with her stepsons and encouraging positive bonds between her sons and their half siblings, much as we also see with stepmothers in the chapter by Geoff Monks for this volume.

There are many other examples. When Honor Lisle remarried in 1529, she became stepmother to her husband Arthur's three daughters from his first marriage and continued to care for her seven children from her first marriage to Sir John Basset, all being young children. Many of the children lived away from their parents while on different service or educational placements in England and France, and Honor maintained correspondence with all of them. Her youngest stepdaughter Bridget had the most ambivalent place in her family. She had been left in the care of a nunnery in Winchester when the Lisles moved to Calais with the plan to be educated and then remain there as a nun in her adulthood. This career path was not usually the first choice for an aristocratic girl who would more usually be found a suitable spouse. Muriel St. Clare Byrne suggests that she had been 'conveniently disposed of' there. Her young

stepbrothers George and James Basset had also been left in Winchester to be educated and a career in the Church was certainly planned for James, but, of all the children, Bridget does appear to have been somewhat neglected compared to the others, for reasons that are unclear. It is possible that her birth was the occasion of her mother (Arthur Lisle's first wife)'s death, although this does not offer a convincing explanation, as many women died in childbirth in this period, and there is no indication why Arthur should have particularly taken against his daughter for this reason.

Whatever the cause of Bridget's apparent disfavour, her father was remarkably uncaring about his daughter's everyday care and future. When she first went into the care of the nunnery, Bridget was not provided with the same amount or quality of clothes as the other children. Abbess Elizabeth Shelley wrote to Honor to 'assure' her that Bridget 'lacketh convenient apparel' describing that she had only one whole gown, one good partlet for her neck and one good coif for her neck, evidently not the amount of clothes one would expect the daughter of an aristocrat to be provided with.[72] For comparison, at around the same time, a letter concerning Bridget's stepbrother James Basset confirmed that 'as for shirts and hoses and all other gear, a shall lack none'.[73] In the late 1530s, the nunnery became threatened by the dissolution of religious houses. Bridget was removed by a family friend who wrote to Arthur that he was looking after her, adding that she had outgrown most of her clothes and 'is very spare and hath need of cherishing'.[74] When Honor went over to England in 1538, she brought Bridget back to Calais against her husband's wishes. He wrote that, 'there is no man living would gladlier have by [his] wife's company than I would have yours […] I am sorry that you will bring my daughter Bridget with you'.[75] Here, Honor's care for her stepdaughter appeared to exceed Bridget's own father's, and it might be inferred that her comparative neglect of Bridget in England might have been due to her husband's instructions. When Honor was without him in England, she took the decision to bring Bridget home.[76]

There are many other examples of stepmothers caring for their stepchildren. During her second marriage in the 1540s, Bess of Hardwick lived with her two stepdaughters and bought them expensive gifts and clothes.[77] She expressed concerns about her stepchildren's health and well-being for example, in the 1570s writing to her fourth husband, George Talbot 6th Earl of Shrewsbury, about her stepson Gilbert's

health that 'my son Gilbert hath been very ill in his head ever since he came from Sheffield, I think it is his old disease. He is now I thank God somewhat better'.[78] Her language suggests a degree of anxiety about his condition and indicates her knowledge about Gilbert's medical history. During an illness of her stepdaughter Katherine in 1575, Bess was kept in touch with regular news from her other stepchildren about Katherine's progress, with Anne and Gilbert Talbot writing to her about it specifically.[79] Similarly, Honor Lisle was informed of the health of her stepdaughter Elizabeth at the same time as news of her biological daughters Anne and Katherine who she had left in Calais when on her trip to England in 1538.[80] Honor Lisle's care for stepchildren also extended to her stepniece, the daughter of her sister's first husband, who wrote to her for help in 1534.[81]

Stepfathers can also be seen to show concern about the health and well-being of their stepchildren. In the 1570s, the same time as his wife expressed care and concern for her stepchildren, George Talbot wrote to Bess of Hardwick during the pregnancy of his stepdaughter, her daughter Elizabeth, that he advised Elizabeth to eat fruit for her health 'which she loves well'.[82] That he both knew she enjoyed eating fruit and felt in a position to advise her own mother to tell her to eat it suggests a close relationship with his stepdaughter and certainly a knowledge and interest in her well-being. George also took an interest in the relationships between his stepchildren. During the pregnancy of his stepdaughter Mary, who was also his daughter-in-law, he wrote to Bess explaining that he had seen Mary's sister Elizabeth who wished to be with her sister:

> I told my Lady Lennox, she asking me of her going to Chatsworth, I told her she should stay awhile […] where it seemed to grieve her she should not come to the bringing to bed of her sister which I infer you do her wrong therein, for it were not amiss she should be with her now.[83]

Here he intervened and told Bess he thought she was doing wrong by not considering the feelings of her daughters and Elizabeth's wish to support her sister in pregnancy. In around 1550, John Bourchier, 2nd Earl of Bath, seems to have been looking after his daughters and stepdaughters while his wife, their mother Margaret, was away, as she sent instructions to keep them at home and away from sickness in the town. She threatened that if he did not carry out her orders to care for all the children then she would quickly return home.[84] Although slightly

mistrusted, John was evidently assigned with the care of his children and stepchildren. An earlier example from the Stonor letters in 1476 shows William Stonor caring for his stepdaughter. His wife Elizabeth wrote to him asking to send her daughter to her when the child was ill, and she later thanked him for looking after the children, so he was evidently left with care of the family, including his stepchildren.[85]

Stepsiblings were also an active part of this process of building positive relationships and made independent efforts to form close bonds with each other.[86] The process was made easier if the siblings were near in age and lived together at points during their upbringings, as Geoff Monks also notes in relation to Eleanor Pack for a rather later date. Stepsisters Frances Plantagenet and Philippa and Katherine Basset lived together in Calais for several years during their father/stepfather Arthur Lisle's posting there and so shared an experience of companionship and living together for a longer part of their adolescence than with any other siblings. Frances especially seemed to form close bonds with her Basset stepsisters who she lived with in Calais. When her stepmother Honor was away, Frances wrote to her with the news from her and her stepsisters (Honor's biological daughters), and informed her of their health. Her biological sisters, Elizabeth and Bridget remained in England and so did not share the experience of companionship with their stepsisters, or indeed with Frances in the same way. When youngest sister Mary Basset was accused of contracting a secret marriage in 1540, her sister Philippa described Frances as the sister whom Mary 'loved best' of them all and if anyone knew any of her secrets then it would be her.[87] When in a service placement in a French household during her early teenage years, Mary would write letters to Philippa but always passed greetings onto Frances and sometimes included small gifts.[88] Youngest brother James Basset wrote frequently to his siblings in Calais when at college in Paris and included Frances in his demands that his siblings reply to his letters.[89]

Close sibling bonds are also found in the Kitson/Long/Bourchier family in the 1550s/60s with evidence that these relationships continued after the death of the parents. Margaret Donington married three times and had children with each of her husbands, Sir Thomas Kitson, Sir Henry Long and John Bourchier, 2nd Earl of Bath. In a letter to her mother in 1556, younger daughter Susan Bourchier asked for news 'from time to time' from her half- and step-siblings, as did her stepson Henry Bourchier who generically referred to 'all the rest of my brothers and sisters'.[90] The bonds of these children from Margaret's three marriages

endured after her death in 1562. Thomas Kitson, her eldest son from her first marriage, wrote to his half-brother Henry Long over a disagreement, stressing that he did not want to break the 'bond of brotherly love'.[91] Thomas Kitson kept in contact by letter with his half-sisters Mary Long and Susan Bourchier, who also lived with him during their childhoods.[92] Although they had an elder full-blood brother, Henry, as their mother's eldest son, Thomas seems to have taken on responsibility for half-sisters Katherine and Mary Long as their accounts from 1562 to 1573 are in the surviving collection of his papers. In this situation these women had several male heads of household they could appeal to for support. The blending of families caused by their parents' multiple marriages gave them a wide network of contacts and male patrons bound by familial obligation. Joel T. Rosenthal notes that this kind of behaviour is 'a welcome counterweight to the theme of rivalry and competition that we so often find after the death of the patriarch or matriarch' and it is true that some of the siblings discussed here appear to have maintained friendships into adulthood more amicably than some full-blood siblings.[93] A shared experience of growing up may have been crucial here as individuals developed bonds with parents or siblings who they spent long periods of time with. But the survival of letters that were used to maintain these bonds over years and through different life stages suggests that families made considerable effort to act as a cohesive family unit with shared responsibilities. Relationships between step-relations had the potential to be as close and loving as those between blood-relations, if not more so.[94]

Conclusion

The early modern English family could go through many changes throughout its life cycle as it evolved and combined with other families after deaths, marriages and remarriages changed its composition. Individuals could find themselves members of overlapping family circles where relationships had to be managed and renegotiated across their life courses, something also observed by Kim Price, Goeff Monks and Regina Poertner (for later periods) in their contributions to this volume. An in-depth focus on how families were changed by one or more remarriages complicates the picture of family life in the past. Family was not a fixed, nuclear type but a process of change with flexible bonds and relationships. Individuals formed and reformed emotional groups when required to incorporate new step-relations with whom they shared

obligations and responsibilities. The essential timelessness of this observation is confirmed by Geoff Monks in his engagement with the Pack family, living some three centuries after the examples that have informed this chapter. Forging new networks was indeed one of the main goals behind a remarriage as the remarrying partner aimed to broaden their networks and opportunities, and those of any children they might have. This chapter has introduced a variety of choices made by parents and step-parents towards stepchildren, many of which were practically and emotionally supportive. Although the stereotype of the 'wicked' step-parent has been an enduring one, it was not the uniform experience of most people in blended families. It was in the interest of most families to try and manage their shared responsibilities and they often did this through forming affectionate bonds.

The concept of emotional communities can be applied to the overlapping networks of individuals who made up these composite families. Although they were often from different lines and dynasties, the blending of their families through marriage created a shared sense of family and interest in the success of all its members. In practice this meant that families worked within their networks to ensure the success of all their members, as far as possible. When interests collided, particularly in the case of the inheritance of wealth and property, family communities could separate and use emotive language to unite in factions against each other. But in everyday life, there is evidence of similar emotional practices and behaviour in blended families. Step-parents, children and siblings expressed a care for each other's well-being and used letters to maintain their interest in and knowledge of each other's lives even when separated. The expressions of emotion in their letters are evidence of the affectionate bonds that their blended families relied on in the process of responding to further changes and challenges.

This chapter has questioned our understanding of the composition of the family in early modern England and shown that it was a fluid and flexible process of building and negotiating new networks, much as Steven King also shows for the nineteenth century later in this volume. Ultimately, each family formed a unique composition of relationships but remarriage by no means always resulted in the negative consequences outlined by contemporary writers. A study of the emotional relationships in stepfamilies challenges the dominance of the 'wicked stepmother' or

stepfather stereotype by understanding it as a cautionary tale for families who failed to balance the needs of their blended family's goals and ideals. Those step-parents who did behave 'wickedly' were described as such precisely because they failed to understand the benefits of cultivating harmonious relationships in the blended family that were for the good of all those incorporated into it.

Notes

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2. See also W. Coster (1995) '"To Bring Them Up in the Fear of God": Guardianship in the Diocese of York, 1500–1668', *Continuity and Change*, 10:1, pp. 9–32; N. Tadmor (2010) 'Early Modern English Kinship in the Long Run: Reflections on Continuity and Change', *Continuity and Change*, 25:1, pp. 15–48.
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7. L. Warner (2018) (ed.) *Stepfamilies in Early Modern Europe 1400–1800* (London: Routledge).
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37. Erickson, *Women and Property,* p. 19. For the impact of entails on this situation, notably in Scotland, see Regina Poertner's chapter in this volume.
38. Hanawalt, 'Remarriage as an Option', p. 153; One other exception is S. Collins (1991) 'British Stepfamily Relationships, 1500–1800', *Journal of Family History,* 16:4, pp. 331–344, who identifies the threat posed to inheritance as a dominant theme in considering remarriage.
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40. B. J. Harris (2002) *English Aristocratic Women, 1450–1550: Marriage and Family, Property and Careers* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), p. 118.
41. TNA, PROB 11/183/753, 20 October 1640.
42. For other families, as Regina Poertner points out, these matters would be tied up in entails.

