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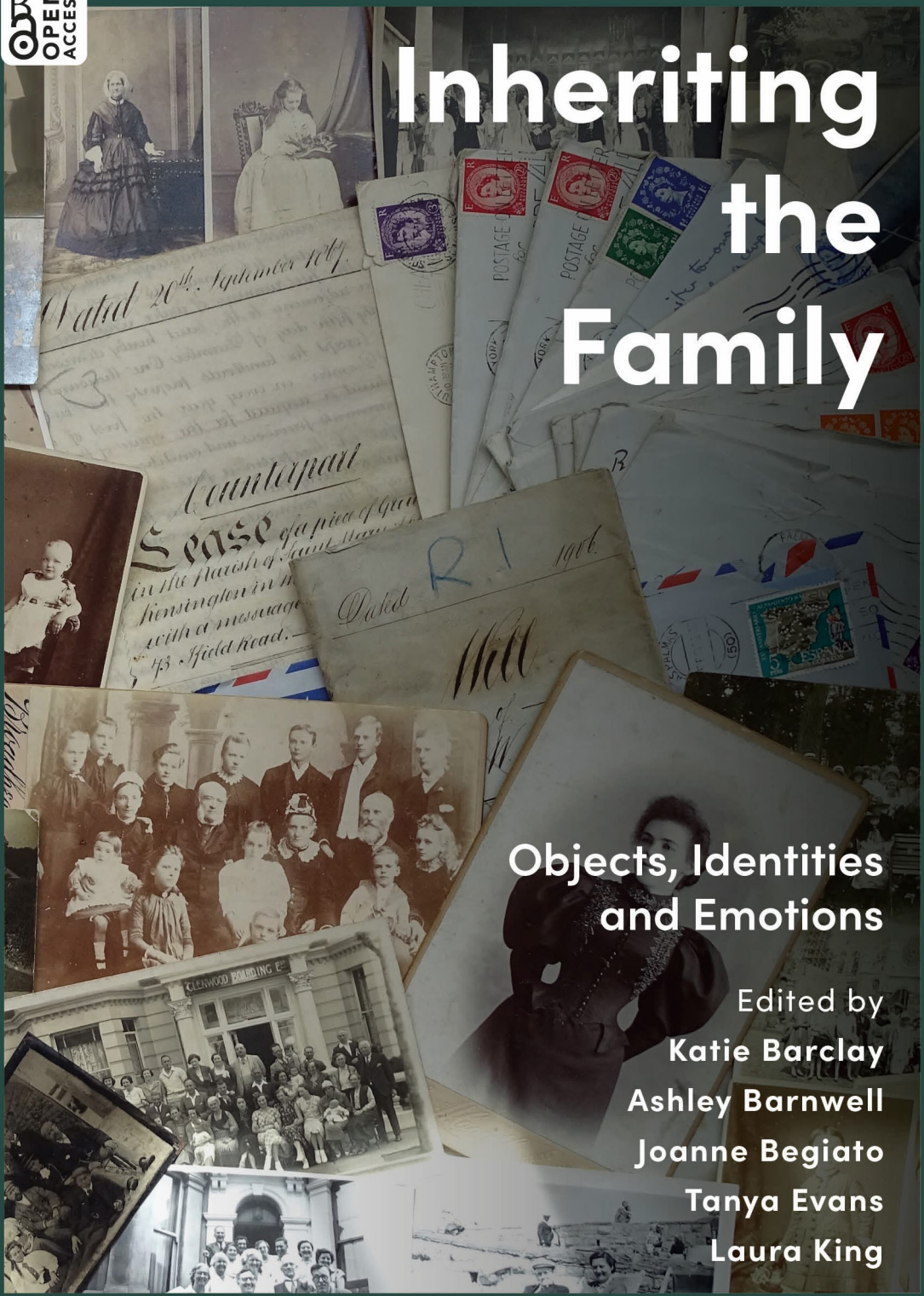
Inheriting the Family



Objects, Identities and Emotions

Edited by
Katie Barclay
Ashley Barnwell
Joanne Begiato
Tanya Evans
Laura King

NEW DIRECTIONS IN SOCIAL AND CULTURAL HISTORY

BLOOMSBURY

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1

Inheriting the Family

Objects, Identities and Emotions

Katie Barclay, Ashley Barnwell, Joanne Begiato,
Tanya Evans, and Laura King

Families are the space in which we first learn about the past and about history. Likewise, knowledge of our families' pasts provides a key ingredient in creating a sense of identity over time and over generations. In this book, we bring together all kinds of historians – those working in academia, those working in other professions, and those researching their own families. Many of our authors span more than one of these categories. The book collectively considers the question of how a sense of family is inherited materially, through the objects passed between relatives, and indeed what happens when those objects are lost or destroyed. We consider the moments of inheritance and exchange, and what the materiality of inheritance does in emotional terms. We think through the nature of objects and their ability to connect the living and the dead and to provide a sense of immediate connection between individuals and moments in a family's life that are in fact many years apart. And we bring that together with the object's capacity to both act as a container for emotions and to trigger emotions in those who encounter them.[1]

This book, then, sits within an emerging interdisciplinary scholarship on the family as a mnemonic community, one that enables remembrance and the transmission of history.[2] *Inheriting the Family* contributes to this conversation in two ways: first, by focusing on the material nature of how histories are passed between relatives and, second, by introducing a wider range of voices into the discussion, including family historians themselves. There has been a welcome blurring of the distinction between academic and family historians in the tide of recent publications that use both methodological approaches to studying the past. Family historians are turning to academic research degrees to further their genealogical work, and established academic historians are looking into their own families for different kinds of answers about the very mechanisms of history, of how the past is constructed and shared in the intimate worlds of family life.[3] This volume provides space for this range of voices through a variety of written responses to this topic, combining shorter object histories and personal reflections, which provide insights into the motivations and meanings

of inheritance for family historians, with academic contributions that situate familial inheritance within larger methodological, theoretical, and historical conversations. The variety of writing forms not only provides space for the representation of the diversity of researchers contributing to the field of family history but also engages with key questions of how scholarship should be presented. The adoption of family stories into professional histories, as well as dedicated space to family history in top journals such as *History Workshop Journal*, has played a key role in pushing the boundaries of what academic scholarship should look like. In providing space for different voices and forms of writing, this volume also asks *whose* research matters for history and what different forms of research enable. This approach also requires us to take a capacious view of 'family', recognizing its multiple forms and extensions beyond biological connection. In doing so, we acknowledge the valuable work and contributions made by historical researchers, amateur and professional, to shaping how the past is constructed and transmitted over time, and to how we understand that process.

If we are to reckon with how families construct and use their own histories, we have to think not just about those objects that get passed on, or don't, but their material nature. Some scholars have started to do so; work on family photos is some of the most sophisticated in its analysis of the medium of transmission as well as the message, of the unpicking of captions scribbled on the back of photos, or the arrangement of snapshots in a scrapbook, as well as what is held within the images themselves.[4] As we tell the stories of families in the past, and think through how important that space is for the making of our historical consciousness, we must also turn to thinking about how the past is materialized. As Stéphane Gerson suggests, in a recent review of academic historians writing about their own kin, further developing research that combines academic and family history methods means 'tracing the workings of power' within those families.[5] In *Inheriting the Family*, we hope to provide some of the thinking that might make such tracings more possible, by drawing out the ways in which objects can solidify or undo emotional ties, include or exclude, and how dynamics of class, race, gender and so much more can be found within the ways in which families inherit and pass on their pasts.

This volume brings together twenty-three contributions, organized across the themes of materializing history; embodying inheritance; temporal connections and re-producing national stories – although many chapters speak to ideas in more than one area. Materializing history draws attention to the ways that inherited objects and their uses provide an access point to the past, and how our affective engagements and investments in such materials enable history to take material form. If history can materialize, it can also be embodied, a topic especially resonant for families where DNA and physical resemblance offer a reincarnation of the past. Section 2 considers bodily objects as inheritances, and the ways that memory practices take embodied form, tying histories of emotion to those of senses and experience. Section 3 extends this conversation, recognizing the temporal dimension of inheritance, and the capacity of objects to extend connections across generations. Here objects not only bring together past and present, but enable future imaginaries of family and of history. A final section steps back from the family to acknowledge how family objects move into the public domain and become implicated in the production and transmission of

national stories. Here we highlight one of the reasons that familial emotions are critical to history-making: it is the emotions and investments of families that provide us with the sources and stories of national identity. Across this volume, authors consider the role of emotion in shaping what is inherited and how such inheritances tie us to pasts and futures.

Materializing history

Many of the sources that historians use to interpret the past began their life within families. Whether that is the family papers, often filed in record offices as 'estate papers', of the great and the good, which provide insights into everything from social structure and political formation to familial intimacies and childhood fantasies; the monumental art that hangs in galleries, often work that originated life as decoration for a family home; or indeed the houses themselves, that now form part of our 'national heritage', much of the past is accessed by historians through surviving material artefacts transmitted across generations. If once historians restrained themselves to those goods that contained writings, the letters, account books, diaries and so forth that provide written evidence of the past, more recently the methodologies provided by the 'material turn' have opened up new ways of 'reading' or constructing history from objects. Goods and objects are now recognized for deepening our understandings of systems of production, trade, economics, cultural exchange, technology, taste, fashion, as well as ritual, domestic and work practices, relationships, and emotion.[6] So too, more humble, everyday objects are valued for their historical insight and emotional valences, giving form particularly to those lives that may not feature so prominently in written records and to families that have not otherwise accumulated records or 'heirlooms' to pass on. This volume turns to inherited objects, taking seriously how the transmission of goods across generations shapes their functions and meaning, and how attending to emotion helps us better understand processes of inheritance and their implications for history-making.

Objects can be understood to 'materialize' the past, or perhaps history, by which we mean they can act as anchor points within networks of time and memory. The histories of an object's making, use, and associations – who made it, kept it, passed it down to a next generation – can be understood to infuse an object, giving it meanings that are transmitted with it. Within the context of a discussion of ritual objects, those used in religious or cultural ceremonies, such an infusion of meaning has sometimes been described as an object's 'magic' – wherein a particular object, because of how it is valued by people, can play important social and cultural functions, such as giving access to the divine, healing the sick, or acting as a talisman.[7] Contemporary cultural theorists sometimes refer to these qualities, as well as those exerted by an object's physical presence, as its 'agency'.[8] Objects have 'agency', because they are identified as holding, or being allocated, qualities that shape how people respond or use them; objects have 'potential' that can be deployed when used by the right people with knowledge of the object. Sara Ahmed suggests that objects become 'sticky', accumulating new meanings that overlap with older meanings, and which give semantic 'depth' to an object.[9]

This in turn gives such objects greater cultural importance. John Guillory makes the distinction between 'monuments' that hold particular cultural relevance and impact at particular moments and 'documents', the many other objects that litter our lives.[10] Importantly, documents can become monuments as our attention evolves and we recognize the value of a previously unimportant object.

Because objects carry these meanings with them, they play an important role in transmitting ideas and relationships over time and particularly across generations. Inherited objects, passed within a family, therefore can be viewed as capturing something of an earlier generation – perhaps identity, values, aspirations or something else – and holding it for a future generation to access. What it is that is transmitted across time – the 'magic' of an object – has been notoriously hard to name or define. Thinking about this through a lens of emotion has provided new insights into this process. Some have considered such inheritances as 'emotional objects', where an object comes to stand in place of, or to embody, an emotion. The emotion here might be that transmitted between a giver and recipient – the love of a mother for a child embodied by a handsewn toy – or it might be an investment in the larger concept of family and the importance of lineage to identity.[11] When we consider objects as 'anchors', we can also consider how different material experiences give shape and structure to our emotional lives – the wedding certificate that gives legal weight to and so helps us feel secure in our partnership – and so consider objects as part of wider emotional practices, like love or marriage.[12] Emotions attach to objects and help produce particular feelings in those that use or respond to such objects, and feeling is not just ephemeral – the fancy of a moment or an individual. Rather, emotions 'stick' to objects and become part of an object's potential.

The chapters in this volume highlight the ways that exploring inherited objects as emotional enables new insights into how familial inheritances help materialize the past. A recurring theme within this volume, and seen here in the rich accounts of their inherited objects by Sue Child and Janet Coles, is that family objects often act as 'triggers' for family historical research. Both Child and Coles were gifted objects that signalled histories of family members about whom they knew little; family histories here contextualized the life of the objects that they inherited, imbuing them with further meaning, and opened up intergenerational engagements, perhaps relationships, with deceased ancestors. Notably both authors, like those later in the volume, situate themselves as the custodians of their family inheritance; they feel pride for the women whose stories they keep, and recognize their important role as the keepers and transmitters of their memory to later generations. These objects promoted intergenerational emotion through their materialization of past lives and in their facility to further such stories into the future.