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56. Erickson, *Women and Property*, p. 80.
57. TNA, C 1/405/29, c.1515–18.
58. TNA, PROB 11/20/334, 1520.
59. On the wider context of guardianship see Coster, '"To Bring Them Up"'.
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62. Ibid., pp. 212–213 (10 September 1538).
63. D. Cressy (1987) *Coming Over: Migration and Communication Between England and New England in the Seventeenth Century* (New York: Cambridge University Press), pp. 269–275.
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72. St. Clare Byrne, *The Lisle Letters*, p. 93 (26 February 1535).
73. Ibid., pp. 107–108 (4 November 1533).
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80. St. Clare Byrne, *The Lisle Letters*, pp. 95–96 (7 April 1538).
81. Ibid., pp. 163–171 (1534).
82. ID 076, George Talbot to Bess of Hardwick, c.1575, in 'Bess of Hardwick's Letters'.
83. ID 078, George Talbot to Bess of Hardwick, 21 June 1580, in ibid.
84. CUL Hengrave Hall MS 88/1/35 (c.1550). CUL refers to manuscripts held by Cambridge University Library.
85. C. Carpenter (1996) (ed.) *Kingsford's Stonor Letters and Papers, 1290–1483* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), p. 168 (1476).
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87. St. Clare Byrne, *The Lisle Letters*, p. 145.
88. Ibid., pp. 164–165 (13 March 1536).
89. Ibid., p. 504 (13 April 1538).
90. CUL Hengrave Hall MS 88/1/65 (17 March 1556), 88/1/118 (no date).
91. CUL Hengrave Hall MS 88/2/4 (21 January 1567).
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CHAPTER 10

Family Beyond the Household: Constituting and Reconstituting as Kin

Iain Riddell

Themes and Context

Naomi Tadmor's investigation of fictive kinship reminds us that broad labels such as 'family', 'household' and 'kinship' are socio-cultural constructions imposed and defined in different ways by non-academics, sociologists, anthropologists, historians and genealogists.[1] Kinship, she notes, is a particularly slippery concept. Focussing on early modern England, Tadmor's perspectives overlap with and draw upon a rich European literature which has become increasingly sceptical of the utility of approaches to relatedness based upon a universal hierarchy of kinship forms.[2] We see this played out particularly in Carola Lipp's work on German local demography, Hilda Bras and Theo van Tilburg's research into kinship relationships in the twentieth century, and Mikołaj Szołtysek's ambitious ongoing work to challenge the pervasive presence of mid-twentieth-century thinking about European family structures.[3] Marshal Sahlin's recent work has similarly sought to capture a concept of kinship that avoids othering cultures outside of the Euro-American environs. His resulting framework advocates that kinship is a cultural,

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not biological construct and is formed around mutuality of being between individuals, in effect challenging deeply rooted Euro-American ideas of kinship bonds of blood and sperm.[4] Above all, Peter Schweitzer has established a basis for understanding kinship as local, cultural and empowered or constructed by the decisions of kinship made by individuals rather than the application of specific rules brought to sources by an academic observer.[5] Such perspectives sit well with Rosemary O'Day's sense, as far back as the 1980s, that English historians had been unduly trammelled to write the history of family and kinship from inside the conceptual constraints of the bureaucratic census.[6]

As other contributors to this volume have pointed out, the sense of these new approaches has been imperfectly applied to the empirical study of British family and kinship structures. It is, however, possible to take the bureaucratic datasets of the nineteenth-century (censuses, parish registers, etc.) and rework the original documents into reconstructed genealogies that reveal the individual decisions around kinship relationships taken in the past. This is a process of genealogical reconstruction, research aimed at linking an individual to their lifetime core records (birth, marriage, death, and enumeration) *en masse*. This reconstitutes the bureaucratic records gathered on all individuals as the century progressed, alongside wills and testaments and a small number of newspaper clippings which applied to a smaller population body, into a format in which the responses and choices of past people can be contextualised over a long period. In effect, the snapshot records from which historical demographic quantitative results are derived are used to create a web of potential relationships which can be queried probabilistically. This is the task of the current chapter. Reconstituting a century's worth of bureaucratic records for two Aberdeenshire families—Fraser from Skilmafilly hill and Cardno from Kinharrichie, Ellon—it is possible to explore the varied interactions and interpretations of family, household and kinship as experienced by multiple egos.[7] The resulting perspectives are an important addition to our understanding of Scottish kinship and family history which, as Regina Poertner and Kim Price have also noted in their contributions to this volume, has lagged significantly behind English, Welsh and European research. The two chosen families share a socio-economic position amongst the skilled working-classes through the nineteenth century and originate from the Ellon hinterland north of Aberdeen. The focus will be to explore the impact of enduring kinship connectivity, for example, family beyond the household, against the social and economic challenges

presented by illegitimacy, migration and economic change. The analysis provides evidence of enduring, flexible connectivity that linked together fluid household formations over decades, generations and across continents. Such connectivity includes and excludes a host of biological and legal/affinial relatives, speaking directly to the key questions of this volume around the fluidity and functionality of kinship relationships and the meaning and quality of family relationships. The chapter progresses with a basic narrative outline drawn from the reconstruction of the genealogies of the two case study families which enable a discussion of the use of the universal record in contrast to actor-generated artefacts. Then the chapter, over two time periods, 1820–1860s and 1870–1910s analyses specific incidents from an individual perspective but from within the broader knowledge of their kin groups and asks how the personal impinged the collective. These sections enable the chapter to conclude with a discussion on how British kinship studies can be enhanced.

Reconstructing Genealogies

The Fraser and Cardno kinship webs emerge from fluid domestic arrangements. The former centred around a blacksmithing enterprise on Skilmafilly hill which moved back and forth between simple, extended and neighbouring domestic setups with firm links into a wider kinship of smiths across the county. The Cardno network, in contrast, is revealed (see Fig. 10.1) as multiple domestic arrangements around the grain mill that serviced the Kinharrichie farms, west of Ellon with close by satellite, single and extended, fluid domestic groups as family members shuffled around the households.

The core of this Cardno arrangement collapsed following the patriarchs' death in 1861 but many of the dispersed family units can be tracked until 1901 migrating to Aberdeen within proximity to each other and with kinfolk exchanged between domestic units (Fig. 10.2). These behaviours are observable in bureaucratic records when they are reconstituted into analysable genealogies. Similarly, a large proportion of the Fraser descendants in the later Victorian decades can be traced as they migrated to central Canada in successive waves (Fig. 10.3). From these results, echoes of the observations of Charlotte Erikson, who used archived letter and diaries to show the endurance of kinship forged in childhood and the resilience of the family bonds beyond the household, emerge.[8]

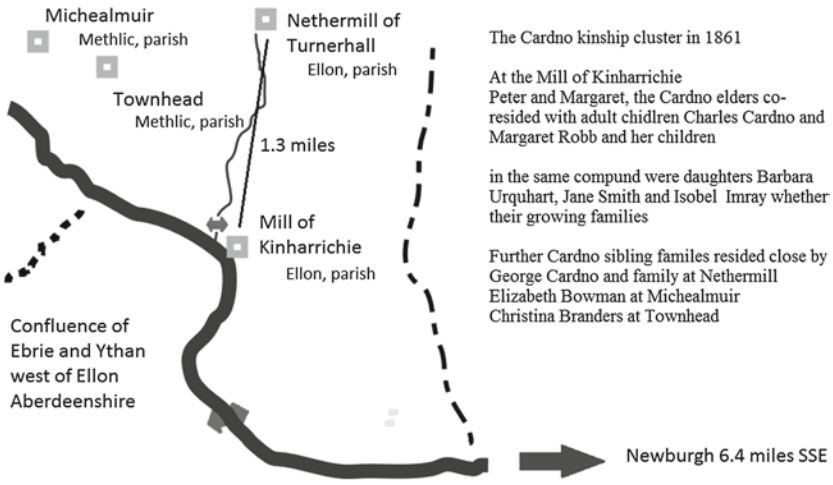


Fig. 10.1 Map of the Cardno kinship cluster centred upon the Kinharrichie Mill, Ellon, southern Buchan (*Ancestry.co.uk*, '1861 Scotland Census'; Ellon; 3; P15; L5; CSSCT1861_28; Methlick; 4; P4; L11; CSSCT1861_30; Ellon; 3; P13; L3; CSSCT1861_28; Ellon; 3; P16; L3; CSSCT1861_28)

In contrast to the traditional approaches utilised to explore personal relationships which rely upon retrieving artefacts such as letters and diaries as exemplified by Tadmor, Leonore Davidoff, O'Day and Steven King, this research has used analysis of reconstructed genealogies, or more accurately kinship collation.[9] Methods based upon meticulous linking, of mainly government records, clearly has its roots in genealogy but it is not focused on establishing a lineage or family tree as opposed to building the pool of connections that surrounded past people. When done in sufficient but manageable numbers the accumulated data creates a basis that not only answers Laslett's questions from the 1980s as to who was alive and when to provide support to their kinfolk, but also provides evidence as to the depth of that support. This approach of reconstructed genealogies draws inspiration and direction from the challenges presented by the likes of David Moody in the 1980s and Elizabeth Shown Mills, who argued in the 2000s that genealogists ought to produce something more than lists of families. In the case of the Cardno focused web, the evidence offers up contradictory evidence as the core

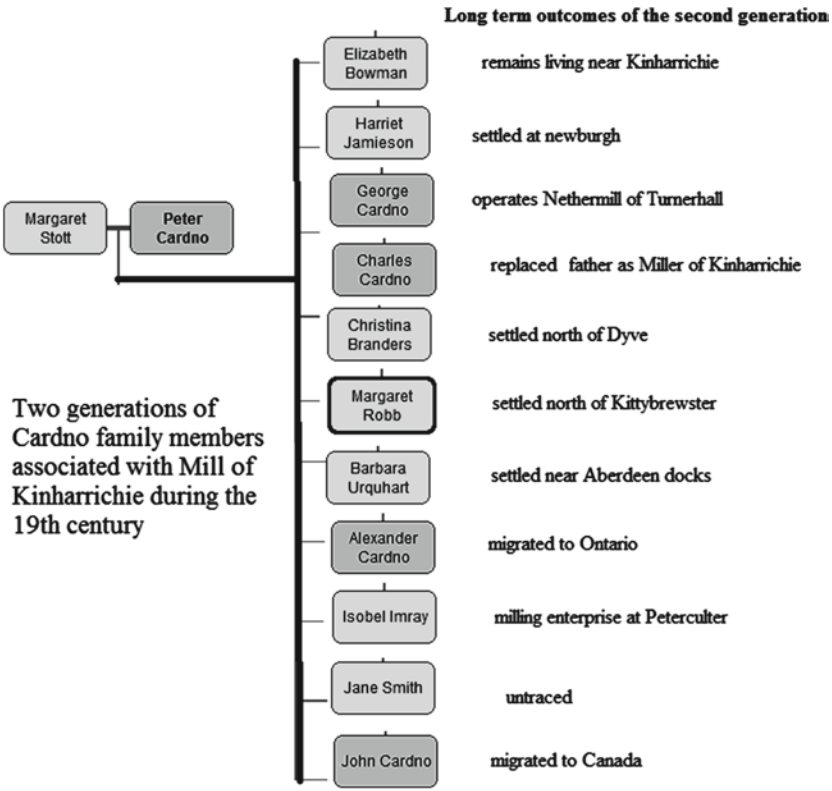


Fig. 10.2 Two generations of Cardno, Kinharrichie (*Ancestry.co.uk*, Iain Riddell)

multiple-domestic group broke down following the death of the miller patriarch Peter in 1861. For instance, Charles the son, who married in light of his succession to the Kinharrichie mill lease and enterprise, may not have succeeded to the family leadership of his father. He did ensure that his mother's welfare was paramount. His filial allegiance in the case of one of his sisters, however, appears to be lacking. In 1871 she was enumerated in the nearby pauper's cottage despite having supported her parents and brothers in their milling endeavours for decades. From the Fraser case study, a more extreme case of filial support emerges following the migration of members of the third generation. Not only did

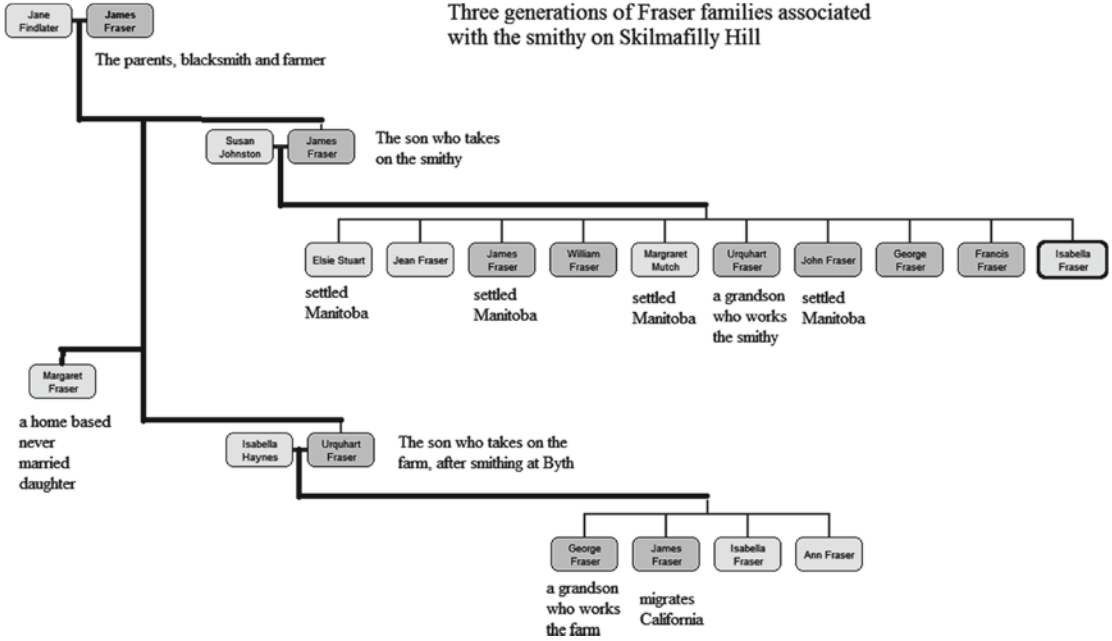


Fig. 10.3 Three generations of Fraser, Skilmafilly (*Ancestry.co.uk*, Iain Riddell, 'Riddell Family Tree', Iain Riddell)

the earliest emigrants act as a focus for younger siblings of working age, they also attracted older relatives in their sixties to join the migration. Thus the parents-in-law of James Fraser were recorded in a co-residing extended domestic setup with him.

Whilst the established methods of sifting, contextualising and cross-referencing surviving artefacts has an ability to reveal a greater level of depth than is possible to recover directly from single core state records, such as a census enumeration or marriage certificate, there are other benefits to analysing reconstructed genealogies. Thus, the bulk of saved personal and family records were generated in the past by people best positioned to do so; for example, the literate with the time and resources to produce them and the self-esteem, or executors with the social confidence, to place value upon the artefacts to have them preserved. This weights the evidence towards the more secure and influential socio-economic groups. Even then, the nature of diaries and letters is that they present only one-half of the relationship unless both parties' artefacts have survived, which as noted by Steven King in his contribution to this volume, is incredibly rare.[10] In contrast, extensively reconstructed genealogies enabled in recent years by digitisation allow a near-universal recovery of what could be regarded as mass oral history exercises without regard to socio-economic status. This means that reconstructed genealogies when mapped out create the possibility of gaining multiple viewpoints on past relationships illuminated by artefacts. This is a natural extension of the work undertaken by Di Cooper and Moira Donald which identified that some employer–servant household relationships were underpinned by a pre-existing genealogical relationship.[11] In this context, the two case studies produce evidence of how, despite social and economic tensions, the mutuality of being was sustained and stretched over distance and time, much as Price has also found in his chapter for this volume.[12]

Cardno and Fraser: Social and Economic Tensions, 1820s–1860s

Our two familial groups socially and economically did not belong to either the Scottish middling-class or of the more vulnerable labouring poor. Instead they serviced the farming industry as millers and smiths. The century-long story of the Fraser grouping was driven primarily by patrilineal connectivity, the economic realities of the male relations being

dominant, yet with significant realisations to be garnered from women and matrilineal networks. The Cardno web of individuals only emerges from the record once matrilineal searches are applied, and have import as a matrikin network. In short, the Cardno story is a story of sisters, their relationships and the consequences of their decisions and life events as Grampian women of the nineteenth century. The selected families have two economic features in common that represent a slither of the rural society's tradesmen. Firstly though they had small apportionments of land attached to their tenancies the primary function was as essential craftspeople. Secondly, these were not village-based artisans, but estate based. This again is reflective of the Aberdeenshire socio-economic structure. The case studies, therefore, move away from a study of farmers and villages, which have sat at the heart of projects such as Day and Smith as well as Barry Reay's microhistory research.[13] Neither families component units are contained within a single parish, nor within the traditional county subdivisions applied in 1841—the first useful enumeration for reconstruction. More challengingly they make significant migration over the decades. The Cardno and Fraser groupings cannot be assessed then as isolated from their wider societies of Kinharriche and Savoch/Schivas on Skilmafilly hill, nor from a broader socio-economic web across the county.[14] The case studies must also, of course, be read alongside the Scottish-focussed chapters by Price and Poertner elsewhere in this volume.

The Cardno family of southern Buchan in the 1840s–1890s were part of a larger patrilineal linked group of Cardno families that originated on Aberdeenshire's northern coast. Peter Cardno (1790–1861) originated from Fraserburgh parish. Indeed the bulk of Cardno men and women across the century are found in this north Aberdeenshire territory. They form part of a single patrilineal grouping which practised a level of cousin marriage. Indicators such as the birth of Peter's uncle at Milltown of Phingask are suggestive of a milling background. Peter had migrated to southern Buchan, married Margaret Stott (1795–1879) a local of the Ellon hinterland and their first child had been born by 1811, at a surprisingly young age for both parties.[15] In 1841 Peter and Margaret were an established economic partnership based at the Mill of Kinharrichie, which was a component of Turner of Turnerhall.[16] The many children of Peter Cardno and Margaret Stott were already forming a kinship cluster of familial units surrounding the main family compound at the mill, a process which continued over the next two decades.

The three census enumerations 1841, 1851, and 1861 captured various types of family households across three parishes and two sub-county regions but all within a short walk of each other, emphasising the difficulty of understanding where the boundaries of familial units really lay. Two further domestic groups existed at Mill of Waterton, three and half miles north and at Newburgh, six miles east. In the former, Margaret Cardno was supporting her brother George, overseeing her nephew William Bowman and raising her two-year-old illegitimate son William Michie. Margaret and Peter's daughters have the effect of disguising the kinship clusters and muddling the relationships within each enumerated household, speaking to a more eclectic theme also investigated by Steven King in his contribution to this volume. Two further items are notable at this stage, Margaret Stott's natal connectivity has yet to be resolved which makes it impossible to understand the speed of Peter's integration socially and economically at Kinharrichie; allied to this there is no evidence of retention of links to his northern family.

The wider arrangement of Cardno familial units between 1841and 1861 are complex.[17] Christina Cardno, for example, married James Branders in 1855, the bride a decade older than the groom who had become an associate of the mill sometime after 1851 following a milling apprenticeship at the nearby Mill of Auchreddie.[18] Yet in 1861 this skilled worker was enumerated as an agricultural labourer within the wider Cardno milling endeavour whose domestic group included his illegitimate stepson John Reid, labelled as a boarder.[19] A symbol of the multiple domestic grouping with its extended interlinked households is a Bowman granddaughter, aged twenty-three, who in 1861 was co-opted to the Smith unit to support much younger cousins.[20] Even Harriet Cardno, Mrs Robert Jamieson who lived in a nuclear family household some distance away in Newburgh should not be discounted from consideration. It is arguable that Harriet the second daughter, whose later-life marriage to a sea mariner followed a period living and working independently in the port village freed her of the strictures of the kinship cluster, with such a break or tension being informative in itself as to the state of relationship dynamics.[21]

Potentially one of the major social tensions amongst the Cardno family group was illegitimacy, which has already been hinted at. This subject illustrates how economic status and social power intermingled as it was a topic which church elders, drawn from the wealthier farming families, exercised authority on.[22] Social control, particularly on the issue of

the illegitimacy of which the targets were disproportionally women from labouring backgrounds, ought to have had some impact on kinship relationships over time when the family incomes were reliant upon economic ties to wealthier farmers. It is clear from the enumerations that Christina and Margaret were both mothers of illegitimate children and it is possible that the parents, Peter and Margaret, had married to avoid being in this position. Indeed Christina and her younger groom may also have been motivated by similar circumstances in 1855; likewise in 1864 the eldest granddaughter, Elizabeth Bowman became an unmarried mother aged twenty-seven.[23] Harriet, the daughter who departs, intriguingly produces no evidence of having an illegitimate child. Her sister Margaret Cardno's story is interesting as in 1851 she had a two-year-old and by 1861 an additional legitimate four-year-old daughter. She had been widowed during the 1860s but had a sexual relationship with her brother's journeyman at Kinharrichie, a widowed man with children, resulting in her third child but no marriage.[24] A socio-economic stability argument on multiple levels recommends they married, as marriage would have bound the journeyman to the mill and provided a mother to the Forsyth children. Robert Forsyth a trusted confidant of Charles Cardno, remained close to his daughter Martha who was also by 1871 an unmarried mother herself. Moreover, Forsyth's wife Ann Anderson had brought an illegitimate child to their marriage. This was not a unique pattern, especially for women and men from the barely economically secure families, and whereas having a child out of wedlock placed mothers under the eye and thumb of Kirk elders it was not a bar to later marriages in Scotland.[25] Illegitimacy did, however, complicate the meaning of flat labels such as 'family' and 'kinship', much as did remarriage and other re-constellations of family arrangements upon death. We see this clearly after Peter Cardno's death in 1861 when the dispersal of the extended kinship cluster began, a matter to which we return later in the chapter.

In contrast to Peter Cardno and Kinharrichie, the three Fraser siblings, Urquhart (1796–1872), James (1802–1882) and Margaret (b.1811) were more deeply connected to Skilmafilly hill, the slopes of which were incorporated into the estates of Schivas, Savoch-Auchnagatt and Drumwhindle. These had all passed into the hands of the Earl of Aberdeen by the 1840s.[26] The Fraser *pater* held the blacksmithy tenancy of Skilmafilly located at the near juncture point of the estates and the three traditional parishes in which they sat, Tarves, New Deer and Ellon.[27] Whilst Margaret Fraser in the second generation remained

unmarried her brothers reinforced their area connectivity through their wives as both married women who were part of the key Johnston 'clan'.[28] This extensive, intermingled, kinship with which Mrs Charles Cardno was also associated, had since the seventeenth century been the main tenants on the hill gradually opening up more agricultural land and extending across the surrounding parishes. Yet, it is the Fraser network arising through the blacksmith trade and connected economic landscape that is most important for this chapter. Economically the Fraser family were deeply rooted in the blacksmithing craft. A toponymical engagement with the Aberdeenshire census forms quickly reveals the importance of the blacksmith craft to the management of estates. Logic suggests that a landowner wishing to optimise estate revenues would require an effective smith and census papers reveal that addresses such as or inclusive of *smithy* and *smiddy* generally were occupied by smiths.[29] Blacksmith tenancies were like the mill a key part of the economy; the importance of the blacksmith for the production of tools and equipment including ploughshares was enhanced as horses took on more work in the fields; while the production of some equipment would have shifted from small country enterprises to new factories as other opportunities opened up.[30] Reputation would have been important for a blacksmith to be attractive to estate management which would have been reciprocated, in turn, by the provision of a decently appointed smith-tenancy or mill to operate from, backed by an acreage. It is within this context that a wider cross-county kin-based strategy of the Fraser family of Skilmafilly will be discussed, as craft families such as the Cardno and Fraser were enhanced by effective participation in such extensive social networks.