The capacity of inherited objects to materialize relationships also emerges in chapters by Deborah McGuire, Imogen Peck, Lucy Brownson and Hannah Upton. If for Coles and Child, inherited objects enabled a connection with a distant ancestor, the inherited objects discussed in these chapters provided space for multiple generations of family to work together to produce family identity, memory, and feeling. Peck, in her discussion of family account books, and Upton in her exploration of an early modern family Bible, both highlight the potential for books to convey messages across

generations, enabling familiarity and connection over time. In Upton's case, a family Bible provided a space for different generations to record messages for a younger generation, or to respond to comments by an ancestor. Later generations did not add to the marginalia, but nonetheless valued this item for its traces of familial hands. Peck shows a similar tendency within account books – here the accounts of a first generation were often redeployed for other family storytelling purposes by later generations, but the surviving books acted to cohere messages in a single volume and so to produce a space for intergenerational connection.

A similar practice can be seen in Brownson's exploration of the Chatsworth handbook and McGuire's discussion of quilt-making. The Chatworth handbook, as Brownson highlights, offered a 'personal tour' of Chatsworth house. First produced by the sixth Duke of Devonshire, the text was subsequently extended and edited by multiple later generations, acting as an intergenerational creative conversation and commitment to preserving Chatsworth as a site of significant cultural memory. Through their cross-generational inter-textual conversation, the Devonshire family ensured the transmission of a particular form of familial identity, rooted in place but also artistic practice and the upholding of class and high culture as a form of status. McGuire brings to light a similar practice at a very different social level, exploring quilt-making that often involved multiple women within a family, and potentially repurposed cloth from within the family. Quilts were then gifted within families and across generations. As with Chatsworth House for the Devonshires, part of the value of quilts for the family was not just a beautiful piece of art to be inherited, but the ways that handmade textiles supported a haptic connection with the past.

Across all of these chapters, the value and connection produced by inherited objects rest not just in their shared ownership, but because they are also sites of family-making, literally drawing together different hands and transmitting them into new ones for their care and survival. The emotions of inherited objects arose here from the emotion work done by past generations to sustain their values, faith and bodily needs, and to embed such identity work in a physical object for transmission over time. Inherited objects, then, can be considered as starting points for family histories but also as family practices, evidence of past people and their lives, and as opportunities to transmit family identity to a new generation. As 'emotional objects', family inheritances support particular imaginaries of family across generations, and convey the relationships built on it as a form of emotional obligation and attachment. The holder of the inherited object becomes not an end point but its custodian, transmitting stories, identities and affection, and materializing a past that includes their family, sometimes against expectations or the normative structures that occlude some families from view.

Embodying inheritance

Family inheritance is not only conveyed through material objects, passed on to descendants, or compiled from bureaucratic documents by family members to tell the story of their family through time. As this section shows, inheritances are also bound up with bodies. They can be rooted in family resemblances, observed where relatives are

still living or sought out through inherited photographs, or via ancestry DNA testing.[13] They also include bodily phenomena including hair, teeth, clothing or intimate objects used on the body, like lipstick or bodily senses where family members are recalled through smell, taste, images, touch or sounds. There is an expanding scholarship on the importance of examining the embodied and sensory qualities of a range of phenomena, to explain their power, dissemination and their longevity.[14] They are particularly redolent where family inheritance is concerned, since bodily things evoke the physicality and personhood of an individual. A lover can caress their partner's hair after their death, a parent can touch their baby's hair even when they are now adults; people can hear the sound of cake being mixed, or smell home-baked scones to remember a mother or grandmother and use this to tell their stories to another generation. Scholars have recognized that bodies are often emotionalized and that senses are intrinsically bound up with strong emotions that trigger and fix memories.[15] As such, embodied and sensory inheritances can convey much that is significant to family identities and self-presentation. Bodies and their senses become emotionalized 'things', which encourage and help the transmission of memories, stories and feelings across generations.

Leanne Calvert and Joanne Begiato's chapters in this volume show how human hair (and the non-human hair of pets, now recognized as fictive kin) is one such emotionalized body 'part', an object that conveys individual attributes, often through associated stories, to family members. Before the twentieth century, this was done through hair jewellery, manufactured to console the living since it preserved the hair of a deceased loved one in a form that could be worn on the body. These repositories, as both Calvert and Begiato show, were familial in that they often twined the hair of several family members, not just lovers. Both also show that hairy objects can be used to project family stories into the future when a story can be attached to the hair jewellery. The locket that Begiato investigates, for example, was passed on by Lady Marion Bell to her nephew in such a way that it carried the story of romantic and familial love, and commemorated her husband's professional and national significance.

The power of smell to convey family stories lies at the heart of Kate Wvendth's contribution to the volume. While a number of scholars from several disciplines have shown that certain smells evoke nostalgia, often for one's childhood, or parents and close relatives, Wvendth writes from the position of acquiring an object whose aroma has helped her understand and, therefore, communicate the story of her ancestor.[16] For her, the ladies' dressing case's perfume evoked its owner, her step-great-great-grandmother and manifested her powerful personality and status. It was this intimate sensory experience that provoked Wvendth to research this family member. In this instance smell did not trigger an involuntary emotional memory, but was an agent in eliciting feelings of an intimate connection that began a journey to creating a story of familial inheritance.

It is often the embodied or sensory qualities of family inheritances that shape whether they are tangible or intangible in nature. Stories are more easily curated around tangible family archives and objects, which showcase particular family members, or their ties to local or national historical events, or follow a life-course rationale. Embodied and sensory inheritances can be more intangible, despite the

physicality of some of them, because they do not tell a family story in quite so obvious a way as an object or a textual document. A loved one's hair, an infant's baby teeth, a piece of clothing shaped by or smelling of a particular individual has the most meaning for the person who knew them most closely. They do not mark events or historical moments that possess similar meaning for many people across generations, such as toys, military medals, a sporting trophy or an ornament or valued piece of furniture. Instead bodily and sensory inheritances are washed up by historical tides, flotsam that is undateable, unknowable without a family story and vulnerable, therefore, to destruction. Once removed from the loved one's body, and after the connecting family member themselves died, the inheritance can become bodily detritus, more likely to cause disgust than to stir memories or materialize love.

This might not mean that embodied and sensory inheritances are entirely lost, if we are attuned to their resonances and open to the immateriality of family inheritance. Ashley Barnwell's chapter in this section illuminates the ways in which descendants can 'feel' inheritances in ways that are immaterial but profound. In her work on family secrets with Australian family historians, there emerged side-stories of intangible or difficult to articulate connections that were often brought into being by sensations. In one case, a daughter saw an embodied generational transfer through a mirroring of skin pigmentation in her father and her son. As Barnwell also notes, unexpected affinities often occurred in spaces which the researchers' ancestors had inhabited, where their physical self could be imagined, even 'felt', or their habits retraced by their descendant. These ways of 'knowing' had an uncanniness for the family historians, offering them emotional bonds with their ancestors and a sense of 'doing' family history that was akin to a haunting.

Scholars have become much more interested in the emotional and psychological tremors of the past and its reverberations into the present. Taking inspiration from the French philosopher, Jaques Derrida's coining of 'hauntology', and psychoanalysts' Nicolas Abraham and Maria Torok's work on haunting and transgenerational phantoms, literary and cultural studies scholars, anthropologists, and others, have traced the effects of the past (and the future) in the present.[17] For us, perhaps the most relevant finding is that such hauntings are often the results of collective trauma, sometimes undisclosed or discussed, which is conveyed across generations. Furthermore, family secrets haunt individual families and, therefore, subjectivities. As such, we can draw effectively on the concept of hauntology to interpret those family inheritances which unsettle, trouble and disturb, even when they are intangible or less knowable, and, perhaps, help those who inherit them to navigate them and their meaning.

Katie Barclay's chapter examines archives formed through therapeutic creative practice alongside a collaborative family book to argue that the archive becomes a form of family, either in the absence of family, or by standing in for a family whose ancestors would otherwise be lost, or less knowable. She proposes that the objects and practices of family archives are haunted by stories of their making and transmission. It is possible to trace material agency in such hauntings, since in family books the past persists in the present, and the familial stories attached evolve as different family members redeploy them, contributing to whether they are kept or discarded. As Shanaaz Hoosain and Vivienne Bozalek observe, hauntologies are 'where the past

is not left behind, but diffracted through the present moment and into the future'.[18] This hints at why some inherited objects are kept, others discarded: their stories must resonate with individuals to be retained.

It is frequently women who are central to these tangible and intangible stories, since they keep, curate and pass on family inheritances, especially those that hold no intrinsic financial value, nor mark out an ancestor as having taken part in a notable historical event, such as a famous battle, or world war. Studies show that female family members are tasked with managing the familial residue that has emotional, rather than financial, value.[19] Sarah O'Brien's chapter shows that it is often family history that provides the infrastructure of women's life-writings. The Irish women that O'Brien interviewed to inform her study of the lives of Irish immigrants in Britain understood their family stories to be as significant as 'public' stories. Indeed, her lyrical example of Mary Vaughan reveals a woman who tells her own story and her cultural inheritance, through her family's circumstances, typically the memories of bodily labour, smells, sights and sounds. Perhaps unsurprisingly, O'Brien formulated these ideas while her mother was baking scones, illustrating the embodied and sensory nature of telling family stories to the next generation, and their creative potential for history-making.

Throughout this section, chapters point to the ways that family objects and stories are mediated through the body, and where the value of an inheritance – tangible or intangible – takes form through its use by each generation. Inheritances manifest as body parts, as familial resemblances, through repetitive making-practices, such as stirring a pot or sewing, through the engagement of senses of smell, sight, taste, sound or touch, and where these traces of use and their transmission inhere to and become part of the value of an inheritance. Part of what haunts such objects, then, is that they bring with them past people, actions and events, and help make tangible the everyday and the transient.

Temporal connections

If inheritances are 'haunted' and so act to mediate our relationship with the past and the future, they become a critical resource through which we can explore our relationships over time. In this section of the book, we consider the capacities of emotional objects to connect relatives across generations, to disturb linear temporalities, and to render the past rewritable. The chapters add to a rich tradition of research into history, memory and the multidirectional dynamics of past-present-future.[20] They focus specifically on how family objects evoke emotions and, in doing so, protect, confound or reorder temporal logics – revealing new paths into and out of the past. Rethinking the directionality of time and centring connection with ancestors, such considerations also speak to critiques of progressive time, and a renewed interest in deep and cyclical temporalities.[21]

Emotional objects can be enlivened differently across time. The same family photograph or trinket can lay dormant, gathering dust for one generation, yet be cherished as a keepsake by the next.[22] A descendant might feel a connection with an ancestor based on a shared love of cooking. Becoming an emotional object, the

ancestor's recipe book is elevated as origin and evidence of an inherited passion. As suggested earlier, the tactility of such objects is also central; we can touch what has been touched by our ancestors. Thus family objects become a point of embodied contact across time and space, where emotions can converge.[23]

Inherited family materials therefore enliven time differently. They unsettle the assumed linearity of time, and highlight how emotions can redirect temporalities. As Magrit Pernau explains, 'the past and the future are not safely gone or yet to come, but haunt the present with their presence'.[24] Thus while family heirlooms can be read as anchors for time, a material constant that signifies the continuity of family, they are also open to happenstance and reimagining.[25] More than personal, such reimaginings can reflect a moment in socio-historical time, where particular objects resonate with the feelings of a new generation who seek to refashion the past. Concepts such as nostalgia, post-memory and temporal belongings show how past feelings are reinterpreted to fulfil the emotional or sense-making needs of the present or future.[26] Objects can be central to this world-making – a concrete means to salvage coherent historical narratives and/or embody new myths.[27]

Inherited possessions can also provide crucial knowledge when other records or testimonies are absent or withheld. As 'silent' witnesses to the past, objects can elicit emotions, spark memories or provide clues to unspoken or traumatic aspects of family and national histories. Family photographs in particular have been described as keys to family mysteries, and are central to the first two chapters of this section.[28] In Jane McCabe's chapter, a photograph becomes a catalyst for uncovering family and social silences. McCabe's grandmother was one of 130 Anglo-Indian adolescents resettled in New Zealand via a Presbyterian mission scheme between 1908 and 1938. McCabe's grandmother kept silent about her Indian background throughout her life. However, after her death, a revelatory photograph of her surfaced, setting McCabe on the path to recover her story amidst the wider migration story of 'Kalimpong kids'. The photograph not only linked McCabe and her grandmother across time but also forged lateral connections with hundreds of present descendants of Anglo-Indian migrants.

Louise Taylor similarly delves into the nuanced ways that photographs keep and disclose secrets, compelling the viewer to look deeper. Taylor takes us on a moving journey through her father's photographic archive – colour slides and black-and-white negatives and cine film – bringing to light sharp and fuzzy memories, and trying to make sense of his emotional struggles, and eventual suicide. Taylor meditates on the photographs, particularly those images that capture them together in time, searching for the nature of their relationship in the past. She asks us to consider the relation between photography and memory, and how we rely on photography – albeit partial and perspectival – to capture and transmute emotions in the wake of loss.