The blacksmith network of the Fraser family illustrates the pressures of significant numbers of relatives specialising in one commercial niche, particularly in the context of the disposition of the second generation Fraser brothers Urquhart and James (Fig. 10.4). In 1841 Urquhart Fraser was based at Mains of Byth in the far north-western corner of the county, part of the Byth House lands which was a junior property of the Urquhart of Meldrum family.[31] In the early part of Victoria's reign, Urquhart of Byth and Turner of Turnerhall were cousins so there was a potential network through the landowners.[32] In the following decades, Urquhart Fraser returned to Skilmafilly and shifted from blacksmith to farmer taking on over 100 acres according to his census statement. In 1841, his brother James meanwhile was operating the Skilmafilly smithy in a compound that included their ageing parents and sister.[33] James,

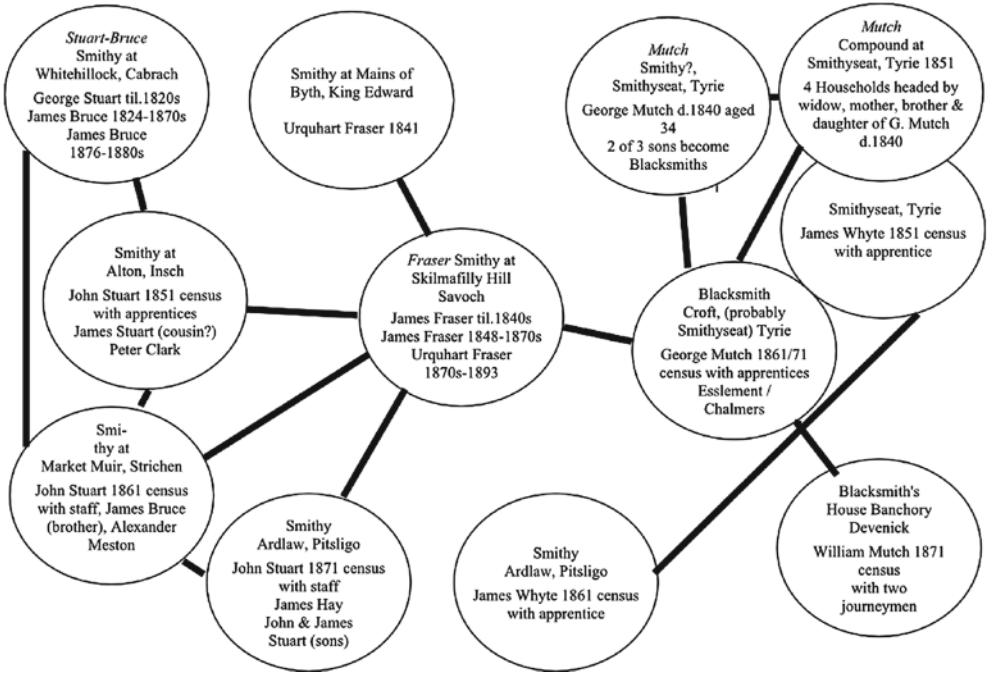


Fig. 10.4 A Blacksmith Kinship nexus focused upon the Fraser blacksmiths of Skilmafilly, Savoch, in Buchan (*Ancestry.co.uk*, Original data—Scotland. Scotland Census: 'King Edward; 10; P9; L650; Yr1841'; 'Tarves; 1; P4; L14; CSSCT1851_52; Yr1851'; 'Tarves; 1; P1; L11; CSSCT1891_72'; 'Tyrie; 1; P2; L13; CSSCT1851_52; Yr1851'; 'Tyrie; 1; P8; L13; CSSCT1871_44'; 'Strichen; 2; P24; L15; Roll: CSSCT1861_33'; 'Cabrach; 1; P11; L3; CSSCT1851_42; Yr1851'; 'Pitsligo; 4; P10; L10; CSSCT1871_42')

unlike his brother, recorded his occupation consistently as a blacksmith with forty acres and the two families sat side-by-side until the brothers' retirement. Oddly, but reflective of the split nature of the Hill, the kin-cluster had memorial stones in both the New Deer and Tarves kirk-yards.[34] Tracking of the third generation carries forward the strategy. James's daughter Elsie married a blacksmith from the Banffshire Highlands beyond Strathbogie and this couple can be traced to various parts of the county between 1851 and 1871, building a substantial enterprise. At least three of Elsie's brothers trained as blacksmiths. The eldest James was amongst the earliest embarked for Canada, followed by the youngest traceable brother, John, whereas Urquhart, the middle brother (1842–1893) took over the Skilmafilly smithy in the 1860s after working away from home. Margaret Fraser the third generation daughter of James also married a blacksmith, George Mutch from northern Aberdeenshire. This couple joined the migration to Manitoba as did Elsie and her grown-up family in 1886.[35]

This brief outline illustrates what a strict locality study could never pick up and thus the value of genealogical reconstruction. Using this method a blacksmithing network which linked together varied parts of northern Aberdeenshire is revealed. This network was reinforced by marriage, apprenticeships and journeymen appointments and indicates that kinship underlay the craft and created a nexus of related blacksmiths on a multi-generational basis. Kinship strategy through marriage was clearly important. The union of Urquhart Fraser and Susan Johnston ensured an absolute link to the key neighbouring farms, as likely did James's marriage to Isabella Haynes. Stepping away from the micro-detail, we can see that the traditional focus on co-residential family and discrete residential units has little purchase on the lived experiences of kinship in Scotland. People lived in a dense network of proximate and distant kinship and one which provided palpable support to its members. The boundaries of families, households and kinship groups were porous much as the increasingly rich European literature on the complexity of familial relations as outlined at the start of this chapter would lead us to expect. This observation becomes even keener if we shift our attention to the later nineteenth century, and to the Fraser familial units as they moved in waves to Manitoba via Ontario, and the Cardno familial units as they dispersed from Kinharrichie.

Kinship in the Long-Term, 1870–1910

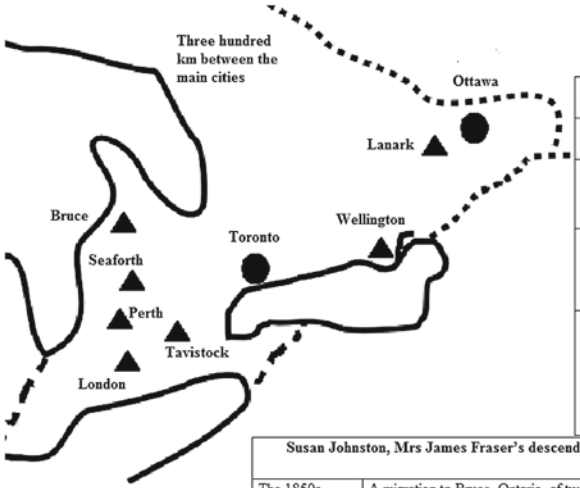
Both case studies produced a pattern that indicates kinship clusters and enduring familial networks holding individuals in a nexus of mutuality through to the twentieth century. Within such an analysis individuality cannot be discarded. In the third Fraser generation, James, son of Urquhart the second generation farmer, migrated in contrast to his siblings, while his namesake cousin James, son of James the blacksmith, pioneered his sibling trend of emigration as early as 1854 and his brother Urquhart remained taking over the smithy.[36] As an early migrant with his wife Margaret Martin, also from the Ellon area, all of James's children were born in Canada and her relatives, including in time her elderly parents, were part of the migration. As noted, this also involved his siblings and, in some cases, their adult children a situation suggestive of a cross-household response to wider socio-economic forces. This was an underpinning finding of Molloy's global study of Highland families even as the research of Erickson points to the elderly Martin migration as a significant symbol of social power within the kinship network.[37]

Margaret Fraser, Mrs George Mutch, and family joined her brother James c.1873–1874 in Bruce County, Ontario, leading up to the mass movement from Ontario to Manitoba during 1881 (Fig. 10.5).[38] Elsie Fraser, Mrs John Stuart, accompanied by grown/married and younger children and grandchildren set out directly from Buchan to Manitoba, bypassing Ontario, arriving in 1886. This staged migration coalescing into a new locality is a reminiscent of Molloy's study of west Highlanders reconfiguring kinship in New Zealand, with some familial units arriving via Nova Scotia. The subsequent complex and dense kin relationships of Susan Johnston, Mrs James Fraser's descendants in Manitoba, are outlined in Figs. 10.6 and 10.7. In summary, the different branches can be seen layering and intermingling amongst themselves and with other families, especially through marriage.

Marriage choices could be restricted by two major factors: lack of potential non-kin partners and prejudices (internal and external), such as socio-economic differentials, social perceptions and faith backgrounds.[39] Once the extended descendants of Susan and James had reconfigured in southern Manitoba the potential pool of partners was even more restricted due to lack of Europeans and problems associated with the limited connectivity of the Red River Valley to the rest of Manitoba. Yet a search for news items on the community of Pilot Mound, which the

Fig. 10.5 The migration zones of the Fraser and Cardno related domestic groups

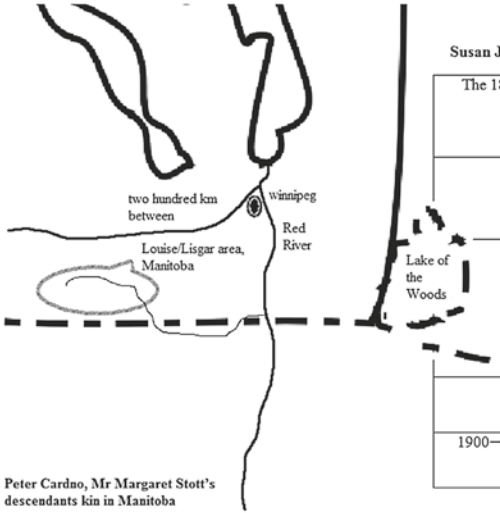
kinship were notable members of, in the British local press reveals that a diverse range of people was drawn there. It is also possible to gain an insight into the socio-economic situation of the Fraser familial units within southern Manitoba from local press cuttings. For instance, the Perth Courier, Lanark, Ontario carried news from Pilot Mound in 1882 sent by former resident James Fraser. Equally J. M. Fraser, the postmaster of Pilot Mound, had news of the agricultural opportunities posted in papers as far afield as Dundee, Scotland. A 1929 California record picked up James Martin Fraser, then seventy-one, travelling with his wife to Canada on a ship originating from Australia, and these three documents alone would make it difficult to argue that the Fraser familial units had been unsuccessful. Potentially the inverse is true and the familial units struggled to find acceptable brides and grooms outside of the re-clustered kin group.[40]



Peter Cardno, Mr Margaret Stott's descendants kin in Ontario	
Early 1850s	Alexander a younger son and his wife arrive Seaforth, Ontario
Mid 1860s	Likely that the youngest son John along with a wife and baby arrive in Wellington, Ontario
The 1860s –1880s	Alexander Cardno working in milling and grain industries, His brother John Cardno a farmer
1916	Robert, son of John Cardno marries in Wellington, Ontario a woman whose grandmother was connected to the blacksmiths at Mains of Waterton, Ellon, which neighboured the Mill of Waterton, operated by George Cardno in 1851

Susan Johnston, Mrs James Fraser's descendants' kin behaviour in Ontario	
The 1850s – 1880s	A migration to Bruce, Ontario, of two sons, one daughter and her family Planned a further move to Manitoba that included a second daughter and her descendants making a direct move from Aberdeenshire
1871	John and Isabella Martin in their mid-seventies arrive, Bruce, Canada to join their daughter Margaret Martin, Mrs James Fraser the younger, whilst their son settled at Tavistock

Fig. 10.6 Fraser and Cardno kinship presence and events in Ontario (*Ancestry.co.uk*, 'Toronto, Ontario, Canada; Registrations of Marriages, 1869–1928; MS932; 401', Robert Cardno/Alice Johnston; *Scotlandspeople.gov.uk*, Aberdeen Sheriff Court Inventories, James Craig, SC1/36/35; Toronto, Ontario, Canada; County Marriage Registers, 1858–June 1869; MS248; 17, Alexander Mutch/Mary Ann Simpson)



Susan Johnston, Mrs James Fraser's descendants' kin behaviour in Manitoba

The 1880s – 1900s	The eldest son and youngest daughter of Elspet Fraser, Mrs J Stuart marry an aunt and nephew pairing, the Blackburn, another daughter Elspet Stuart married her sister's widower
1893	Alexander Mutch, son of Margaret Fraser returns to Lanark, Ontario to marry, two of his wife's siblings go on to marry two of his siblings, all three sibling exchange couples settle in Lisgar area
1901	William Blackburn, nephew of Annie Blackburn, Mrs James Stuart Is in service to Alexander Mutch, a grandson of Susan Johnston as was James Stuart
1901	Margaret Fraser, Mrs G Mutch, has her husband's, 8-year-old, motherless, great niece Alexandria May Gordon in the household
1911	Alexandria M Gordon was mis-enumerated as Mutch in John William Mutch's household
1900—1920s	Elspet Fraser, Mrs J Stuart Four of her grandchildren form two consanguineous marriage unions

Peter Cardno, Mr Margaret Stott's descendants kin in Manitoba

1911	Alexander, son of Alexander Cardno appears in southern Manitoba, close to the Fraser descendants, operating as a merchant
1913	George Cardno Hardie, born and raised at his grandfather's Mill, Nethermill of Turnerhall, a great-grandson of Peter, marries in Winnipeg, Manitoba, having left Scotland in 1910[1]

Fig. 10.7 Fraser and Cardno kinship presence and events in Manitoba (*Ancestry.co.uk*, 1901 Census of Canada, 'Census Place: Louise, Lisgar, Manitoba; 4; 37'; 'Year: 1901; Census Place: Louise, Lisgar, Manitoba; 11; 101'; 'Census Place: Louise, Lisgar, Manitoba; 3; 28'; 'Year: 1901; Census Place: Louise, Lisgar, Manitoba; 1; 8'; 'Census Place: Louise, Lisgar, Manitoba; 1; 3' and 1916 Canada Census of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta: 'Census Place: Manitoba, Lisgar, 16; T-21926; 13;147'; 'Census Place: Manitoba, Lisgar, 19; T-21927; 4; 34'; 1911 Census of Canada, 'Manitoba, Lisgar, sub-district 12'; 'Ontario, Canada, Marriages, 1801–1928', Registrations of Marriages, 1869–1928; MS932; 78)

If we switch our attention to the Cardno sister's in Aberdeenshire, similar complexities emerge. The movement of Margaret Cardno, the widowed Mrs Robb, with her second youngest child out of the Mill compound following her father's death may well be taken as a signal of social tensions over illegitimacy.[41] Any assessment of Margaret's move must also include the arrival of Charles Cardno's new bride Mary Riddel, an older woman from a peasant farming family. Her age was likely to preclude Mary from potential parenthood with Charles but still, a new unit was formed that arguably the trusted Robert Forsyth was part of. Margaret was not the only Cardno sister dispersed from the Mill following Peter's death. Indeed (Fig. 10.8) the kinship cluster was reduced to two brothers at nearby mills and the eldest sister's Bowman family unit at Michealmuir, whose neighbours included the sister of Mrs Charles Cardno, a shopkeeper. Meanwhile, the Branders had set up close to the Cothall industrial mills on Donside near Dyce; the Urquharts and second generation Bowman and Smith familial units had mostly drifted into inner Aberdeen north of the docks; and the Imray's were at the grain mill of Kennerty on the Dee at Peterculter. These various family units were maintaining levels of cross-communication, as evidenced by an Urquhart daughter enumerated with her Brander aunt and most importantly Margaret Cardno's eldest son with his Urquhart cousins. Indeed a plotting of the expanding Cardno descendants over the next three decades has the majority of families close to at least one other familial unit. Only a small number of related individuals opted out of the close geographical proximity that would have facilitated regular contact. Amongst these potential opt-outers was James Imray whose enumerations suggest a highly mobile lifestyle of kin solitude and Margaret Robb who remained in the city but made her own life in service. Long-term the relationship between Margaret and her brother Charles may point towards social conflict over the discomfort caused by a second illegitimate child but the wider familial response suggests this was less of an issue. Once again, it was kinship networks, both proximate and dispersed, not the co-residential family unit, which shaped the experience and meaning of 'family' in this Scottish context. The English historiography, which has moved on little in this sense since the work of Tadmor and Cooper and Donald, has much to learn from this context and the methodological approach from which it is confected.

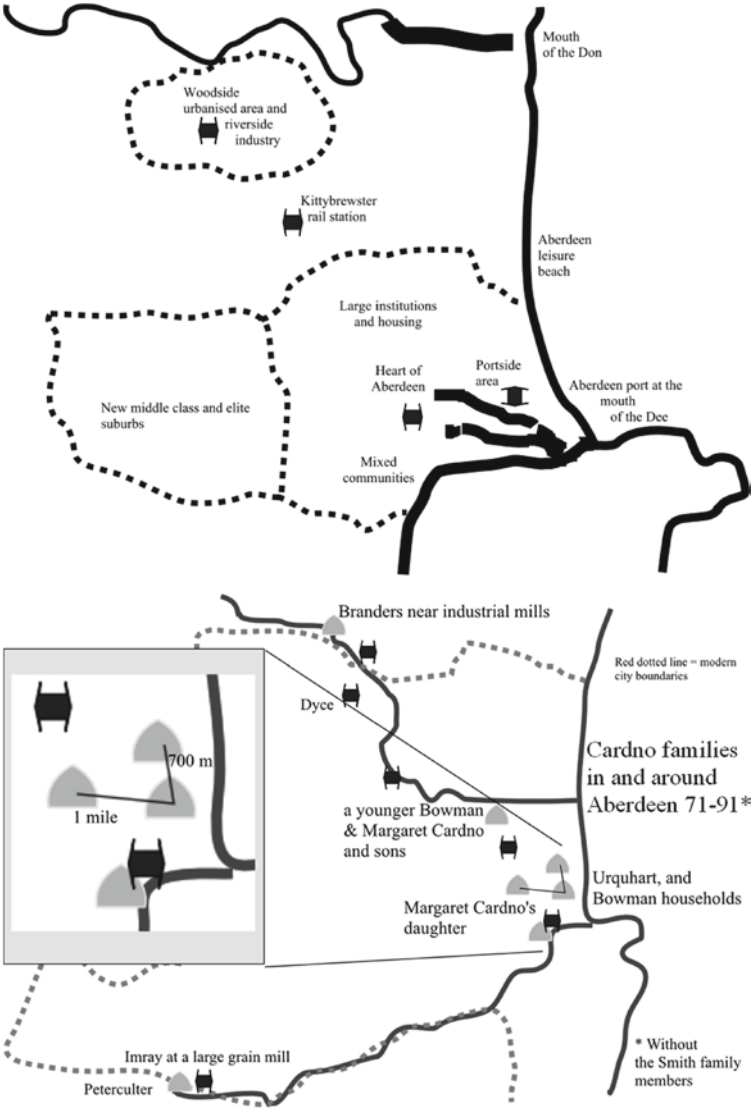


Fig. 10.8 Maps of Aberdeen city and the Cardno familial units (*Ancestry.co.uk*, Iain Riddell, 'Riddell Family Tree', Iain Riddell)

Conclusion

British scholars have, for some decades, recognised the need to gain a better understanding of the scale, nature and functionality of kinship within and around the family and household. Source constraints have to some extent frustrated this endeavour. The British record base as recovered through ego documents such as diaries focusses, until the later nineteenth century at least, on those from a narrow socio-economic background. Census material offers notional coverage of an entire population but privileges the recording of kinship centred on the co-residential family unit and kinship connections focussed only on the physical locality. There is, however, a further issue which prevents the realisation of the goal to look anew at British kinship which is the lack of a cohesive, inclusive and culturally applicable definition of the term itself. It is little wonder in this sense that British studies have continued to examine kinship largely within the limits of kin-family who shared periods of co-residency and to emphasise a core model that gives prominence to specific relationships: that of the child–parent and those between siblings, which weaken through extended stem grandparent–grandchild and collateral (aunt–nephew, for instance) kinship, into the shapelessness of cousinship. This focus has played out across all parts of the UK despite the cultural presence of the clan in parts of Scotland. By contrast our European counterparts have become more interested about the place of kinship in a wider set of interactions within and between networks and individuals.

New digital resources which allow us to re-associate individual records drawn from census data and other records back to individual actors with a high degree of reliability, provide a way to rethink (in this case Scottish) kinship. Using the techniques outlined in this chapter it is possible to confidently build large genealogical reconstructions that can then be followed into other parts of the British-sphere: England, Canada, America and Australia, for example. The exercise of working with multiple record collections which capture minor details of unstudied and ordinary actors, is still complex and time-consuming. To build and appreciate a large enough database has required in this chapter the use of theoretical understandings developed for the European record base. Further approaches and insights were drawn from scholarly work on the management and visualisation of large databases. These were deployed collectively to enable genealogical reconstructed data to break free of fixed forms such as family trees and patri-privilege and build a tool for social history network

reconstruction called kinship collation. Applied to the Scottish record base, this technique allows us to extract not a web of relatives, but a network of multi-faceted reciprocity between individuals in their community whether that was a local neighbourhood or stretched economic interest group over vast distances. Applied and connected to the Canadian record it has captured the re-solidification of those networks into a new locale, neighbourhood and nation. This tool responds directly to Cooper and Donald's insistence that there is a need for the reconstruction of 'family' histories. In this sense we can see that the evidence of kinship for the long-nineteenth century has always been hidden in plain-sight, that evidence is available for actors across a slew of socioeconomic situations and circumstances, and that public interest in genealogy has already built a significant initial base of reconstructions whose data awaits visualisation and analysis to re-imagine the nature of British family and kinship history.

For this chapter, kinship collation has been applied to the question of the shape of relationships between household units as evidenced through multiple connectivities accumulated from a longitudinal, intergenerational perspective. The launch families—Fraser and Cardno—were drawn from areas outside of the classic clan territories (both geographically and socio-economically) so as to avoid any confusion that what was observed was the residual clan culture. The evidence from the families revealed multiple levels of mutuality of being, something that fits neatly with the Schneiderian anthropological definition of kinship outlined briefly in the Introduction. This definition impelled the research to identify something more than mere relatedness however close and the chapter has consequently reported a variety of situations and behaviours that go beyond this benchmark; for example, the ongoing and probably planned translocation of Fraser family units into Manitoba and the arrangement of kin labour in a cluster at the Mill of Kinharrichie. The chapter has also shown that connectedness was not experienced in fixed stable patterns. Rather, it was highly malleable to local and situational circumstances, and changes to one active relationship had a ripple effect across interpersonal connections more widely. This included ultimately the downgrading and abandonment of some interactions and the building of new networks of actual or fictive relatives through the accumulation of reciprocity. Such findings and methods have ramifications for the family and kinship literatures that have underpinned this volume. Firstly, the British record is not adequate to the task of historical kinship research; kinship collation provides us with a new tool to reimagine both kinship and the nature

and meaning of family relations. Secondly, the focus on kin-family of the household is merely one aspect and form of kinship. There are further varieties of kinship yet to be recovered and considered and that task is not achieved through narrow lineages or snapshot assessments of small geographically restricted locales. Thirdly, adopting a sense that connectedness is more important than simply the existence of blood or legal ties requires large datasets to generate meaningful patterns. Fortunately, these are now cheaper and faster to build and, in this sense, British historians of the family and kinship have much to do.

Notes

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8. C. Erickson (1972) *Invisible Immigrants: The Adaptation of English and Scottish Immigrants in Nineteenth-Century America* (London: Cornell University Press). See also D. A. Gerber (2006) *Authors of Their Lives the Personal Correspondence of British Immigrants to North America in the Nineteenth Century* (New York: New York University Press).

9. S. A. King and M. Shephard (2012) 'Courtship and the Remarrying Man in Late-Victorian England', *Journal of Family History*, 37:3, pp. 319–340; N. Tadmor (2004) *Family and Friends in Eighteenth Century England: Household, Kinship and Patronage* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press); L. Davidoff (2012) *Thicker Than Water: Siblings and Their Relations, 1780–1920* (Oxford: Oxford University Press); and O'Day, *The Family*.
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11. D. Cooper and M. Donald (1995) 'Households and "Hidden" Kin in Early-Nineteenth Century England: Four Case Studies in Suburban Exeter, 1821–1861', *Continuity and Change*, 10:2, pp. 257–278.
12. Tadmor, 'Early Modern English Kinship', pp. 27–28.
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20. 1861, Kinhanachy Miller's House.
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24. Ancestry.com, 'Scotland, Select Births and Baptisms, 1564–1950', John Forsyth or Cardno.
25. It is important to note that Blaikie suggests that fathers were decreasingly held to account through this period. Blaikie, 'Scottish Illegitimacy', p. 228.
26. 'Testimonial to J. H. Irvine, Esq., Schivas', *Aberdeen Journal*, 21 October 1840.
27. Ancestry.com, *1841 Scotland Census*, Alexander Gibb 1858.
28. J. Henderson (1907) *Aberdeenshire Epitaphs and Inscriptions* (Aberdeen: Aberdeen Daily Journal), p. 412.
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37. Erickson, *Invisible Immigrants*, p. 37.
38. Ancestry.com, *1891 Census of Canada* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc., 2008. The family was enumerated twice in 1881, Margaret and all the children in Ontario, suggesting that the younger children were temporarily left in Ontario as the settlement was organised. Ancestry.com and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, *1881 Census of Canada* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc., 2009.
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Katharine Cusack, 1887–93: Obligations and Marriage Ideals in Irish-American New England', *New Hibernia Review*, 16:4, pp. 43–63.

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CHAPTER 11

Configuring and Re-configuring Families in Nineteenth-Century England

Steven King

Overview

As the editors have suggested in their Introduction to this volume, our understanding of the size, shape and meaning of the family (and its relation to household) owes much to the foundational work of Peter Laslett on the nuclear family form and associated concepts such as nuclear hardship.[1] Some of his conclusions have continuing reach in the wider family history literature. That English families viewed through the lens of pre- and post-1801 censuses tended to be modest in scale and relatively simple in terms of structure, absolutely and when compared to some of the family forms identified in southern and central Europe, is clear.[2] Reconstructing the age at which children functionally left home is difficult,[3] but co-residence of parents and children, particularly married children, appears in snapshot data to have been rare. During old age, men and women were much more likely to be recording as living alone, with servants, with each other or with kin-like grandchildren than they were to living with their own children, brothers, sisters or in-laws.[4] Iain

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Riddell in his contribution to this volume reminds us forcibly that such observations, which translate to historiographical orthodoxy, reflect the limitations of the sources that we use to interrogate families rather than any reflection of lived reality.