Michael Heim takes up a slightly different capacity of family objects – as domestic grist for the emotive stories that bind a family together across social change and rupture. He explores how heirlooms can be used as stimulus for family mythologies via collective rituals of myth-making and storytelling in the home. Heim recalls kneeling with his siblings on a Persian rug before his mother's rosewood writing desk, both material legacies of a lost pedigree. Here we see the power of emotional objects in telling tales of the family's past, and shaping the identity of the family's present.

The final two chapters in this section look at inherited books – a Bible and a cookery collection. Both make legible the traces left by matriarchs whose lives are otherwise unetched into family history. Catherine Feely describes a Bible given to her maternal grandmother, Marjorie (Nana), as a graduation gift from her Headmistress in 1933. Feely reads the Bible and other ephemera slipped within its pages as a direct line of communication from her Nana to her mother to herself. The Bible also summons a history of religious change across time, for the family, and for the role of women's faith in the church. More than a religious text, it becomes a powerful object for locating a personal narrative within an institutional one, lending new knowledge to both family and social histories.

Lucinda Matthews-Jones writes about similarly cherished volumes, her granny's cookery books. For Matthews-Jones, the cookbooks are emotional anchors but also objects of discomfort and absence. They illustrate how the stories of women's lives and interests can be lost in families whose narratives are centred around the life trajectories of men. Matthews-Jones reads between the lines of the cookbooks to understand gendered expectations. The timing of receiving and reading the cookery books is also pertinent. As everyday detritus, the cookbooks were stashed under the stairs or stuffed in drawers. Granny only gave them to her granddaughter shortly before her death. Matthews-Jones took comfort in the books during the pandemic lockdowns as a tactile and intimate point of connection via her granny's handwriting, and as an insight into her granny's untold life in a different time.

Each of these chapters provides insight into the emotional resonance of inherited objects and multifaceted roles they play in connecting families across time. Be they photographs, furniture or books, the authors show how interacting with the material culture of the family's past can forge new knowledge, emotions and relations, at once keeping and reimagining the history of the family. In doing so, family is produced as multi-generational – as a lineage, rather than a moment – and so tight temporal distinctions between past, present and future are disturbed. Through their capacity to make connections across temporalities, inherited objects take on new significances and resonances that increase their familial and social value.

Re-producing national stories

Inheritances do not remain within families but form an important component of cultural heritage, and may be used to produce national narratives. Conversely, familial objects do not exist in a cultural vacuum but are given meaning within the context of widely known historical and national narratives. The intersections between familial and national inheritances not only shape our investments in particular objects, or types of objects, but also operate reciprocally to produce emotional and historical meanings for individuals and groups. Surveys undertaken by public historians in nations all over the globe, including Canada, Australia, and the United States, provide evidence of the extraordinary popularity of family history and how central the family, as a unit, is to people's engagement with history on multiple levels.[29] Numerous scholars have demonstrated that most people engage with history first through their families. Public

historians have celebrated people's emotional encounters with historical objects and stories, in private and public spaces, and the historical consciousness and knowledge subsequently produced.[30] Family history and object research help to humanize history and to narrate it in compelling ways.

In this book, we see how family inheritances link intimately with national histories, with affective consequences. As Katie Barclay and Nina Koefoed recently suggested in a Special Issue of the *Journal of Family History*, family memory and national memory are closely intertwined and family history research can question and reshape national memories and allow complicated, deep reassessments of the past among scholars and ordinary people.[31] The chapters in this section of the book contribute to recent scholarship suggesting the significance of undertaking family history research to transforming our understanding of the past in myriad ways. The histories of emotional objects, large and small, are shared by several of the authors in this section, moving between England, Scotland, Australia, Canada and India as they trace their and others' familial inheritance and their meanings across time and place.

Emotional objects reveal myriad relationships between private and public worlds and are used by our authors not only to insert their intimate family stories into national narratives, most obviously around war, but also to better understand the life-stories of individuals in the past and present. Authors describe the detective work undertaken to answer enduring questions about familial pasts, better understand family lives and individual motivation and behaviour, respond to surprising discoveries and to solve family mysteries. The stories of these objects allow us to trace the shifting relationships between people, families, locales, regions, communities, nations and the globe and their histories. The careful research that accompanies the movement of individuals and their possessions between the past and present increases these researchers' as well as our historical understanding and knowledge.

Emma Carson shares the details of her chance encounter with her great-grandparents' letters that formed the basis for her Honours degree and then PhD research on marriage during wartime military service. She reflects on the importance of scholarship examining how objects like these were preserved and passed down between family members before sometimes being deposited in public archives. We learn how Carson's use of different sources, material and oral familial inheritances, paints a complicated picture of intimate life, both loving and violent, and emotional histories in wartime Australia through the marriage of her great-grandparents. War often gave these objects more cultural significance than they would in times of peace. This is no doubt due to the importance of war for historical understandings of the nation and national identity, especially in Australia. This focus on wartime stories and objects is also shared in Alison Pedley's and Asif Shakoor's contributions.

Pedley's object history sifts through the contents contained within two suitcases found in her late parents' home. These include documents, letters and objects. She describes being disconcerted when presented with 'evidence' of the stories passed down the family line and goes on to examine her emotional engagement with this material. These things situate her family's story within familiar historical understandings of the world wars and their devastating impact on individuals and families. Pedley suggests

that the chance discoveries of familial objects from the past can help insert ordinary people's lives into national historical narratives.

On a visit to Pakistan with his mother to renovate their family home, Mahomed Shakoor was shocked to discover evidence associated with his paternal grandfather's Merchant Navy service in the First World War. Preserved and protected by his grandmother while alive, this evidence had been stored on a high shelf. It was finally found, after much searching and prompting by Shakoor's mother, among the rubbish left behind when his grandmother passed away. Shakoor became emotionally attached to his grandfather's Continuous Discharge Certificate, but he missed the war medals the box should have contained and determined to find them. He set off on a search through Britain, the United States and India, to hunt them down. He discovered that a British auctioneer had sold the medals in 2014. He was amazed to finally track down one medal, missing for fifty years, on a coin sale website and bought it excitedly in December 2017. He gave up on finding another after it was sold at an auction in Canada to an owner in India. The search for these medals, having moved around the world, not only involved extraordinary research feats resulting in happiness as well as heartache at a personal level, but also reinvested him in the concept of Britain, for whom his grandfather fought.

Carolyn Williams traces within her wider family the movements of a writing table, purportedly once used by Bonnie Prince Charlie following his escape to Skye after defeat at Culloden. It was passed on to the Boswell family through Annabella Boswell's family home, Kingsburgh House, along with many colourful stories about Bonnie Prince Charlie's escapades. The table moved with Annabella's grandfather to Australia in 1816. Williams's family history research suggests that the table, along with tales of Bonnie Prince Charlie, helped keep memories of a post-Jacobite Scottish nationalist sentiment vibrant in a new national context on the other side of the world and for decades after as it was transferred between later generations of the Boswell family. When it was moved back to Scotland with the Boswells and left to Annabella's unmarried daughters, it came to represent the family's Australian lives too. But even today it is its association with Charlie that dominates the stories that are told about the table. Across these four chapters, national and familial stories intertwine, adding to the value of the inherited object within the family, and supporting a family's affective connection, their sense of belonging, to national histories and narratives.

The historical value of family objects is magnified as they move into cultural institutions and deployed in official narratives of the past. Cultural institutions and GLAM sector organizations often showcase large family collections, depending on them to tell stories about the past. From their establishment until the 1970s, national museums and repositories tended to privilege the belongings of families who were elite and white and deliberately collected, constituted and donated with specific concerns about legacy in mind. Their stories were used to reveal the history of the nation, grand narratives of nation and class in myriad contexts. New museology, the popularity of social history among audiences, and aims to 'queer the museum' have encouraged new interpretative foci since then. Curators became increasingly attuned to the difficulties of representing the histories of more diverse populations in the past. Smaller regional, rural and local museums have arguably had more success revealing the politics of

family inheritances and the histories of multicultural and less privileged people in the past – democratizing museums, in terms of their collections and reception, in the process.

Corinne Ball's chapter reveals how the records associated with the colonial Destitute Asylum on display in Adelaide's Migration Museum transmits the family inheritances of society's marginalized, helping to piece together the lives of South Australian colonial families and a web of Asylum descendants. Ball describes redeveloping the gallery with her colleagues and encouraging emotional and spiritual audience engagement with the stories that could be told about the Asylum's past today. Using low- and high-tech methods, they inserted poor working-class families into larger narratives of Australian colonial history. These family inheritances have only survived because destitute peoples' lives came under the remit of the South Australian colonial bureaucratic welfare system. Contemporary descendants of the Asylum's inmates, alongside other visitors, have learned a lot about themselves and colonial history, through their emotional engagement with these stories.

Tanya Evans's chapter focuses on the family inheritances contained within regional museums located in the Blue Mountains in Australia, attending to uses of such inheritances in producing community identity and sense of belonging, as well as motivating the volunteers who commit to preserving and displaying these histories for the public. It describes the work of two local women who used their papers and belongings to insert women's histories into a broader understanding of the history and heritage of Australia. Their family histories housed in Tarella House and Woodford Academy highlight the importance of including local and community stories to produce more diverse and inclusive engagements with the Australian past at multiple levels. As Evans demonstrates here, investments and attachments to familial histories become the foundation of national heritage and its preservation.

Various theorists, including Astri Erll using Maurice Halbwachs, have suggested how important the family is as a space for the construction of collective memory. Family stories and objects reveal the instability of what we know about 'the family' and the constant reconstruction of our knowledge over time, across different generations and in different contexts.[32] We see in these chapters how people use a variety of sources to piece together their family's past – these include written, material and oral sources and involve the sharing and transferral of memories, photographs, objects, and official and unofficial documents. They produce emotional conversations between past and present creating significant and exciting new knowledge on the history of the family and the contexts within which they are situated, and embed familial knowledges and emotions at the heart of national heritage.

Conclusion

Inherited objects play a critical role in supporting memory practices, shaping family identity and supporting national narratives of the past, often through the emotions they elicit. As Kendra Field observes, family history is a 'privilege'.[33] To have objects to inherit, however small or fragmentary, speaks to the capacity of the family to

transmit a part of itself across time. To be able to identify traces of one's family in an archive is itself a form of social recognition and acknowledgement. As scholars of slavery, Stolen Generations, children in care and other marginal groups have highlighted, the tearing apart of families often removed the possibility of knowing who you are and where you came from.[34] The desire to make that connection – observed in the foundling hospital tokens that mothers left for their children, or in an old sack handsewn with a family story, as Tiya Miles reconstructs in her account of resilience within an enslaved family torn apart – is suggestive of its value.[35] In this context, the opening of archives to family historians has played an important role in reclaiming an inheritance, not just of the self but of the place of marginal and excluded groups in national history.

Despite this, there has been very little research that has taken seriously the intersections of familial investments in our material heritage and the implications of such affections. Drawing together the work of historians working with familial inheritances, including family historians, academics and heritage professionals, this volume highlights how particular inherited objects come to hold value, to be saved and transmitted over generations, and to move from private to public in producing national narratives. Taking insight from emotions – whether our own as inheritors of valued objects or as scholars working with emotions methodologies – the collection highlights how the emotions that 'stick' to objects help materialize the past and draw attention to the ways embodied histories give meaning to material culture. Moreover, through disrupting hard temporal boundaries between past and present, emotional objects enable and support relationships across time and generations, and collapse, intersect with and reciprocally produce familial and national histories. Far from being merely 'sentimental' objects of purely personal value, familial inheritances speak to the ways that the past, and, therefore, history, is transmitted as part of affective and local cultures, and how identity – personal, familial and national – is made across time and with feeling.

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Materializing History

2

‘Although It Smack [*sic*] Somewhat of the Days That Are Gone’

Memory, Legacy and the Preservation of the Patchwork Quilt

Deborah McGuire

Figure 2.1 Swaledale Quilt. *c.* 1890–1900. Possible maker Mary Jane Dent Kilburn (1876–1982). Cotton patchwork, hand quilted. 164cm x 219cm, The Quilt Collection of The Quilters’ Guild of the British Isles. 2011-6-C. Image courtesy of The Quilt Collection.