In some respects more recent writing has done much to complicate our understanding of the meaning, form, fluidity and function of families and their associated households for the post-1750 period. Notwithstanding Rebecca Probert's sense that cohabitation in nineteenth-century England was vanishingly rare,[5] it is now clear that the matrix of marital equivalents was peopled by bigamists, cohabiters, those in sequential and parallel short term and often casual relationships, those having affairs even if they did not live together and married couples who, while notionally living together, were in fact separated by intent or distance.[6] Detailed community reconstructions have consistently demonstrated that whatever the physical residential arrangements of families and households, couples and individuals often found themselves deeply inscribed into networks of proximately resident kin of the sort described by Riddell earlier in the volume.[7] Migrants to towns and cities in particular sought out kin and others from a 'home' locality even before they arrived in their host communities.[8] And Di Cooper and Moira Donald's detailed reconstruction of small number of streets in nineteenth-century Exeter has thrown important light on the fuzziness of the language of household and family. As they point out, terms such as visitor, lodger or servant as recorded in the nineteenth-century census often masked a kinship relationship between the person thus labelled and the head of household, pointing to the sorts of complex family structures highlighted by others in this volume.[9]

More widely, Naomi Tadmor has developed earlier models of fictive kinship, arguing that kin-like relationships (apprentices, servants, business partners, neighbours, friends) were a vital part of family and household life and that once we account for such relationships a focus on the nuclear family form becomes problematic. This is particularly true for middling families and one of the singular development points of the historiographical literature over the last three decades has been to view middling families as part of a complex network of proximate and distant friendship, kinship and fictive kinship.[10] Such networks were maintained by personal contacts, visits and above all through the explosion of middling epistolarity in nineteenth-century England, and even long-neglected relationships could be rapidly brought back to life in

this context.[11] Perspectives like this give new emphasis to the idea that families should be regarded as a process rather than the fixed structure suggested by existing models of stem, nuclear and extended families. Against this backdrop what matters is the fluidity of form and function; the porosity of family and household boundaries; and the ability of residential units to re-constellate according to wishes and circumstances. Unsurprisingly these themes are all central to the present volume.

These ideas are not, of course, new. Work on the twentieth-century family has consistently pointed to adaptability of form and membership.[12] For the nineteenth-century sophisticated work on diaries, autobiographies, court cases and personal papers has begun to unpick the very different ways that men, women and children understood, described and experienced family life and the boundaries of the units in which they (sometimes episodically) resided.[13] Such work has concentrated largely on the middling orders of the sort investigated by Kim Price in his chapter for this volume, but even for groups like illegitimate children the work of Ginger Frost has shown persuasively that circulation and porosity of household boundaries was common.[14] Amongst the independent labouring classes the complex interactions of individual and gendered identities that fostered cohesion or fragility in family form and meaning in the later nineteenth century has been laid bare in the magisterial study of Julie-Marie Strange.[15]

Against this backdrop, our understanding of the family lives of the very poorest sorts in nineteenth-century England remains remarkably threadbare. In other work I have used pauper letters to argue that the poor and those on the margins of dependence were enmeshed into a deep, complex and functional set of kinship relationships—that their families were processes—rather than being kin poor as Peter Laslett had originally suggested.[16] Yet, while the extant pauper letter corpus is substantial and spans the entire nineteenth century, it offers only a narrow window of observation onto household and kinship patterns for most individuals. Relatively few of those who wrote to claim poor relief were lifelong dependents, and indeed almost all writers ended their letters with a rhetorical desire to return to independence.[17] It thus follows that the longest periods of observation in such sources apply to groups—the aged, or people with mental impairments of the sort investigated by Cara Dobbing in her chapter for this volume—who might have particular experiences of the process of family and kinship. Working class autobiographies—documents that Martyn Lyons labels ‘ordinary writings’[18]—provide a more general

overview, but they are rarely supplemented with the epistolary collections of ordinary people.[19] Indeed, David Vincent suggests that writing and receiving family letters was a rare event in labouring households for much of the nineteenth century, given slow improvements in literacy, the costs of postage and the limited time and skills to develop familiar letters.[20] Against this backdrop, the current chapter takes a different path to investigate the family forms and boundaries of the sometime or sometimes poor. It draws on information about family form and function contained in memoirs and memorials (and then tensions them with pauper letters) to suggest that ordinary families in the nineteenth century were, and were expected to be, fluid, expanding and contracting rapidly to facilitate different constellations of actual and fictive kin.

Sources

Memoirs and memorials are not autobiographies.[21] While some of them contain personal reflection and even personal histories, their essential purpose was to recap a more generic history of a place, county, building, group or way of life. Representative titles might include *Recollections of a Sussex Parson*; *Idlehurst: A Journal Kept in the Country*; *Old Sussex*; or *The Highways and Bye-Ways of Leicestershire*.[22] Many more of these volumes were collected together and written than were ever published; a project running now for more than twenty-five years to discover and analyse such memoirs has revealed hundreds of un-actioned manuscripts and even more sets of notes which were supposed to have been condensed. The prefaces of many of those actually published suggest the dogged pursuit of publishers or subscribers by authors and the role of sheer chance in the process of bringing memoirs to a wider public. Arthur Beckett records an important tale in this respect:

> It must be nearly thirty years ago since I was examining one day a stock of old volumes in the shop of a dealer … and picked up a little work bound in green cloth and lettered "Our Parish: A Medley; by T. G. H". On opening it I saw at once that it was a Sussex book of which I had never before heard. The perusal of a few pages while I was yet in the bookseller's shop, proved that I had found a treasure after my own heart … Inquiries among those who took an interest in the native literature of Sussex proved to me that the book was known to very few of them. I did indeed discover one un-discriminating person who possessed a copy bound in paper covers, and who, declaring it to be of little value, offered it to me as a free gift.[23]

Beckett had discovered one of a very few privately printed copies of the memoirs of the Hailsham Currier Thomas Geering, which he had begun to write from the age of sixty. It had been first published in 1884, with 500 copies printed but because 'The edition sold slowly' and 'met with little or no financial success', the text and knowledge of it rapidly passed out of memory.[24] It survives now only because Beckett re-edited the copy he managed to obtain, publishing again with Methuen in 1925. In turn the hand of chance can also be seen in terms of the 1884 publication. Geering's original preface noted that not until the summer of 1879 did 'the possibility of my one day becoming an author' first dawn on him. Even then, it was a change encounter with a Gentleman writer which first gave him confidence. The unnamed Gentleman shared his own rough manuscripts with Geering and 'Here I saw the first blushing offspring of the mind brought to the light of day, and lying all naked and exposed before me on a clean sheet of paper'.[25]

Books like these were published by people across the social scale, but a comprehensive county-by-county inventory of such work reveals a striking presence for ordinary people and the sometimes poor. Indeed, the very ordinariness of the writers and the stories they told of their poor neighbours and friends was often cited as a reason for publication or subscription, as well as the richness of the material they conveyed. The remarkable levels of literacy amongst the nineteenth-century poor gives the lie to a sense that literate culture did not penetrate the lowest strata of society until the 1860s,[26] and this conclusion is much magnified when we consider the memorials written by labourers, apprentices, old paupers, mechanics and others who people the sample employed for this chapter. Chronologically, that sample is biased towards the final four decades of the nineteenth-century, as is true more widely for sources on the family history of the period, a reflection of the state of the publishing industry and the appetite for this sort of reflection amongst an increasingly large and sophisticated reading public.[27] Nonetheless, since almost all of the memorials look well back from their chronological vantage point and include the voices of even older residents and the forebears of the writer and their circle, we can gain a remarkably detailed sense of continuity and change in social and familial practice across the entire century.

This chapter uses a sample of 200 memorials. Like any conceivable sub-group of the source, almost all of the writers either style themselves at the time of writing as old or give an exact age which confirms this status. Indeed, the fact of being over sixty is probably what gave the

authors of these accounts of life credibility amongst the buying public. Some 140 volumes were written by men and sixty by women, suggesting that women were more prolific memorialists at this period than they were autobiographers. It is difficult to establish whether these writers were somehow 'representative' of their peers in terms of occupations or even wealth and poverty because almost all of them were writing at the very end of a working life and life-cycle of accumulation and dis-accumulation. In any case, we are rather less interested in their (often fleetingly told) personal stories than in the wider reflections on family life amongst others that they record. One bias in the sample is clear: the sources are drawn from southern and midland English counties and with an emphasis on rural communities. The focus is deliberately chosen. Chronic underemployment, low wages, agricultural recession, the inexorable sprawl of urban areas and the generalised 'flight from the countryside' of the later nineteenth century are often seen to have fractured rural communities, diluted long resident families and undermined kinship patterns as young people migrated and emigrated.[28]

Set against this context, memorials provide a platform to investigate two of the central themes of this volume: family form and fluidity. They are particularly well-suited to this purpose. Memorials share something with antiquarian histories, but they are usually less formal, more variant in their themes and less rigidly structured. Reflections of flora and fauna, local economies and transport infrastructure usually entwine with folk traditions, medicine, social practice and custom, accounts of local personalities and notable events, and the nature of everyday life, of which family form and fluidity was one aspect. Indeed, all of the volumes assembled for this chapter speak at least partly to this theme. Of course, memorials are as subject as their cousins—autobiographies and diaries—to nostalgic reflection, the embellishment of events, selective memory and even falsehood. Arthur Beckett noted as much, writing approvingly of Thomas Geering's text that 'None of these [other texts of the same genre] can be guaranteed as free from fiction; and it is perhaps one of the chief merits of the Sussex book that it is a transcript of life in a small rural town exactly as its author found it'.[29] Like many autobiographies they were written with the intention to seek publication, which may in turn have shaped what was written, style and selection of themes, and case studies. These are unavoidable risks. They are balanced by the potential to see patterning of experiences of and attitudes towards families. There

is (and perhaps surprisingly) little spatial or socio-economic regularity to these variables. Memorialists living in towns were not more likely to write of fluidity, for instance, than those in rural areas. Nor (and perhaps equally surprisingly given the historiography) does there seem to have been any systematic tendency for family forms to become more or less complex over time. Moreover, some of the regularities we can see are merely an artefact of source creation. Thus, the oldest writers tended to recap more examples of family fluidity than younger writers simply because they had a longer sweep of 'history' to range over. Other patterns in the narratives are clearer. Those who were definitively sick when they were writing tended to focus more on family histories (their own and those of others) than writers who were healthy, perhaps a function of the fact that visitors to the sick bed conveyed gossip and reminiscence as well as sympathy. Women, and migrants of both sexes, experienced and observed more family fluidity than older men. And, much as we might have guessed from Sokoll's fleeting engagement with the matter, memorialists of all socio-economic standing traced the most fluid family compositions amongst the very poorest segments of the societies of which they wrote.[30] It is to these broad patterns and experiences that the chapter now turns.

Fluid Families

While nuclear families and stories of them are plain to see in every memorial text used here, the regularity with which writers experienced or recounted fluidity in the co-residential family unit and the porousness of family and household boundaries, is truly striking. Children, young adults, married couples, the aged and singletons moved around, opened their doors and hearths to others and formed multiple fictive relationships which challenged, stood in for or complemented ties of blood and marriage. Whatever the census might record, it seems clear that few ordinary families found themselves in a long-term pattern of residential and inmate stability, particularly where they were persistently poor. This is not a new observation, but it demands both greater historiographical emphasis and a particular focus on the exploration of the network of small towns and villages which continued to dominate settlement types in the majority of counties even by the later nineteenth-century.[31]

Against this backdrop, the memorials are littered with colourful examples of irregular families and odd kinship arrangements. Alice Day, memorialising Sussex life, and more particularly the communities around the Hadlow Down, between the early 1800s and the 1890s, is a compelling example. Recollecting the 1880s she noted the case of 'a dangerous witch' who 'lived on the common just beyond Tinker's Lane. Her only companion was her black cat'.[32] Some years before in 1876, Day had been a visitor of the sick and recollected attending 'Old Mrs Jones [who] lived with her [adult] son and crippled daughter Ann near the top of Wilderness Lane', her husband having absconded at some earlier date. She too was a reputed witch and Day's mother was 'entreated by our local builder to desist from visiting Mrs Jones lest she should lay her spell on her'.[33] At the other extreme, the Waterloo veteran William Martin and his wife Elizabeth 'spent their declining days with their daughter and son-in-law in a picturesque farmhouse, which stood back in a garden all aglow with flowers'.[34] Other forms of co-residence also appeared common. Thomas Streeter lived with his daughter and son-in-law and:

> It struck me as strange to find that he ate alone, instead of with the others, his little round table with a white cloth being placed near the fire, whilst his daughter and son-in-law used a square table beside the door. But later on I found that this is the way in the cottages, probably in some cases in order to let the old folks eat in peace, without being disturbed by children.[35]

In similar fashion, aged mothers lived with married and unmarried daughters, grandmothers could be found 'keeping house for her grandsons at the age of eighty-three',[36] fathers took in sons and sons-in-law, and siblings resided together as for instance in the case of 'three brothers, whose nicknames were King (a very good cricketer) Rugged and Butcher', who lived together and built up a farming business, only marrying and splitting their residence once all were established.[37] Accounts of 'standard' nuclear families are also balanced by frequent discussion of fictive kin. As just one example, Day traced a functional community of the aged and disabled, noting their presence at Hadlow Down Church:

> Obadiah Cottingham ['an octogenarian neighbour'] leading blind Hezekiah Stapley, followed by George Fuller on his wooden leg, were rather a pathetic sight, as Sunday after Sunday they tramped along and then sat together in one of the front benches.[38]

In turn, Day herself had come back (in 1879) 'to settle in my old neighbourhood' and to live in a house started decades earlier by her elder brother which she completed and then opened up to her own itinerant kin and the extensive fictive kinship that underpinned the area she loved.[39]

These examples are of course situational. Family size and form was contingent upon many tangible and intangible variables including cultural norms, the effect of mortality rates on accumulated kinship, the architecture of homes, wage rates, the incidence of physical and mental impairment, war, trade depression and the contractual and neighbourhood relationships which might or might not bring fictive kin into the ambit of individuals and families. Other contributors to this volume explore these themes at length. The ability to talk about family fluidity was also inter-correlated, as I note above, with the age of the writer, a proxy for the depth of the material on which a writer might have been able to draw. Nonetheless, the stories told by Day of the 200 or so families which compromised the source material for her local memoirs resonate through the rest of the sample.