Domestic quilt makers and owners have frequently articulated the emotional significance and intergenerational meaning-making represented in stitched bedcovers. In 1821, a columnist in the periodical *Blackwood's Magazine* expressed her affection for her Georgian grandmother who had been 'extravagantly fond of Patch-Work'. She described the 'bag in which she [her grandmother] preserved every shred [of fabric] with religious veneration'.[1] People often described the emotional connection between remembering and textile objects through words of worship, revering the tangible role of cloth in the preservation of immaterial feelings.[2] As the columnist reveals, textile memorials were intimate and domestic: 'We love our grandmother's memory' and 'delight in preserving her patchwork, as the coverlet of our best bed.'[3] For the original needleworker, collecting patches for a quilt preserved memories associated with significant fabrics, 'from the slip of brown holland that made her darling's pinafore to the elegantly flowered cotton of her own best gown, all was valuable'.[4] Quilts, as soft, practical and enduring objects of women's domestic production, could have a potent role as legacy objects for families after the death of the maker.[5] Existing in the home throughout an individual lifetime and beyond, quilts were a palimpsest of memory absorbing and reflecting the reminiscences of different generations.[6] The *Blackwood's Magazine* commentator chronicled these layered memories as 'involutions', a word conjured to invoke 'an enfolding or entangling' of meaning and object.[7] This form of emotional thinking about quilts could be transmitted from generation to generation.[8]

While many old quilts survive within families, their preservation is variable and seldom assured.[9] As objects that are subject to changes in fashion, a quilt's decorative value fluctuates through time. The columnist alluded to this threat to her grandmother's quilt observing that 'although it smack [*sic*] somewhat of the days that are gone, we delight in preserving her Patch-Work'.[10] The inherent portability of quilts means that they pass through different spaces and times, where their contextual meaning inevitably changes.[11] With each new generational keeper, the memories associated with a quilt might evolve, or fade. Indeed, some might characterize the preservation of the patchwork quilt as subject to chance and deem its emotional meaning too ephemeral or changeable to capture. Yet, interpreting the long life of some quilts within the family as merely chance obscures the intentional and emotional actions that preserved them. Indeed, a quilt's preservation is predicated on an emotional relationship formed between people and objects, often within the family.[12] Yet this emotional relationship also reveals connections to the wider complex neighbourly, community and regional networks in which families were enmeshed.[13] This chapter will explore the biography of one patchwork bedcover to reveal the emotional forces that shape the journey of other quilts. Historicizing these emotional acts offers insight into how the private concerns of the family shaped the wider community in which families operated.

Once-known quilt makers

This chapter will explore the story of one patchwork quilt, made in Swaledale in the last decade of the nineteenth century, and today held in The Quilt Collection of The

Quilters' Guild of the British Isles. Many needleworkers, like the woman who stitched the Swaledale quilt (Figure 2.1), did not sign their creations.[14] Understood today as 'once-known' makers, their quilts can nonetheless reveal a rich history.[15] For more than one hundred years and four generations, the provincial farming family who owned the Swaledale quilt preserved it in their Yorkshire Dales home. Made between 1890 and 1900, by the time of its eventual museum accession in 2011, no one in the family remembered clearly who had made this quilt or why. Genealogical research, however, suggests its maker was Mary Jane Dent (1876–1982), who probably made it in the decade before 1901, the year that she married Swaledale farmer John Kilburn (*c.* 1875–1955) in the village of Muker in North Yorkshire when she was twenty-five years old.[16] The quilt's striking patchwork design is typical of a style of provincial quilt making, which was retained in some rural areas of Britain at the end of the Victorian era, and its condition suggests that it was once a treasured object.[17] Yet, it took many decades before quilts such as this began to be valued more widely.[18] Until then, they were objects of domestic thrift for their makers, melded with such a strong sense of inherited regional practice and identity that they are sometimes offered to museums.[19] While some quilts might be cherished and preserved within the family for their link to a remembered forebearer, exploring the Swaledale quilt's inheritance route shows how overlooked and forgotten quilts also carry significant emotional freight for a community.[20]

For most of the last 300 years, the memory work of quilts has been done privately within the family.[21] Quilt making, as plain needlework, occupied a strictly delineated space beneath embroidery and fancy needlework in the nineteenth century.[22] In the twentieth century, quilts, conceived as products of women's leisure, were largely overlooked by the art establishment before Holstein and van der Hoof's groundbreaking show at the Whitney Museum of American Art in 1971; thus, only the very few finest and most complex quilts, or later the most strikingly decorative, were deemed worthy of preservation among the material culture of British national institutions.[23] Yet in the folk revival of the mid-twentieth century, local or 'living' museums were frequently offered quilts from their local populations as remembered objects of social history.[24] Today it is widely recognized that the emotional stories associated with quilt makers and the communities they worked within are as important as the textile's material or aesthetic qualities.[25] Old quilts and the emotional stories attached to them are collected today by specialist museums but still exist in large numbers in domestic homes.[26] Sources which survey private quilt ownership crucially reveal the multiplicity of emotional impulses which preserve quilts within the family, and demonstrate the myriad ways that quilts carry layered meaning through generations.[27]

Selfhood

A quilt first gained emotional significance for its maker because it shaped and expressed personal identity. For girls like Mary Jane Dent, the technical mastery of

textile skills and their use in creative expression were important aspects of developing female identity.[28] Preparing domestic textiles was an important part of planning and provisioning a new home as a wife.[29] Girls were expected to master plain sewing, and patchwork and quilt making were skills embedded within rural working-class women's domestic lives and schooling.[30] Women's identity was as much shaped by their girlhood needlework as reflected in it.[31] Mrs Knagg of Westerdale, interviewed as an elderly woman, described being 'kept busy [as a girl] threading needles' at quilters' gatherings in the Yorkshire Moors around 1900 where 'three or four women gather in the best parlour round a large wooden frame on which they make one of their lovely, coloured quilts'.[32]

The Swaledale quilt was made before 1900, when Mary Jane Dent was a young woman. Her marriage in 1901 and move to her husband's farm in another dale necessitated her separation from her birth family and the assumption of the new identity of wife. For Mary Jane, perhaps, the quilt represented her girlhood identity before marriage and motherhood transformed it. The 'Lady's Column' in *The Globe* in 1897 described patchwork quilts as 'a kind of chronicle in needlework', evoking the quilt's ability to reflect an evolving selfhood.[33] In accounts like these, written by and for women, we see how the preservation of quilts was an act of everyday individualized memory keeping through objects described as resonant with individual 'symbolism and history'. Thus, we might see quilts such as Mary Jane's as feminine chronicles of selfhood for their makers.

Personal identity was also shaped by the values of place. Mary Jane was born in 1876, in Mallerstang, at the head of the Eden Valley in Westmorland and moved 20 miles to Swaledale in North Yorkshire after her marriage. Both areas had a rich history of quilt making, but in Swaledale this tradition was particularly prized, extending longer than in other dales into the interwar period.[34] As Mary Jane stitched, she prepared her quilt for scrutiny in a community whose values were encapsulated within the practices of quilt making. A local newspaper column in 1845, 'An Example for a Small Farmer', reminded men that a rural wife's ability to provision her married home went beyond financial resources, warning 'what she gathered herself was more than her fortune', listing her skilled making of at least 'two quilted quilts' as indicative of a necessary steadiness and reliability of character.[35] In a place where needlework skills could be seen as an indicator of character, Mary Jane might invest her quilt with greater significance. Historians now recognize that women's valuing of their own stitched production challenges us to look beyond their symbolic significance as objects of patriarchal roles, to re-cast these objects as valuable emotional commentary on women's own experience of identity.[36]

As the young Mary Jane Dent stitched for her future, her quilt still linked her firmly to her family's past. The patchwork design that Mary Jane chose for her quilt was bold, but not unusually so in a region where strong graphic design existed in an era before modernism. Shared regional styles of patchwork reveal friendship and neighbourly networks beyond the family. In the census of 1901, the Dent family's next-door neighbour in the isolated scattering of dwellings that made up Aisgill outside Mallerstang was Catherine Bellas, a 37-year-old dressmaker, who might have offered counsel on colour placement or design. The quilt's fabrics also reveal the local

economic community. The dark fabrics that form the outer border of the quilt are a variety of different patterns in the same repeated black colour, the striped fabrics in the inner border are the same repeated design in a range of colours, all probably sourced from a sample book. Men like Mr E. Moore who started work in 1906 had 'eight rounds all over the Dale and into Westmorland carrying great heavy boxes of material and patterns for the women to choose from'.[37] Mary Jane's individuality shines through the materiality of her bold graphic choices. Yet behind the arresting modern patchwork the quilting could not be more traditional. The overlapping cable or chain quilting pattern which undulates down the quilt without recourse to the patchwork shapes was a typical design, common to many North Country communities and chosen due to its efficiency when stitching in a frame.[38] It was a quilting pattern she likely learnt from her mother, perhaps drawn from a family template; a stitched shape that bound her firmly to the past in her Dales land home.[39]

Familial identity

When quilt making was a generational practice associated with marital homemaking, we might see ghostly echoes of the emotion of previous wedding quilts in the significance placed by families on this ritual.[40] In remote moorland communities where female family networks offered important and practical support, the personal identity of young women often remained bound up in the associated identity of their generational female family. Mary Jane's marriage necessitated a move out of the Eden valley of her birth. Her decision to marry John Kilburn from Muker in Swaledale was likely influenced by her mother who grew up in the Muker hamlet of Kisburn. The matrilineal family connection back to Muker with its deep tradition of quilt-making likely suffused her marriage quilt with more meaning for both mother and daughter. Newspapers thirty years after Mary Jane Dent and John's Kilburn's marriage would describe the long importance of generational quilt making in this valley as 'an ancient women's craft' as they extolled these quilts' value, declaiming 'the covers they make are real works of art'.[41] In such inherited needlework traditions, we uncover transgenerational 'emotional communities', as defined by Rosenwein, where values are governed by a shared set of priorities and their expression is illuminated with the needle.[42]

Mary Jane, as a new bride in 1901, would carry a hand-stitched quilt back to a place where twenty-five years before, her own mother Mary Alderson Dent may well have learnt to make a quilt alongside Mary Jane's grandmother, Mary Fawcett Alderson (1818–97). More than a practical preparation for a new identity, the quilt was already an emotional block-chain, a kind of stitched initiation linking the identities of at least three generations of women.[43]

Many women harnessed quilts in the retelling of their personal emotional biographies within the family. This gave quilts a changing state of dynamic and fluid meaning over time. That a quilt might 'smack of days gone by' could be a blessing or a curse, with quilts cherished or overlooked by different generations. Often a granddaughter might cherish what a daughter dismissed. This threat could be anticipated, and a quilt's value

could be tutored within the family through storytelling between generations.[44] A columnist in 1890 asks her readers, 'Did you ever in childhood sit upon the bed and hear the history of the various pieces of chintz? That's a piece of your first coloured dress: that I had when I was a girl: that was your grandmother's mourning gown: that is a piece Miss S- gave me. I have heard such a history many a time.'[45] This active process of tactile use meant that some quilts might be destroyed by years of loving touch.[46] Others might be preserved because they were deemed too precious for children's hands.[47] The emotional associations attached to objects in childhood could transcend lifetimes, seeding the values which linked shared emotional communities through generations. An elderly accessioner described her preservation of a quilt made by her aunt: 'as a child I loved to see it when it came out', adding '[it] was her pride and joy'.[48] Emotions associated with pride and care were passed on as a gift with the material quilt, offering a way to reanimate a memory of generational comfort after the death of the maker.[49]

Yet, the past is not always benign within the family. Emotional obligations may not be experienced neutrally, and negative associations can seep through generations. Ambivalence can aid preservation; problematic memories might be consigned with the quilt to spaces like the back of wardrobes or the corner of attics – places existing between active cherishing and outright rejection. The emotional reasons for captive neglect – objects that are too precious to throw away but too confronting to use or share – are rooted deep within the stories that families tell about themselves. In 1891, the domestic advice columnist Dr Muriel commented that the wide compass of emotions from life might also be reflected in a quilt: 'Doubtless the grave long ago closed over the heart of the worker – the heart that beat with those varied human emotions – emotions of joy and of sorrow, of loss and of gain, ambition and disappointment, hope and fear, love, hate, despair; each succeeding the other then as now, and as certainly as seasons change or as darkness follows the day.'[50] Quilts left unfinished or unused due to death, desertion, disillusionment or dismay form an important part of any wider curation of quilts as an emotional object. The emotions which governed why quilts were kept are revealed in the behaviours which ensured their preservation. It is these acts of preservation for the material quilt and the ephemeral stories associated with it where the transmission of cultural values between generations within the family is revealed.

Patriarchy, patchwork and emotional places

Inheritance stories collected when old quilts are accessioned remind us that men could also be emotionally invested in their role as keepers of 'heirloom quilts'. In farming areas, patrilineal familial inheritance was explicitly linked to place through the bequeathing of land, farms, stock, and agricultural property, a practice widely understood to be both pragmatic *and* emotional.[51] Mary Jane's husband was one of four men named John Kilburn to farm their acres since the 1840s. Matrilineal inheritance chains often cause moveable goods like quilts to become separated from patriarchal links to place, displaced by women's marriage migration, but Mary Jane's quilt remained within the patrilineal home to be passed on through the male line from father to son or brother. For many men, an old quilt in Swaledale reinforced a sense of a family's community

identity and the depths of its bond with geographical place. The Dales historian Hartley recorded that 'quilts were formerly made in all the dales, and fine examples now heirlooms, have been shown to us in many farmhouses especially in the North Riding', describing the pride of old men who would draw out an 'heirloom' quilt made by a wife, mother or grandmother for examination.[52]

Work such as quilt making in Swaledale was linked by a symmetry of gendered labour between men and women; work recognized as central to the functioning of family farms. Just as well-bred stock might serve as an inheritable legacy for a man's lifetime of labour, women's domestic stitched work was also practically valued by families and reflected in inheritance practices. Mary Jane's quilt was sheltered by this settled patrilineal inheritance tradition, never ejected out of the farm's linen press by house sale or probate. On Mary Jane's husband's death in 1955, the farmhouse, and the quilt within it, were inherited by their eldest, and then second son. Perhaps this was a symbolic transfer given Mary Jane's long life of labour; after all, she remained living on the farm. Nevertheless, by the time the quilt was passed to a museum its value lay in its link to the farmhouse and its land as much as its link to the maker. Some owners describe receiving an old quilt, returned when they move into a house where the quilt was known to be made. The community recognized the bond between object and place, as powerfully as a link to an individual person or family.[53]

Emotional labour

Quilt making was both a practical and an emotional labour.[54] When women like Isabella Peacock (b.1839) of Muker, stitched the words 'own work' into the embroidered centre of her pieced and embroidered quilt that was made in 1855, they asserted proud ownership of their labour.[55] Piecing and then quilting a quilt was long and often labouring work which was undertaken at the heart of family life. Hannah Hauxwell of neighbouring Baldersdale recalls 'grandma laboured for years with her frames . . . I have still got two quilts that she made that have been in use for as long as I can recall . . . which I treasure to this day'.[56] Women without natal descendants invested their stitched production with comparable legacy. A great-niece who inherited her great-aunt's quilt said she 'remembers seeing the quilt frame and hearing Aunt – who had no children – allude to the quilt as her 'life's-work'.[57] Today, families invariably state that their recognition of the hard work represented by an old quilt is central to their emotional reaction to it.[58]

Quilt-making was not an act of leisure as we might conceptualize it today.[59] Instead, it was time snatched from a full physical day of farm and housework. Hartley records 'a big quilt of elaborate pattern, took three women six weeks', but crucially adds the addendum 'in amongst farm work'.[60] As women looked back over their lifetime of toil their stitched production took on new poignancy as a tangible memorial to their domestic labour. The quilting, at the frame, was, after all, demanding physical work, requiring women to bend and twist for long hours while maintaining the close careful attention necessary for small regular stitches. In their quilts, families had a tangible tally of these hours, such that they might continue to lionize the otherwise often-invisible work of past generations

of women. A commentator reflected that 'though mining is dead, some industries are carried on by the Dale folk. They include "quilting", the making of heavy quilted covers which in Swaledale take the place of blankets and eiderdowns; rug-making, and the building of drystone walls'.[61] Quilt making was understood as an important gendered experience of 'industries' in this rural geographical setting. The nobility of the gendered work of quilt making was as emotionally intrinsic as the male labour which built the characteristic drystone walls of the intake fields. Quilts, like well-walled fields, were enduring memorials to the labour of those generations who toiled there.

Quilts also existed as objects of traded emotional credit among close-knit matriarchal emotional communities. Through the uncovering of networks of shared needlework practice, we might also reveal the emotional priorities and values that shaped this emotional community.[62] Academic historical study of women's domestic lives is an area of scholarship that is now recognized as crucial to our understanding.[63] Yet, the quilt's value as a historical source has long been subject to the same condescension as women's other domestic work.[64] Rural women's labour such as cheesemaking, which contributed to the visible farming economy, is often better recorded. Labour such as quilt-making, however, operated among a less visible emotional economy where company, sympathy, encouragement, labour and supplies might be traded as an alternative currency. A local newspaper described the scene: 'every night you will see three or four women gathering in the best parlour round a large wooden frame on which they are making one of their lovely, coloured quilts'.[65] Aunts, cousins and female friends and neighbours were significant vectors of the skills required for this labour. Neighbourliness, thrift, self-sufficiency, support and camaraderie might all be read into the emotional labour of the quilt, a chronicle of women's social and emotional labour and the values of the economies in which it was expended.

Was Mary Jane's quilt overlooked, or was it ever explicitly bequeathed during her lifetime, gifted with an affectionate story that might become explicitly associated with the quilt or Mary herself? If it was, the generational chain of storytelling had somewhere been broken. Maybe Mary Jane made other, more prized quilts which her daughters took from the Dale with their own marriages? After so many years and following Mary Jane's death perhaps the quilt's comfortable ubiquity in the home rendered it too ordinary for special consideration to her sons and grandson.[66] The emotional meaning of the quilt in Figure 2.1 in its last years remains opaque. Was this quilt retained because it was more emotional, or was it just more useful than the others?

Emotional utility

Prosaically, many quilts are preserved, precisely because they are useful, they wrap, cover, and envelop other objects deemed worthier of this care. Mary Jane's grandson became the custodian of the quilt after the death of his father in 1995. At this point the family offered four other quilts to The Quilt Collection, but they held back this one until 2012. The other quilts were well worn, one turkey red applique quilt was patched, a characteristic strippy quilt extensively remade to extend its useable life.[67] The eventual donor to the museum collection in 2011 (a niece in the extended family)

joked in accession notes that otherwise the quilt 'might have been used as a tractor cover'.[68] Yet behind this anecdote lies an emotional truth – that practicality is also felt emotionally. Objects of use rather than decoration are prized in communities where utility and durability are valued qualities.[69] In prioritizing the decorative value over the utilitarian, we overlook one of the key dimensions of the quilt as an emotional object.[70] This quilt stood for the kind of pragmatic provisioning that characterized many rural lives. Quilts accessioned to The Quilt Collection also often present with a range of emotions hidden in these utilitarian stories; they have come from inside disused chest freezers (an anxiety to preserve the quilt from mice in an outhouse), attic trunks (a final resting place for the precious but unfashionable), under mattresses to soften bed springs (the owner didn't want to give up the emotional familiarity of this solution).[71] Thus the quilt's robust durability can reflect its owner's personal identity because the practical taciturn farmer who preserves a quilt for its usefulness, bestows on it a valuable form of meaning that should not be dismissed.

Conclusion

The story of this quilt's long life is typical of many old quilts that stay within the family. Sometimes treasured, sometimes taken for granted, 'owned' by different generations with changing priorities, who nevertheless share a common understanding of the object as a link to their shared familial past. We now recognize that when Mary Jane swapped and gathered fabrics, planned this striking design, and collaboratively quilted at the frame, she participated in the creation of a distinctly regional artistic and utilitarian culture. Her family recognized the significance of the object's link to their shared past. Yet, when the family gives up its custodianship of a quilt and its lineal history, institutions take on the responsibility to accurately reflect the quilt's story in the making of wider histories. The weight of preserving the patchwork quilt while capturing and conveying the often-ephemeral emotional cargo that it carries is complex. Without the shifting, layered remaking of generational history which occurs within the family, the quilt's stories are vulnerable to misplacement or misunderstanding when they finally are frozen in time at the point of accession.[72] Without specialist textile curation, the significance of pattern or design can be invisible. Specialist collections, such as The Quilt Collection, have long been mindful of this responsibility, and recent work to capture fulsome 'Emotional Biographies' of objects offers a more detailed audit for future historians of what a quilt might have meant to its many owners.[73]

Of course, we must take care not to romanticize the role of the quilt, or of the family. Most families lacked the resources to keep their material histories as they moved for work or opportunities, and many quilts were worn out, used up or thrown away. Not all quilts were objects of love and care, enjoyed in warm homes. Over the dale in 1895, the workhouse at Kirkby Stephen reluctantly decided to issue inmates with 'quilts – presumably of cotton' after overturning a policy of not issuing any bedding, resulting in inmates sleeping under 'sheets and rags'.[74] Warm quilts carry stories about care, and reveal its lack, describing where comfort might be found when the family or wider society fell short. A quilt's palimpsest value lies in its ability to bring back into focus

the lives of otherwise anonymous makers and generations of overlooked communities. Quilts carry a breadth of contradictory emotional meanings embedded in durable objects which families use to tell stories about themselves and their place in the world. In the complex patchwork of these family stories lies evidence of emotional values and behaviours, which inform the wider study of the history of our feelings.

Notes

1 Column from Blackwood's Magazine, reprinted in the *Windsor and Eton Express*, 18 March 1821.
2 Maureen Daly Goggin and Beth Fowkes Tobin, eds, *Women and the Material Culture of Needlework and Textiles, 1750-1950* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), 3.
3 Bridget Long, '"Regular Progressive Work Occupies My Mind Best": Needlework as a Source of Entertainment, Consolation and Reflection', *Textile* 14, no. 2 (2016): 176–87.
4 *Windsor and Eton Express*, 18 March 1821.
5 Deborah McGuire, '"Remember Me", Love, Loss and Legacy. Memorial Textiles in Britain 1790-1890', *Quilt Studies Journal* 23 (2022): 7–33.
6 Laurel Horton, *Mary Black's Family Quilts: Memory and Meaning in Everyday Life* (Columbia, S. Carolina: University of Columbia Press, 2005), 2.
7 Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary. Involution. noun. 1 a (1): the act or an instance of enfolding or entangling.
8 Marius Kwint, Christopher Breward and Jeremy Aynsley, eds, *Material Memories: Design and Evocations* (Oxford: Berg, 1999).
9 Issues addressed, for example, by Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, *The Age of Homespun: Objects and Stories in the Creation of an American Myth* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2001), 25.
10 *Windsor and Eton Express.* 18 March 1821.
11 Stephanie Downes, Sally Holloway and Sarah Randles, eds, *Feeling Things: Objects and Emotions Through History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018).
12 See Anna Moran and Sorcha O'Brien, eds, *Love Objects: Emotion, Design and Material Culture* (London: Bloomsbury, 2014), 11, for a discussion of methodologies which capture the ephemerality of emotions expressed in objects.
13 Liz Gloyn, Vicky Crewe, Laura King and Anna Woodham, 'The Ties That Bind: Materiality, Identity, and the Life Course in the "Things" Families Keep', *Journal of Family History* 43, no. 2 (2018): 157–76.
14 Deborah McGuire, '"Remember Me". Domestic Textiles in Britain, 1790-1890: Memory, Identity and Emotion', unpublished Masters by Research Dissertation, Oxford Brookes University, 2022.
15 Roderick Kiracofe, *Unconventional & Unexpected: American Quilts Below the Radar, 1950-2000* (New York: Stewart, Tabori & Chang, 2014). Also see '"And Still We Rise": Race, Culture, and Visual Conversations', International Exhibition (2019) curated by Carolyn L. Mazloomi for discussion of the intersectional political dimensions to overlooking the unnamed makers of quilts.
16 With thanks to The Quilt Collection's volunteer genealogy researchers, especially Kathleen Fisher for her work on the family history of this quilt which informs this chapter.

17 Dorothy Osler, *Traditional British Quilts* (London: Batsford, 1987), 97.
18 Arguably, in Britain, this evolution has still not taken place when compared to other forms of folk art, or similar quilts from other countries such as the USA or Australia.
19 Based on primary interviews between 1934 and 1952 see Mavis FitzRandolph, *Traditional Quilting: Its Story and Practice* (London: B.T. Batsford Ltd., 1954) for the widespread expression of these emotions.
20 For discussion on the complexity of the relationship between domestic objects and selfhood see Daniel Miller, *Home Possessions: Material Culture behind Closed Doors* (Oxford: Berg, 2001).
21 For example, see Antonia Brodie, 'Marking and Memory: An Embroidered Sheet in the Collection of the Victoria and Albert Museum', *Textile, Cloth and Culture* 14, no. 2 (2016): 160–75, on generational family memory keeping through textile use.
22 Sophia Frances Anne Caulfield and Blanche Saward, *The Dictionary of Needlework: An Encyclopaedia of Artistic, Plain and Fancy Needlework* (London: L. Upcott Gill, 1882).
23 Jonathan Holstein, *Abstract Design in American Quilts* (New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, 1971). Local and regional social history museums in the UK, for example, The Beamish Folk Museum (now Beamish: The Living Museum of the North) and St Fagans Folk Museum (now Museum Wales) collected quilts as early pioneers. The Bowes Museum in Northeast England was an important early exception and now holds many important quilts as part of its decorative arts collection.
24 The Dales Countryside Museum, and the Keld Resource Centre both hold quilts from the region in their Collections.
25 For example, *Quilts 1700-2010. Hidden Histories, Untold Stories* exhibition at the Victoria & Albert Museum, London in 2010 see Sue Prichard, ed., *Quilts 1700-2010: Hidden Histories, Untold Stories* (London: V&A, 2010).
26 The Quilt Collection of The Quilters' Guild of the British Isles, St Anthony's Hall, Peasholme Green, York contains over 900 objects of patchwork and quilting and associated textile crafts spanning 1680 to the modern day.
27 *The British Quilt Heritage Project 1990-1993* archive is held by The Quilt Collection, York which recorded quilts remaining in private hands and made before 1960.
28 Roszika Parker, *The Subversive Stitch. Embroidery and the Making of the Feminine* (London: Bloomsbury, 2010). First published by The Women's Press, 1984.
29 For example, see the quilt made by Mary Elizabeth Hall Kinghorn. Patchwork quilt, made between 1900 and 1904 at Low Hall Farm, Kirkby Stephen, Westmorland. Made by the maker between the ages of 17-21-years-old before her marriage. British Heritage Quilt Study, BOS2519.
30 Barbara Burman, ed., *The Culture of Sewing: Gender, Consumption and Home Dressmaking* (Oxford: Berg, 1999).
31 We might think of needlework practice, and its material products, as actors which shaped girls' identity as much as recorded it, see Katie Barclay, 'New Materialism and the New History of Emotions', *Emotions: History, Culture, Society* 1, no. 1 (2017): 161–83, for a wider discussion of emotions, practice, and embodiment.
32 Leeds University Library Special Collections. Marie Hartley Archive. Handwritten research notes. MS1803/1. Folder 5. Crafts Vol 1.
33 *The Globe,* 13 May 1897. Susan M. Stabile, *Memory's Daughters: The Material Culture of Remembrance in Eighteenth-Century America* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004).
34 Leeds University Library Special Collections. Marie Hartley Archive. MS1803/21.
35 *Northern Star and Leeds General Advertiser*, 14 June 1845.