In this context, there are three insistent aspects of family and household fluidity which snake through the memoirs used for this chapter. The first was that of *return*. While demographic historians have focussed on migration and emigration as long-term life experiences, often attaching to them finality in terms of sustained physical contact with families, the reality was usually more nuanced. Kim Price and Iain Riddell make similar points in their chapters for this volume. The memoirs show us that at times of sickness, unemployment, childbirth and sometimes in old age, people returned to community and family, a process often involving some co-residence. Others returned as part of a life or career plan, in response to parental need and village opportunity, or because they were at a loose end. Authors left implicit in their texts a sense that return was more common for poor families and for families headed by women, but the sheer ubiquity of the experience is also compelling. William Greening, writing his memorial of Worthing in 1896, encapsulates this experience:

> There was never something that the older people could rely on. Young men and women moved out and in again like the old jamboree and even those who left for great voyages might find themselves back on for a time or for good. Nothing was fixed, families were always moving around even if the old names remained.[40]

Similarly Sarah Broom, looking back on the Berkshire community of Englefield from the standpoint of 1863 noted that houses were 'alive' with the comings and goings of those who migrated for work, with injuries, trade downturn and unemployment bringing back people some of whom had left many years ago. Such for instance was Matthew Foster who returned home to his mother's house with a new wife in 1847 having been unable to keep work in London and 'so began half a lifetime of living with the bent and vicious old woman'.[41]

The detail of these experiences is captured in some detail in the memoirs of his late nineteenth-century boyhood in Corsham (Wiltshire) by Herbert Spackman. One of his brothers had emigrated to New Zealand at some unspecified date in the 1870s and Spackman notes on many occasions a prospect of visits or a return. This was not to transpire; indeed Spackman himself emigrated to New Zealand soon after his engagement to a cousin in 1893. Yet his childhood was littered with departures and returns both from and too the area and into and out of the family itself. Relatives went off to jobs in service or to serve apprenticeships and returned. Sisters were sent off to relatives, clearly in the hope that they would find an eligible match, and returned with or without their catch. Female cousins came in the opposite direction and for the same reasons. Brothers having migrated sought to return home, or closer to home, as opportunity arose. Thus, while it is difficult to reconstruct the Spackman family structure with exactitude between 1877 and the close of his memoirs in 1891, it is clear that various degrees of relative were to be found in the household for at least two thirds of this chronological period. The fact that the Spackman family was ostensibly nuclear in the 1881 and 1891 censuses thus does little justice to the fluidity of the family form and the intricate complexity of which it was capable, much as Iain Riddell finds for the Cardno and Fraser families in rural Aberdeenshire at the same date. In Spackman's own words 'we were never short of family'.[42]

A second striking regularity in the memorials is the theme of *circulation*, which is also central to Cara Dobbing's chapter for this volume, and particularly circulation of and by women and the relatives of the poorer sorts. Historiographical perspectives on the development of urban areas in the first part of the nineteenth century (before self-sustaining natural growth) and the flight from the countryside in its latter stages, have led us to underplay the extent to which two other forms of movement—circular on the one hand and in-migration on the other—continued to colour the demographic experiences of rural communities.

In lowland Lincolnshire, Cambridgeshire, borderland Herefordshire, Devon and even some midland counties such as Northamptonshire it has become abundantly clear that a period of circular migration continued to figure in the lives of the majority of those who left their home communities.[43] And while it is true that some nineteenth century rural areas saw the rapid ageing of populations and the crumbling of kinship dynasties, for other places in-migration had a sustaining effect. The Devon memorialist Jonathan Hill (writing in 1849) moved from the subject of the longevity of traditional leisure pursuits such as cock-fighting to that of family, noting that:

> If your author moves from this subject to the question of family, then he must point out to his readers that nothing stood still, whether that be of the poorer classes or the better sorts. Circulations by relatives – but none of them of lifelong duration – were normal in these parts as your author understands for other places too. Nephews, nieces, grandchildren, brothers, sisters, the whole world of relations would come to stay or outstay their welcome and room were always having to be found for the wandering.[44]

Our memorialists made a clear distinction between returners, who could often claim lifelong co- or proximate residence, and those in circulation, for whom family support might extend to some years but was never *expected* to endure. This distinction is given real clarity by the Hampshire memorialist Methelerym Blake. She wrote memoirs of her time around Lyndhurst between 1872 and the early 1880s, privately publishing a text by subscription in 1888. Reflecting on the way that a distinctive Welsh identity and language was maintained by migrants to the county, she described a conveyor belt of moving family members from South Wales to mining, smelting and foresting communities near her. While acknowledging that 'our Welsh community had particular character' Blake suggested that:

> your author cannot help but note the way in which it was normal even for the English to take in their relatives or inmates as they are known in these parts. When I was a girl first moved here from Wales I was struck by the closeness of these families, not unwelcoming but good stock and all with a nephew or niece or some other family member in the attic or sheds, all staying for a time and then moving on. I am reliably informed this was the practice of generations and we all fell into it of course, even the Welsh.[45]

These themes are given vivid colour in Thomas Geering's recollection of Hailsham and other Sussex communities. Geering gives us an ideal-typical model of family shape and structure. Talking of 'striking innovations' in domestic interiors, he noted: 'The sofa or couch is the result of the latest effort at fashion and indulgence. You rarely now enter a decent cottage without seeing this representative of ease and luxury'.[46] Populating this space one might see:

> The youngest of the family, the last one at home, stretches his limbs upon it on a winter's evening as the mother sits darning, and the young daughter is crocheting or knitting by the light of the oil lamp; and the father, scanning the "People's Edition" for the latest news, lifts his glasses to look at the old clock standing against the wall opposite, and warns the household that it is time for bed.[47]

Yet, the infrequency with which this model was realised in the rest of Geering's text is striking. His own grandmother, whose cottage 'was to me a paradise', accommodated her brother-in-law, the basket maker 'Master Levett' in an outhouse once he returned to Hailsham.[48] The 'Naylors and Hares, though all dead or gone from the parish' at the time Geering wrote had filled 'the neighbourhood with their inspirations', by which he meant complex marital, spiritual and familial arrangements.[49] When passing through the grave yard, Geering was 'touched as I pass the last resting-place of the widow Slye'. Buried with her and all coming back to Hailsham having lived away, so as to live episodically together in life, were 'her five maiden daughters, the maiden sister, and Aunt Marthana, and the blind bachelor son'.[50] In death they were 'mingling together in their common dust, waiting the last trumpet call'.[51] Further into the churchyard Geering found 'the tomb of two other bachelor brothers, Mathias and Pearson, the first named decidedly the eccentric man of the parish' periodically returning from London 'addle headed' in order to live with his brother.[52] Geering also recounted at length the story of Hailsham's local witch who 'was small, and in her gait stooping, and, like all other witches I have ever heard of or read about, she was poor'. Living in the requisite tumbledown cottage, the witch was co-resident at the end of her life with a married daughter and her husband who had moved back to the community specifically to look after her.[53] The village Beadle lived with his wife in a cottage, which they subdivided to provide a home for a episodically

present son who, by the time Geering wrote, 'reared a large family of boys and girls, the husband, wife, and children, cocks and hens, all sheltering beneath the same roof'.[54] Geering also turned his eye to 'our old-fashioned maiden druggist' Nancy Gearing. Having left the village she came back to take over the druggist shop for her mother 'a little dark-eyed, precise, shrivelled-up old dame'. And although she never married, she did take in a 'celebrated lodger' with a 'manly presence, and his kind, gentlemanly demeanour' while living three years in this situation.[55] Other examples of circular and in-migration, and consequent complex family forms, could be mined from Geering's text, but read as one canvas these sources suggest clearly that there was an expectation of such complexity, particularly, as these examples begin to suggest, for female headed households.

Perhaps most notable of all, however, is the way in which ordinary households were made complex and then less so by the arrival and removal of kin and fictive kin on briefer *sojourns*, an experience that has a surprisingly fleeting presence in the historiography of the nineteenth-century. This aspect of life, also visited by Iain Riddell in this volume, had many sides: our memorialists show that children might circulate around friends, neighbours and relatives; former apprentices might return to the neighbourhood and board temporarily; cousins, in-laws, grandchildren and others might visit and leave; neighbours would be accommodated and grandchildren would lodge with grandparents during sickness; friends would arrive and stay; fiancé's would leave and come back; and those involved in contractual relationships with a household member—as a supplier, an employee or a beneficiary—might linger for weeks and months. The memorials are replete with individual and collective examples of such fluidity, with a latent sense of the ubiquity of this experience for poor households. Mary Wigges of Chichester wrote her memorial of the town in 1905. Reflecting on its culture she noted:

> It was normal for people to come and stay for weeks or months – it was how young loves were made between cousins and the railways and roads and then buses just made it so much easier for people to come and just stay. This was no mean distance. I was told of the Scotch family, Kilkardent, who are still a pillar of the community but that were never short of inmates as they called them. My own childhood was peppered with stays of short duration but it fostered some life-long friendships with people otherwise too far away.[56]

At the other end of our period, James Howden noted of villages around Trowbridge (Wiltshire) when he was a boy in 1831: 'Our house was much like the rest and I often found myself sharing a bed with cousins or nephews who came to stay a month on end'.[57]

Nowhere do we find a better expression of the essential fluidity of life in the ordinary family than in the memoirs and memorials of Frederick Grover, a late-nineteenth-century labourer from Surrey, and his wife Lucy, as recorded by his employer George Sturt.[58] By the time that Sturt was drawing his memorials to a close in the early twentieth century, Grover was living with just his aged and sick wife, moving between cottages in an attempt to reduce spending on rents and in the face of competition for housing from incomers to Bourne (near Farnham, Hampshire). Even at this late date, the structural form of Grover's household oscillated between co-residence of the couple and singleton, as Lucy Grover moved in and out of hospital or asylums because of a deterioration in her lifelong condition of epilepsy. Cara Dobbing similarly traces circulation of the broad category of the insane (of which epileptics were often part) in her chapter for this volume. By 1905, Grover's own family had died out but his in-laws remained well represented in the town even if he had little regard for them. And he had plenty of fictive kin who would episodically take him in or come and co-reside with him. There were, Sturt recorded in mimicking Grover's own voice 'those who are willing to find the old man a home if anything should happen to the old gal. 'Tis a sort o' comfortin', he says 'to think what good neighbours I got'.[59] At Lucy Grover's funeral in October 1904 'a young woman (Mrs Porter) with her little boy Tim stood in the background, she carrying a wreath she had made'. Sturt went on to explain that:

> She is a near neighbour to us, and a very impoverished one, to whom the old man [Grover] has shown what kindness has been in his power; while she on many mornings has called him into her cottage at breakfast time, to give him a cup of hot tea.[60]

This system of neighbourly support is familiar from the wider historiographical construction of old age in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, even if the promise of friends and neighbours to take the aged and poor Frederick Grover into their households is a less recounted landmark.[61]