36 Serena Dyer, *Material Lives: Women Makers and Consumer Culture in the 18th Century* (London: Bloomsbury, 2021), 2.
37 Leeds University Library Special Collections. Marie Hartley Archive. Handwritten research notes. MS1803/3. Folder 6.
38 Quilting in a vernacular flat frame encouraged designs which travelled down the quilt towards the stitcher for maximum speed and efficiency.
39 Quilt templates, commonly made in card or brown paper often include owners' names or are made from parcel paper which reveals generational names. For example, see Quilting Templates, *c.* 1915. The Quilt Collection. 2012T-26-A for a collection curated by subsequent generations.
40 Ghostly outlines of actual quilts, encased in new covers and re-quilted, can sometimes be glimpsed, a practice both practical and emotional. See Mary Griffiths Central Medallion Patchwork Quilt, cotton and patchwork, 1890, The Quilt Association, 2012-1.
41 *Leeds Mercury*, 17 February 1936.
42 Barbara Rosenwein and Riccardo Cristiani, *What Is the History of Emotions*? (Cambridge: Polity, 2018); Katie Barclay, et al., eds, *Sources for the History of the Emotions* (London: Routledge, 2021), 8.
43 'Block Chain' describes an immutable ledger where new information is stored alongside its history, rather than overwriting it, a term used most commonly in digital financial networking. For another example of this multi-generational practice, see Martha Jane Pedley, White Wholecloth with Frill. Cotton. 1880. The Keld Resource Centre. 2016/2.
44 Deborah McGuire, 'Maintaining "The Importance of Aunts": Textiles, Emotions, and the Matrilineal Family'. A presentation to the AHRC Inheriting the Family Network on website. www.inheritingthefamily.org/resources/ Seminar 4 at 25:14.
45 *Newry Reporter.* 24 July 1890.
46 For example, a quilt from *c.* 1800 described in 1992 as 'much loved . . . been through the washing machine and in use daily'. British Heritage Quilt Study. NOM1498.
47 For example, see accession records for The Quilt Collection. 2020-15-A.
48 Accession records. Letter to Curator, 2003. The Quilt Collection. 2003-3-A.
49 A maker might also ask for their most prized quilt as a covering on their deathbed, for example, see British Heritage Quilt Study HAX2813.
50 *Preston Herald*, 11 April 1891.
51 Amy Louise Erickson, *Women and Property in Early Modern England* (London: Routledge, 1993).
52 Leeds University Library Special Collections. Marie Hartley Archive. MS1803/21.
53 British Heritage Quilt Study. BOS2593.
54 See Monique Sheer, 'Are Emotions a Kind of Practice (and is that what makes them have a History?). A Bourdieuian Approach to Understanding Emotion', *History and Theory* 51, no. 2 (2012): 193–220, for discussion of the role of practice, such as regular sewing practice, in generating emotion.
55 Isabella Peacock, 'Block Patchwork Quilt. Plain and Printed Cottons with Embroidered Centrepiece Including Makers Name and Date. 1855. 198cm x 237cm', *The Bowes Museum*, 2017, 2.
56 Hannah Hauxwell, *Hannah, The Complete Story* (London: Random Century, 1991), 110.
57 Accession notes. The Yarcombe Quilt. 'Cotton Patchwork Frame and Hand Quilted. 1830-1850. 214cm x 214cm', The Quilt Collection, 2018-15-A.
58 For example, the accessioning letter for a complex 1830 coverlet, The Quilt Collection, 2016-3-A.

59 On women's leisure see Catriona M. Parratt, *More Than Mere Amusement: Working-Class Women' s Leisure in England, 1750-1914* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2001) and Julie-Marie Strange, 'Leisure', in *Twentieth-Century Britain: Economic, Cultural and Social Change*, ed. Julie-Marie Strange and Francesca Carnevali (Harlow: Routledge, 2007), 197–213.
60 Hartley, MS1803/21.
61 *Northern Whig*, 4 September 1934.
62 Deborah McGuire, '"Our Folk on Twilting in Our Parlour": The Pragmatic Emotional Networks of the Quilt Stampers of Allendale, 1870-1920', *Quilt Studies Journal* 24 (2023): 37–69.
63 Leonora Davidoff and Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class 1780-1850* (London: Routledge, 2002), First published by Hutchinson Education 1987; Amanda Vickery, *Behind Closed Doors. At Home in Georgian England* (London and New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009); Joanne Bailey (Begiato), *Parenting in England 1760-1830* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).
64 Dyer, *Material Lives*.
65 *Leeds Mercury*, 17 February 1936.
66 On the mutability of memory see Joanne Begiato, 'Moving Objects. Emotional Transformation, Tangibility, and Time Travel', in Downes, Holloway and Randles, *Feeling Things*, 229–42.
67 See The Quilt Collection, 1996-3-A-D. 'Strippy quilt' is the vernacular term for a quilt made of seamed lengths of fabric, usually 5 or 7 lengths of alternating patterned fabric, quilted in elaborate designs.
68 Accession notes. Swaledale Quilt. *c* 1890–1900. Possible maker Mary Jane Dent Kilburn (1876–1982). Cotton patchwork, hand quilted. 164cm x 219cm, The Quilt Collection. 2011- 6-C.
69 Emotional silences are discussed in Julie-Marie Strange, *Death, Grief and Poverty in Britain, 1870-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).
70 See Alexander Langlands, *Craeft: An Inquiry into the Origins and True Meaning of Traditional Crafts* (London: Norton, 2107), for a discussion of the role of form and function in craft work.
71 Accession notes. The Quilt Collection, 2010-2017.
72 This volume further explores this threshold between family and institutional history. See Raphael Samuel, *Theatres of Memory* (London: Verso, 1994) on the importance of familial oral histories.
73 The ongoing 'Emotional Biographies' curatorial project between the author and The Quilt Collection.
74 *Cumberland & Westmorland Herald*, 13 July 1895.

3

Inheriting Accounts in Early Modern England, *c.* 1590–1810

Imogen Peck

In the late sixteenth century, Henry Greswold, a gentleman from Greet in Worcestershire, began a book to keep track of the prices his crops had fetched at local markets. When his first son was born in 1593, he made a note of his arrival among the records of sales and expenses; as more children arrived, Greswold continued to record the growth of the family unit alongside his financial accumulation. On his death in 1602, the book passed to his son, Humphrey, who later used it to keep his own records: by the time the last entry was made in 1808 the 'old Countbook', as it became known, contained the hands of five generations of the Greswold family across three centuries.[1]

In early modern family archives, financial records – like the Greswold 'Countbook' – rank alongside letters and legal papers as the items that were most frequently preserved. Once regarded as factual documents to be mined for evidence of prices and purchases, scholars have become increasingly aware that early modern financial accounts were partial, partisan documents, their contents shaped as much by cultural conventions and authorial aspirations as any material reality. In his influential work on early modern autobiography, Adam Smyth has shown that accounts were both the basis of other autobiographical texts, such as diaries and journals, and themselves a form of lifewriting through which authors expressed and forged their own subjectivity.[2] Though he rejects the term 'autobiography', Jason Scott-Warren has also drawn attention to the rhetorical dimensions of early modern accounts and the ways these texts could be used to assert the identity of their subject, and Katie Barclay has demonstrated the role that accounts played in constructing, negotiating and contesting social relationships within and beyond the family.[3] More recently, historians have also begun to attend to the emotional dimensions of accounts, in terms of both the ways emotions shaped the 'cultural and moral environment in which the early modern economy was practiced' and the emotions that accounting practices encoded and expressed.[4]

Yet while attention has been paid to the intentions, emotions and anxieties of account authors, we know rather less about the meanings that financial materials possessed for those who inherited them, and for future generations who did the same. As historians have long been aware, the survival of account books – like so many early modern documents – was the product of complex processes of intergenerational preservation

and transmission. These processes have rarely been the subject of historical analysis in their own right.[5] As records of money spent and received, accounts books are not as obviously evocative as the letters, diaries and other personal papers that they nestled alongside – and yet, as this chapter will show, their apparently practical function belies the fact that these materials were themselves imbued with a powerful emotional and sentimental significance that stretched across generations. Account books acted as lively articulations of family history, memory and identity, and, as they passed through the hands of each generation, they gained new layers of meaning that might extend – but also contest, subvert or ultimately replace – those of their original creators.

In most cases, account books passed down the male line and they were intimately bound up with the expression and transmission of principles of primogeniture and patriarchal inheritance, economic expertise and social status. This was not, however, an exclusively patrilineal practice. Women also inherited and bequeathed accounts, albeit with less frequency (or, at least, less archival survival) than their male counterparts and with a keener eye to the value of accounts as projections of family history, rather than as 'live' financial documents that might be consulted or continued. This chapter explores the gendered dimensions of this form of intergenerational record keeping, as well as the implications that social status and religious identity had for preservatory practices and the emotional (after)lives of accounts.

Beginning with a discussion of account books as sites of intergenerational family history writing, to be considered alongside more familiar texts such as family Bibles and recipe books, this chapter goes on to explore the multifarious meanings that these books possessed as they passed through successive generations. From statements of familial identity that engendered feelings of duty, pride, and also, in some cases, regret, to pedagogical tools that conveyed care, concern, or sought to spare their recipient distress, accounts were repositories of complex, and sometimes conflicting, emotions. It concludes with a discussion of empty account books, arguing that even when they went unfilled account books could be of sufficient sentimental significance to ensure preservation, their very blankness acting as a moving testament to accounts – and lives – that had gone unwritten. By paying attention to the multi-layered afterlives of financial accounts this chapter demonstrates that emotions were integral not just to the creation of early modern economic records but to their preservation and transmission, and to our understanding of early modern family collections more broadly.

Financial accounts and family history

Though the Greswold 'Countbook' was unusual in the consistency and temporal span of its entries, the combination of financial and family record keeping was a common feature of such books from the late sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries. Thomas Gibson's account book contained records of the births, baptisms (and, in some cases, deaths) of his children alongside those detailing his South Sea stocks, and the haberdasher Benjamin Frewen kept a similar record of family baptisms and burials in his ledger.[6] In some cases, it was this familial information which ultimately ensured a book's preservation and transmission. In the mid-eighteenth century, David Lewis, husband

of Mary Greswold and the latest custodian of the Greswold 'Countbook', added an additional title to the front cover that foregrounded its genealogical, as opposed to financial, heritage: 'A Book of the Pedegree and Genealogies of the Family of the Greswolds'.[7] For Lewis, the earlier dual function of this item had been eclipsed by its role as a record of family history.

Over the last decade, scholars working with early modern recipe books and family Bibles have drawn attention to the practical and ideological value of these genres as sites of family history. As Elaine Leong notes, recipe books were used to record practical, useful knowledge for future generations – knowledge which might include an awareness of one's ancestors as well as the best way to prepare a particular dish or cure an ailment.[8] Bibles, meanwhile, were, as Karin Wulf has demonstrated, 'recognisably and fundamentally genealogical'.[9] From Old Testament stories of patrilineal descent to illustrations that depicted 'every Family and Tribe With The Line of Our Savior Jesus Christ', genealogy was integral to both the theology and materiality of these texts and encouraged owners to embed their own family history within this broader genealogical and spiritual narrative.[10] Similar – if less immediately apparent – connections existed between financial accounts and family histories. From a practical perspective, births and deaths often necessitated monetary outlay, and in some cases the impetus to begin a family record was rooted in the need to document the associated costs. For example, Thomas Street's note that 'My wife dyed Dec 24 1733' was accompanied by a list of funeral expenses incurred for his recently deceased spouse.[11]

However, there was also a religious dimension to accounting that ensured it lent itself, conceptually and theologically, to family record keeping. Throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the keeping of accounts was closely associated with the introspection and salvational self-examination that characterized so much post-Reformation Protestantism.[12] When, at the end of each year, the Puritan minister Ralph Josselin cast up his accounts he made a reckoning of both his spiritual and his material estate, an equivalence that reflected the belief, particularly influential among the middling sort, that the accumulation of wealth was a product of divine favour and a person's faith in God.[13] Conversely, when, in 1755, the Wiltshire clothier George Wansey lost a large proportion of his fortune in the Lisbon earthquake he was quick to examine his internal state, likening his afflictions to Job and dwelling on the spiritual lessons that this economically ruinous turn of events proffered.[14] In this context, recording the gains and losses of one's family – marriages, births, deaths – in the same place as financial gains and losses had a conceptual coherence: both were a way of tracing God's providences, his favours, reproves and, ultimately, the signs of one's own salvation. The family book of the nonconformist minister Philip Henry and his son Matthew explicitly combined these various registers, containing accounts, legal documents and family history alongside reflections on the 'gracious' workings of God's providence.[15]

In many cases, the family records begun in account books were continued by later generations, transforming what started as financial records into family heirlooms. Gibson's genealogical records, for example, were continued after his death by his son Edmund, and the Greswold book, as noted earlier, was kept by at least five generations. However, the Greswold text also testifies to some of the hazards of using account books

as a site of family history, as well as the flexibility of their emotional meanings. In early modern accounting practice, it was not uncommon for scribes to rip out pages that contained irrelevant material – debts repaid, accounts settled – and in the case of the Greswold book several pages of vital family records were torn out sometime in the mid-seventeenth century. That the book's third owner, the second Henry Greswold, made a concerted effort to replicate and replace these records, even down to his grandfather's habit of inserting his initials over entries 'to signify his writing thereof', testifies to the import attached to the material as well as the factual content of these records.[16] Though Greswold could not recreate the haptic touch that had connected his ancestor to the book, he could recreate its visual appearance – indeed, one of the most striking features of the Greswold book is the consistent style used for entries, linking the members of each generation in a shared material practice (see Figure 3.1). The financial accounts written in the Greswold book, while not entirely jettisoned, became increasingly recessive as time went by, and were eventually themselves incorporated into the book's genealogical function. In the mid-eighteenth century, David Lewis went through the early accounts adding annotations that glossed them with additional, biographical information. For example, alongside a record of a payment to 'my father Smalbroke' for 'the hard corne' in 1595 he inserted the words 'Henry Greswold the other side [i.e. page] in 1595 was married to a Daughter of Mr Smalbroke'.[17] In this later iteration, financial accounts *became* family history.

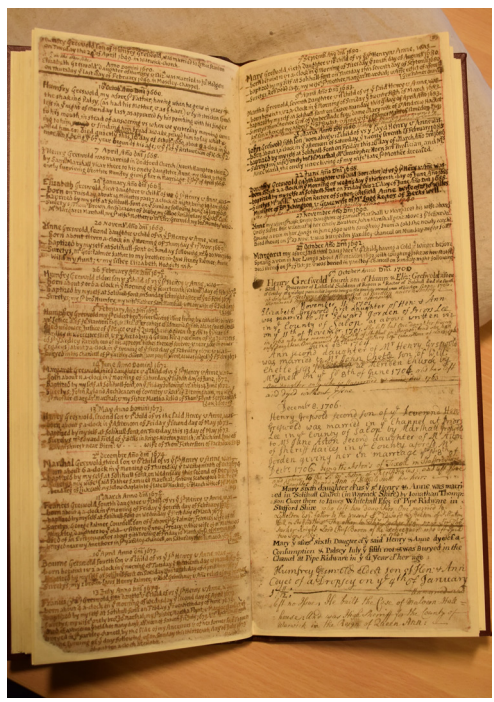

Figure 3.1 Pages from the Greswold Family 'Countbook'. Warwickshire Record Office, CR 1291/437.

By the late eighteenth century, then, the transition of the Greswold Countbook from financial to genealogical record was complete. However, as it passed through the generations, there is evidence which suggests that the emotional meaning of the book, once prized as evidence of the longevity and continuity of the Greswold line, became rather more ambivalent. Its final annotator, Henry Greswold Lewis, did not have any children of his own, and he increasingly used the book, not to record family births and marriages, but to chronicle the 'disastrous' state of his own marital relationship, which he attributed to the 'intolerable and insufferable . . . interference' of his mother-in-law.[18] Lewis and his wife separated in 1785, lived apart for several years, and though they eventually reconciled she died in 1802 from a laudanum addiction. In Lewis's hands, the book became less a site of family history than of self-justification: many of his entries were an attempt to absolve himself of responsibility for the breakdown of his marriage, while simultaneously lamenting the fact that this outcome had 'prevented the Greswold family being perpetuated by me'.[19] Even within a family, intergenerational books might possess different emotional registers for those who engage with them. For Lewis, who had ultimately 'failed' to continue the family line, the emotions that the Countbook evoked were closer to regret and disappointment than the sense of pride and familial duty that had previously sustained it.

To 'treade in his steps': Emulation and identity in early modern accounts

While some books, like the Greswold Countbook, came to be valued principally for their genealogical material, others were prized for their financial contents and were continued, not as records of births and deaths, but as accounts. When the Cheshire gent Thomas Minshull died in 1602 his son, Richard, began to use the book of payments and rents he inherited to record his own financial affairs.[20] The account ledger of William Brockman, MP for Beachborough 1690–5, was likewise continued by his son, James, while the records of the furrier and merchant's son Thomas Frewen also contained accounts written by his third son, the Reverend John Frewen, and, latterly, his grandson.[21] In part, continuing accounts in the same book as one's predecessors was a prudent and practical act: it saved money on fresh paper and also ensured that records which referred to the same properties or products remained together. The financial material in the intergenerational Gibson account book, for example, was largely concerned with family property and their stocks in the South Sea Company.[22]

However, the decision to keep one's accounts in an inherited book might also have a symbolic resonance that extended beyond the purely practical. In most cases – including the Minshulls, Brockmans, and Frewens – account books passed from father to son, just as the assets that they recorded would have been transferred down the generations in a process of patrilineal inheritance. By continuing these records their authors stepped – on the page as in the wider world – into their new positions within the family. This was a moment of emotional and social as well as material transmission, and, in some cases, the heirs of intergenerational accounts reflected on this, both more

and less obliquely. The Reverend John Frewen, for example, began his entries in his father's book with an 'Acc[oun]t of my own Estate begin[in]g at Mich 1702 being from the ye time of my Fathers death'.[23] Here, the death of the book's previous owner, and the material transfer which it had engendered, marked a new stage in both the author's life and their financial affairs: it was a moment to take stock and reflect on his revised material position, identity and place within the wider family.

Even more explicit was the memorandum penned by Richard Minshull when he took over his father Thomas's account book. Richard began with a record of his father's death before going on to express his desire that he might 'Live and deale in the world as he [i.e. his father, Thomas] hathe done before mee and I beseche the Lord of Heaven that I may treade in his steps and deale and meane as honestlie as ever my father that gon is before me did Amen'.[24] These comments reflected the belief, widespread in early modern England, that accounts communicated the moral and spiritual worth of their subject.[25] As the author of the guide to accounting *Debtor and Creditor Made Easie* (1682) put it, the financial ledger 'sets before thee the true state of every Mans Account' and 'remain[s] to Posterity to be scanned, to his Praise or Dispraise'.[26] Well-ordered accounts demonstrated creditworthiness, industry and prudence and, in his father's books, Richard perceived an example of theological as well as financial virtue. His desire to 'live and deale in the world' as his father had done equated his father's financial trade with his other earthly activities and the virtues that these embodied.[27] For Richard, his father's example was worthy of emulation for religious as well as financial reasons, and, by continuing his accounts in the same book, he sought to align himself with his predecessor, materially, socially and spiritually. Indeed, in the early years of his record keeping, Richard mimicked not just his father's habit of diligent accounting but his visual style. He replicated the structure and organization of his father's records, his habit of beginning each year with the word 'Emmanuel', and even his signature in an effort to ensure not just physical proximity but visual unity with the accounts of a much-respected father.

In other families, the accumulation – as opposed to continuation – of account books was itself a means of forging and transmitting familial identity. The Warminster clothier George Wansey, for example, was at least the fourth generation of his family to pursue this trade in the town, and his collections contained the business accounts of his predecessors, including his grandfather, also George Wansey (1649–1707).[28] Records of prices and sales, debts owed and paid, and fabric samples, these books contained a plethora of information about local business affairs and were valued partially for the role that they played in the preservation of knowledge. However, as I have argued elsewhere, these texts also helped to convey the family's broader economic and moral identity, establishing the Wanseys as a dynasty of Godly, industrious tradesmen.[29] When, in 1760, a cloth belonging to George's brother fetched an especially high price George made a note of its 'extraordinary' value, commenting that this was the highest 'known either in my own, or my fathers, or Grandfathers trade'.[30] By drawing on earlier accounts, George was able to construct and convey notable business information – but he also situated himself as a figure of authority, asserting his own place in a long line of expert clothiers. His brother William also sought to align himself with the financial activities of his predecessors, inscribing his name and familial connection on the front

cover of one of the first George Wansey's accounts alongside that of its original creator – 'George Wansey His Booke 1701 William 1734 his Grandson W.W:'.[31]

The accounts of the Warwickshire gentleman Thomas Fetherston were a similar blend of useful knowledge and the projection of family identity and prestige. Compiled in the mid-seventeenth century in the back of his mother's recipe book, Fetherston's 'appendix', as he termed it, was intended to preserve 'certaine things w[hi]ch through carelessness, or chance, might have beene scattered, and lost . . . w[hi]ch probably may be somewhat usefull to posterity'.[32] This included not only some genealogical information but also a large quantity of financial records concerning the family's estates and his own financial expenditure. These expenses, however, were not records of day-to-day money spent and paid, but a curated collection of high value, high status purchases: fountains, church bells, memorials to ancestors. By including these selective accounts, styled as 'memorandums', Fetherston was as much asserting his status as a wealthy gentleman – and, in the case of the £33 monument erected to commemorate his father, his posthumous expectations – as he was passing on knowledge that might be 'useful' to his progeny. The curation of accounts was more than a financial activity: it was an act of memory work, and, in some cases, a future-oriented articulation of individual and collective identity. By keeping or continuing these records heirs negotiated their own place within this complex web of meaning, utilizing accounts to convey their own aspirations and expectations, and to navigate the social, material and emotional complexities that attended their bequeathal.

Learning lessons: Accounts as education

Inherited accounts not only had an important role as articulations of family history and identity but also had a pedagogic purpose, educating the younger generation on the best way to keep their own records. This chapter has already noted the structural similarity between the accounts of fathers and sons like Thomas and Richard Minshull, and it seems likely that some accounts were intended and kept as models of effective accounting. In printed accounting guides, the idea that one would learn good practice from pursuing the efforts of elders was well established. Richard Dafforne, author of the accounting guide *The Merchant's Mirror* (1684), argued that such a text was only necessary due to the '*insufficient*' example that many merchants set for their servants, who would then inevitably '*be but* Equivalent Imitators', and the manual *Idea Rationaria, or The Perfect Accomptant* (1683), like many others, included extensive examples of well-drafted accounts on which readers might draw.[33]

While the similarity between the accounts of some fathers and sons is suggestive of the ways accounting knowledge was reproduced across generations, there are also some books which contain evidence that they were explicitly intended as educational tools – and not just for male offspring. The Derbyshire farmer Gilbert Soresbie, for example, considered himself 'especially' skilled in the keeping of accounts and he actively sought to transmit this knowledge to his daughter, Frances.[34] Among his papers he kept a letter of advice from father to daughter which recommended she make 'Extraordinary Improvement in those necessary Accomplishments . . . and

Accompts, which will always distinguish you from those of your own sex', and at the top of a page in one of his account books he wrote the words 'Give ear fare daughter of love to the InStrucshons [*sic*] of prudence'.[35] These lines were borrowed from Robert Dodsley's collection of moral precepts *The Oeconomy of Human Life*, first published in 1750, and, in their full iteration, continued with an encouragement to women that they should endeavour to cultivate the 'charms' of the mind.[36] By including them in his own accounts, Soresbie perhaps sought to inspire his daughter, with whose financial education he was so concerned, to heed his example and to use his book as a guide to good conduct.

The transmission of account books was an act of care, an investment – both practical and emotional – in a child's future that offered encouragement and guidance, as well as accounting techniques that the recipient could emulate. Though it is not clear whether Frances followed her father's advice, Soresbie's efforts to transmit financial knowledge to his daughter suggest that, while these books were more commonly passed between fathers and sons, intergenerational accounts were not an exclusively male domain, just as the matriarchal dimensions of family recipe books did not preclude male involvement.[37] Indeed, Thomas Fetherston's decision to embed his family accounts in the back of his mother's recipe book, noted earlier, points to the permeability of these two genres, combining recipes and accounts to create a multifaceted family heirloom.