Looking back across the Grover's household history from the vantage point of the grave reveals a rich history of actual, offered and feared co-residence of relatives, friends and employees which is done no justice

at all by census records for Bourne. Nephews, nieces, cousins, brothers, sisters, in-laws, former occupational colleagues, fellow workers, lodgers (who were often distant relations) came and went. For most of their lives the Grover's were enmeshed in a rich additional network of local kinship, even if the resulting personal relationships were often less than harmonious. Nor were the family arrangements of their neighbours any less fluid. The Sturt memorials are replete with unintended information about grandchildren residing with grandparents and acting as rent collectors, sick (or pregnant) servants and apprentices seeking sanctuary in the homes of kin who were not their parents, visiting cousins and nephews who never went away, cousins following cousins who had come to Bourne and young people taking their own parents or brothers and sisters as boarders into homes where they had lived independently. Relatives might also arrive to provide nursing support at times of sickness, much as Carol Beardmore finds in the case of Edward Wrench in her chapter for this volume. Above all, the Sturt memorials point to myriad layers of casual (but often repeated) and very short term co-residence like that experienced by Frederick Grover himself. Thus, talking of 'my old brother-in-law Snip', Grover noted that he was a travelling salesman working across the southwest of England. When trade was light or once the summer and autumn fairs were done, Snip would arrive at Bourne to over-winter. He would appear almost every year and either live with Grover or sleep in his van in the garden and share a table.[62] Similarly, the Grover's nephew Jack, variously errant and dependable, appears to have been co-resident for periods from a couple of weeks to several months at least seven times during the course of the period covered by Sturt's memorial. Sometimes even the dead would come to visit; Sturt relates a story in which 'people, I have been told, never lock their doors at night for fear of locking out the spirits of relatives drowned at sea'![63]

Beyond the Memorial

Frederick Grover was not, as we have seen, alone in his experiences of short-term fluidity in family size and form and in the porosity of its boundaries. Indeed, as I have argued in relation to the dependent poor, such fluidity was a core motif of family life for those struggling to avoid the Poor Law and a powerful source of rhetoric in the letters they wrote to convey their claims. Poor Law authorities actively sought partnership between the parish and kin, neighbours and fictive kin as they tried to balance their potentially conflicting duties to both ratepayers and the

poor.[64] In their turn, families also sought partnership, as did Andrew Chubb, writing from Winchester to the overseers of the Hampshire parish of Winton on 17 December 1827. Noting that 'Peculiar circumstances have prevented my earlier reply to Mr Hawkins's letter', Chubb professed himself:

> surprised at my daughter in laws application to the Parish, after what passed between us when she was here. I should, indeed, be very sorry the poor children should be abandoned to the Privation and misery but too often the inmates of a poor house, and the probably contamination of their morals; but at the same time my own circumstances do not allow me to take upon myself so considerable a burthen as the maintenance and bringing up of two children so young, in addition to those I have now with me. If however, you should be disposed to make a moderate allowance for their maintenance I would take one of them, and a son of mine, who is married & Settled here as a baker, would take the other, and bring them up without further trouble to you.[65]

Winton parish duly paid an allowance of 2s per week for each child and two distant households were simultaneously made complex or more complex by taking in fugitive nephews and nieces.

Examples such as that of Andrew Chubb clearly reinforce the sense from the work of our memorialists that short-term residential complexity was the expected, even normative, position. Indeed, we can extend the analysis of pauper letters further to suggest that more generally fluidity and complexity was the order of the day for the poorest spectrum of ordinary families. When Thomas Whillier, vestry clerk to Portsea parish (Hampshire) wrote to his counterpart Charles Lucas, Overseer of St Peter's Cheesehill parish (Winchester) on 24 March 1823, he did so to 'acknowledge the receipt of £9 advanced by us to J[ohn] Taylor'. Unfortunately Taylor's position had not improved and Whillier:

> must beg to call your attention to the very distressed state they are now in. Taylor is above 80 years of age, his wife is above 70, and a Blind daughter above 30. – the old man a short time since was suddenly seized, as to render it impossible to get him up stairs a Medical gentlemen D^{r}. Cooper was called in, and he is recovered partially from that attach, and the Surgeon has ordered nourishing food, which has in a manner been scantily applied by the hand of charity, and the old woman who has been the staff of the

> family of late; is so palsied by her overexertion of work as to render her imployment very precarious, as she only get employed by [a few] persons who she has worked for (some of above 25 years) and they employ her more for the respect they as for her and her extreme poverty, than for the work she can perform, I should think that the old Man cannot survive long, and I think that it is impossible for them to struggle on without a further assistance.[66]

The blind daughter sits in the background of the story of need recounted by the advocate, but the fact that she was thirty and still at home points to the prospect of lifetime co-residence of the sort which is masked by simple reference to the nuclear family form. More widely, this theme of long-term co-residence of children with mental and physical impairment is one that runs through the extant pauper letter corpus.[67] The analogue of this observation, as Cara Dobbing shows, is the movement of those with mental impairments in and out of the nineteenth-century asylum.

Another insistent theme in this material is siblings attending to each other. Mark Eminton wrote from an unnamed parish to the overseers of Lyndhurst (Hampshire) on 8 October 1828 in the case of Elizabeth Reeves. She being ill, an application had been made to Eminton for 'parochial assistance she having nothing to support herself of which she now is become chargeable to this parish (she has got a Brother at whose house she now is but he is a pauper of ours and Very often on Relief from us) therefore cannot support her) [sic] she seems to wish to spend her days in this neighbourhood if you Gentlemen think it proper of allowing her support to Remain here … The case you are not strange to as she has been often Relived by you'.[68] The importance of relationships between siblings for a proper understanding of family life has recently gained considerable historiographical traction and we have seen it as a consistent theme for this volume through chapters by Geoff Monks, Kim Price, Iain Riddell and Maria Cannon. Yet rarely do we see co-residence so clearly played out as a support package as in the letters of the dependent and marginal poor.[69] In common with the perspectives offered by our memorialists, the co-residence (short- and long-term) of grandchildren with grandparents is also a substantial theme in these letters. Robert Thorne of Great Marlow (Buckinghamshire) wrote to the overseers of St Clement Danes (London) on 19 July 1809 in the following terms:

> I received your letter offering to allow my Grandson William Dudley 1s. 6d. per week – I am sorry to say he can not be maintained for that sum – I hope you will be pleased to take the circumstances into consideration, and allow him some thing more – his Father in Law, has two other small children to keep or I should not make this application – And in case you think proper to make him a greater allowance – I will do every thing in my power to prevent his being any expence to your Parish longer than is absolutely necessary – I will undertake to teach him my trade that of a Shoe Maker – I will send him to School and I hope put him in that way of life – that he will not be chargeable your parish [sic] in future – I am sorry to be under the necessity of saying that if you should refuse to allow him any more, – he must be sent home to your parish without delay.

The case was duly laid before the vestry on the same day 'who have agreed to allow 2/per week towards the maintenance of Wm. Dudley, till further arrangements'.[70] John Hennis, writing from Welham (Surrey) to St Clement Danes on Friday 4 March 1814 provides even more detail on the nature of grandparent-grandchild co-residence conveying an urgent letter to the governor of the workhouse and a:

> request you will have the goodness to read the subject of this Letter to the gentlemen overseers to them my unalterable gratitude by me will be rememberd for their humane goodness to the little infant girl Mary Goold my grandawter, in receiving her at a time that she strayed from me at a time that my tenderest care was directed to her – her disposition is good – she is very Inocent – at a day I was from home – she Burned as much wood as I gave three pence for without having a want of fire – as there was a coal fire – when I perceived it on my return – I slapt her – and put her out In the lobby telling her that Bougey would come there to her it might be about six oclock in the Evening in a few minutes after I cal her receiving no answer I opened my room door and supposing she might have occasion to go do let me to try – on my enquirin in the house if the had seen her I was answered No believe me the affliction it gave me it is Impossible to describe – she was not In the habbit of going of a messuage so that she did not know where to return once she got out of the house I never once supposed she might be in ye Workhouse so that my suspence was melancholy. some days after I cald. there to inform Mr. Crawford of the mysterious manner I had [?] Mary When the Porter Informed me she was In the house the happiness it gave me will ever keep my gratitude [remembered] as desperate fires often proceed from a little begining I thought it my Duty to make it a great Crime to her I was informed she said I turned

> out which maid me displeased with her on the Tuesday after she disapierd to me she would have got to the Female orfant school – I signifiyed to the Lady that she was ill with the Measels – her Presentation was given a way since but by the Interest of her I hope I may say I have a Certainty of getting her In shortly – the motive of this Letter is to Say that I will be much obliged to the gentlemen to give an order for her to come out on Sunday next and I trust in Providence – that she will never trouble them a gain – and I will Impress on her mind the gratitude she is bound to return to the Workhouse of St. Clement Deans.[71]

This intricate case suggests the deep emotional investment that families might make in co-residing relatives and speaks to an increasing realisation of the fluid residential arrangements for young grandchildren in nineteenth century England.[72]

Conclusion

Our memorialists do not offer the same vivid colour as paupers and their advocates to the household and family arrangements that they describe. They do, however, convey the same broad message and sentiment: that the employment of census data allied with conventional understandings of the nuclear family form do little justice to the extraordinary family processes created and experienced by ordinary families in nineteenth-century England. Recent contributions to the historiography which have focussed on the porosity of household and family boundaries, structural fluidity and fictive kinship (and which are tested and applied throughout this volume) are clearly bolstered by the perspectives and patterns to be drawn from memorials on the one hand and pauper letters on the other. The fluidity of female headed and poor households and the frequency with which women and girls circulated or sojourned through the families of relatives is particularly striking. Yet these new sources also take us further, suggesting that fluidity was not just possible, even common, but that it was expected and anticipated. Movement, and in particular the sojourn, was ubiquitous. This must have changed the meaning of the concept and language of 'family' for ordinary people, just as would the presence and possibility of fictive kin. For Frederick Grover, other memorialists and pauper letters writers, family was not just a locus and process, but also an unfolding story. This story might have fixed points—Grover's brother came to stay at fixed times of the year for

instance—but for most of the time it developed in uncontrolled fashion, layer-upon-layer. Sometimes it had to be crystallised, as for instance when a person fell into poverty and had to negotiate with the Poor Law through the story of families, friends and relatives. The glorious colour of family relations is often laid bare in such correspondence. Our memorialists, looking back over their own lives and those of others, provide a wider canvas for the rural communities and small towns that are the focus of this chapter. On this canvas, and with varying degrees of consciousness, they etch snippets of thousands of life stories, the central lessons of which are that the prospect of fluidity, circulation and sojourning shaped the very emotional and material architecture of ordinary families.

Notes

1. For the classic exposition see P. Laslett (1988) 'Family, Kinship and Collectivity as Systems of Support in Pre-industrial Europe: A Consideration of the "Nuclear-Hardship" Hypothesis', *Continuity and Change*, 3:2, pp. 167–169.
2. P. Laslett (1977) *Family Life and Illicit Love in Earlier Generations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press); M. Anderson (2009) 'How Different Were Lancashire Families in the Victorian Period? Some Reflections on Another 40 Years of Research', in A. Gritt (ed.) *Family History in Lancashire: Issues and Approaches* (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Press), pp. 43–80; E. Garrett, A. Reid, K. Schürer, and S. Szreter (2001) *Changing Family Size in England and Wales: Class and Demography in England and Wales, 1891–1911* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press). On European context see D. Kertzer and M. Barbagli (2002) (eds.) *Family Life in the Long Nineteenth Century 1789–1913* (New Haven: Yale University Press).
3. R. Wall (1978) 'The Age of Leaving Home', *Journal of Family History*, 3, pp. 181–202; K. Schürer (2003) 'Leaving Home in England and Wales 1850–1920', in F. van Poppel (ed.) *The Road to Independence: Leaving Home in Western and Eastern Societies 16th to 20th Centuries* (Bern: Peter Lang), pp. 33–84; R. Wall (1997) 'Leaving Home: The Experience of Migration from the Parental Home in Britain Since c.1770', *Journal of Family History*, 22:4, pp. 390–424; and J. Humphries (2011) *Childhood and Child Labour in the British Industrial Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).
4. See R. M. Smith (1985) 'Transfer Incomes, Risk and Security: The Roles of the Family and the Collectivity in Recent Theories of Fertility Change', in D. Coleman and R. Schofield (eds.) *The State of Population*

Theory: Forward from Malthus (London: Routledge), pp. 197–199; P. Thane (1996) 'Old People and Their Families in the English Past', in M. Daunton (ed.) *Charity, Self-Interest and Welfare in the English Past* (London: UCL Press), pp. 113–138; and D. Thomson (1984) '"I Am Not My Father's Keeper": Families and the Elderly in Nineteenth Century England', *Law and History Review*, 2:2, pp. 265–286.

5. R. Probert (2014) 'Introduction', in R. Probert (ed.) *Cohabitation and Non-marital Births in England and Wales, 1600–2012* (Basingstoke: Palgrave), p. 4.
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