Another incidence of female inheritance can be found in the collections of the eighteenth-century clergyman's wife Jane Johnson, who, in 1756, inherited a large number of family records, including several financial accounts, from her deceased husband. As well as illustrating the diverse pathways family papers might take – horizontally across as well as down and even up generations – these records also attest to the flexible meanings attached to accounts and the ways these could be subverted and reshaped. Among these papers was a pair of estate accounts which enumerated the lands that William Johnson (Jane's father-in-law) had held in Lincolnshire, Rutland and Northampton in the late seventeenth century. She inscribed these records with a note that explicitly denied them any practical value, observing that the accounts were 'of no manner of use, all the Estates within mention'd being sold'.[38] They were 'only kept', she commented:

> for a proof of what Estates William Johnson Esq . . . was possessed of besides Wytham, and Olney . . . And not withstanding all these Estates he had like to have been a Beggar, through the Imprudence Ill-conduct and Extravagence of his Father Thomas Johnson Esqr of Olney Bucks. And he had several Loses Law Suits and Misfortunes owing to the ill conduct and Knavery of others, but he had no faults of his own, so God Dilivered him out of all, and his Descendants are still in possession of Good Estates. . . . He [Thomas Johnson] was A very sensible, good-natured, agreeable man, but horribly imprudent.[39]

Through her annotations, Jane transformed these records from estate accounts into a repository of family history and a cautionary tale about the consequences of financial recklessness. The pedagogic value of the accounts lay not in their potential for emulation but in the moral lessons that they conveyed about the risks of poor money

management, tempered by an emphasis on the divine favour that might be shown to those who, like William, were apparently not responsible for the trials that they had been forced to endure. By inscribing this piece of family history on the accounts, Jane proffered material evidence of its veracity – the accounts themselves were 'proof' of estates no longer held – while her notes reshaped their meaning to ensure future generations would draw the requisite lessons about both financial management and their own family history.[40]

This reinterpretation of the Johnson accounts as a cautionary tale was amplified further by later custodians. In the mid-nineteenth century, for example, Lucy Johnson (wife of William Augustus Johnson and Jane's granddaughter-in-law) copied several of Jane's papers into her family album, including her account of the financially feckless Thomas Johnson. To this she added the lines 'O to what distress and inconvenience does extravagance bring people let Thomas Johnson of Olney be a warning to all his posterity', a formulation that made the moral lesson future generations should draw even more explicit, not least by emphasizing the emotional affect that failure to heed this advice might augur.[41] Accounts had pedagogic potential, but the lessons that they taught and the meanings and emotions that they embodied were not fixed: they could be reframed and reinterpreted as time went by. Once a record of financial success, William Johnson's accounts ultimately became a 'warning' and a material reminder of emotional 'distress', a transition that attests to the flexibility and instability of both intergenerational accounts and the contents of family archives more broadly.

Blank books

Thus far, this chapter has attended to account books whose preservation, transmission and emotional meanings derived from their contents. Not all account books, however, got filled, and this final section considers the emotional meanings that might derive from their very blankness. During the seventeenth century, a black page devoid of writing came to be used to denote death and commemoration, and by the mid-eighteenth century, this tradition was sufficiently established that Lawrence Sterne was able to play on the convention in his *Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy* (1759), including a printed black page to mark the death of parson Yorick.[42] More prosaically, the death of an author left their diary or journal 'open', and the heirs of many such texts could not resist the urge to use these empty pages to finish the story. George Wansey's chronicle of the 1680s, for example, ends with a record of his own death, inserted by a later family member.[43] Unwritten pages were poignant spaces that symbolized death and loss, while the corresponding desire to fill them with content – from unblemished black to final inscriptions – testified to an enduring concern with adequate memorialization and the transformation of absence and unwritten words into meaningful signifiers.

In this context, accounts that had not been written had the potential to be as emotionally significant as those that had. A striking example of this can be seen in the merchant John Sanderson's 'pilgrimage', a two-volume narrative of his life (of which only one is extant) written in two 'great bookes'.[44] These books, Sanderson

noted, had been 'my fathers before I was boarne, and should have bine filled w[i]th other acc[om]pts, yf God had pleased to pros[pe]r his tradeinge; but the Lord . . . did never lett him'.[45] Here, Sanderson referred to his father's ill health, which had led to the contraction of his trade as a hatter and, ultimately, his death. The word 'accompts', meanwhile, possessed a double meaning – it referred, both to the financial accounts that his father did not get a chance to write, and to the prose account with which Sanderson himself had filled the book. By writing his record in these blank account books, Sanderson was able to transform financial failure into earthly success – and yet, by recording the book's original purpose he also ensured that his father's losses and loss were never truly erased, but only overwritten. His inscription memorialized both the book's original purpose and its owner, creating a kind of palimpsest in which multiple layers of meaning – and multiple kinds of account – coexisted. As Simone Hanebaum puts it, the book was a 'monument to Sanderson, but also a monument to the unfilled possibilities of the elder Sanderson'.[46] It represents both absence and presence, material and familial gain and loss. For Sanderson, these inherited account books possessed a sentimental significance that derived, not from their contents, but from the very absence of contents, a blankness which testified to a life – and to accounts – that had gone unwritten.

Conclusion

From duty and pride to regret and distress, early modern accounts were rich repositories of emotional meaning that belied their apparently factual, practical function. Emotions were integral, not just to the creation of early modern account books, but to their preservation and transmission, transforming individual financial records into intergenerational heirlooms. Accounts books were bequeathed and preserved by men, and, less commonly, women, and by farmers and gentleman, and the meanings and emotions that accounts conveyed were inflected by a person's gender and social status. Women, for example, rarely continued accounts *as* accounts, but they might transform them into articulations of family history or cautionary tales, and while the accumulation of business accounts by the Wanseys conveyed their identity as knowledgeable, godly and industrious middling-sort tradesmen, the gentleman Thomas Fetherston was more concerned with recording high status purchases that cemented his family's formidable reputation as wealthy social elites. Yet while emotions often underpinned the keeping of accounts, the meanings and feelings evoked by financial records were not fixed and could be reshaped as time went by, creating layers of emotional meaning that could contest, subvert or even ultimately replace those of their original creator. Indeed, in writing the emotional lives of accounts, we ourselves become participants in these processes of emotional creation and revision. It is hard to read Henry Greswold Lewis's regretful meditations on the end of the Greswold line, or John Street's record of the cost of his wife's coffin, without experiencing one's own emotional response – responses which are only the latest in a long line of multi-layered emotional responses forged, and reinforced, through the keeping of financial accounts.

Notes

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1 Warwickshire Record Office, CR 1291/437.

2 Adam Smyth, *Autobiography in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 57–122; Adam Smyth, 'Money, Accounting, and Life-writing, 1600-1700: Balancing a Life', in *A History of English Autobiography*, ed. Adam Smyth (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 86–100.

3 Jason Scott-Warren, 'Early Modern Bookkeeping and Life-writing Revisited: Accounting for Richard Stonley', *Past and Present* 230, no. 11 (2016): 151–70; Katie Barclay, 'Illicit Intimacies: The Many Families of Gilbert Innes of Stow (1751-1832)', *Gender & History* 27, no. 3 (2015): 576–90 (esp. 582–5). See also James Aho, *Confession and Bookkeeping: The Religious, Moral, and Rhetorical Roots of Modern Accounting* (New York Press: University of New York Press, 2005) and Karen Harvey, *The Little Republic: Masculinity and Domestic Authority in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), esp. 72–98.

4 Merridee L. Bailey, 'Economic Records', in *Early Modern Emotions: An Introduction*, ed. Susan Broomhall (London: Routledge, 2016), 108–11 (109). See, for example, Katie Barclay, 'Accounting for the Middling Sorts: Emotions and the Family-Business, c. 1750-1832', in *The Business of Emotions in Modern History*, ed. Mandy L. Cooper and Andrew Popp (London: Bloomsbury, 2023), 31–48.

5 For exceptions, mostly rooted in studies of nonconformist culture and religious writing, see Sandra Stanley Holton, *Quaker Women: Personal Life, Memory, and Radicalism in the Lives of Women Friends, 1780–1930* (Abingdon: Ashgate, 2007); Helen Smith, 'Quaker Women, Family Archives, and the Construction of Identity: Analysing the Memoirs and Personal Papers of Elizabeth Taylor Cadbury (1858-1951)', *Quaker Studies* 16, no. 1 (2011): 124–34; Alexandra Walsham, *Generations: Age, Ancestry, and Memory in the English Reformations* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2023), 489–506.

6 Bodleian Library, MS Eng. c.3200, f. 21, 691, 891; East Sussex Record Office, FRE/521, f. 426. For other examples see Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre, 161/90M; Gloucestershire Archives D2929 and D326/F1; Lincolnshire Archives, 1/Fane/6/13/16; Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre, 2533/1 and 2008/1.

7 Warwickshire Record Office, CR 1291/437, front cover.

8 Elaine Leong, 'Collecting Knowledge for the Family: Recipes, Gender, and Practical Knowledge in the Early Modern English Household', *Centaurus* 55, no. 2 (2013): 81–103.

9 Karin Wulf, 'Bible, King, and Common Law: Genealogical Literacies and Family History Practices in British America', *Early American Studies* 10, no. 3 (2012): 467–502 (473).

10 John Speed, *The Genealogies recorded in the Sacred Scriptures according to every family and tribe* (London, 1611). See Wulf, 'Bible, King, and Common Law'.

11 Cheshire Record Office, ZDH5/497, n.p.

12 See, for example, Craig Muldrew, *The Economy of Obligation: The Culture of Credit and Social Relations in Early Modern England* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 1998); Matthew Kadane, *The Watchful Clothier: Life of an Eighteenth-Century Protestant Capitalist* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013).

13 Muldrew, *The Economy of Obligation*, 144.
14 Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre, 314/16, n.p.
15 Bodleian Library, MS Eng. Misc. c293, f. 45.
16 Warwickshire Record Office, CR 1291/437, n.p.
17 Ibid.
18 Ibid. Lewis's only child was stillborn; their birth is not chronicled in the book and is mentioned only in his account of his wife's illness and subsequent death.
19 Ibid.
20 Cheshire Record Office, DBW/P/J/5.
21 British Library, Add MS 45217; East Sussex Record Office, FRE/525.
22 Bodleian Library, MS Eng. c.3200.
23 East Sussex Record Office, FRE/525, f. 177v.
24 Cheshire Record Office, DBW/P/J/5, n.p.
25 Smyth, *Autobiography,* 57–122.
26 Stephen Monteage, *Debtor and Creditor Made Easie, or, A Short Instruction for the Attaining the Right Use of Accounts after the Best Method Used by Merchants* (London, 1682), sig. A3v, B1r.
27 Cheshire Record Office, DBW/P/J/5, n.p.
28 Wiltshire Record History Centre, 314/1-3, 314/2/1, 314/3/1.
29 Imogen Peck, '"Of No Sort of Use"?: Manuscripts, Memory, and the Family Archive in Eighteenth Century England', *Cultural and Social History* 20, no. 2 (2023): 183–204 (esp. 11–12).
30 Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre, 314/2/1, memorandum.
31 Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre, 314/1/1, front cover.
32 Warwickshire Record Office, CR 2981/6/3/18.
33 Richard Dafforne, *The Merchant's Mirror: Or, Directions For the Perfect Ordering and Keeping of his Accounts* (London, 1684), sig. A2v; Robert Colinson, *Idea Rationaria*, *or The Perfect Accomptant* (Edinburgh, 1683).
34 Derbyshire Record Office, D331/12/26/1. For another example of accounts as a teaching tool see the books of Timothy Tyrell, quoted in Harvey, *The Little Republic*, 88.
35 Derbyshire Record Office, D331/12/26/1; D331/12/18/3, n.p.
36 Robert Dodsley, *The Oeconomy of Human Life* (London, 1792 ed.), 59.
37 Leong, 'Collecting Knowledge'.
38 Bodleian Library, MS Don. b 39 and 40.
39 Ibid.
40 Further discussion of the Johnson papers see Peck, 'Of No Sort of Use', and Susan Whyman, *The Pen and the People: English Letter Writers 1660-1880* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 161–90.
41 Lincolnshire Record Office, Johnson/1/3, f. 9v.
42 For example, Abraham Darcie, *A Monumentall Pyramide* (London, 1624); Lawrence Sterne, *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman*, ed. Melvyn New and Joan New (London: University Press of Florida, 2003), 31.
43 Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre, 314/1/2. See also Derbyshire Record Office D2079/1.
44 British Library, Lansdowne MS 241, f. 2r, f. 243r. For an excellent discussion of these texts see Simone Hanebaum, 'Textual Monumentality and Memory in Early Modern England, 1560-c. 1650' (Unpublished PhD thesis, 2019), 253–72.
45 Ibid., f. 243r.
46 Hanebaum, 'Textual Monumentality', 272.

4

‘As Private as a Letter’

The *Handbook of Chatsworth*, Intergenerational Family Writing and Feminized Archival Transmission at Chatsworth House

Lucy Brownson

‘My plan is to suppose that you are just arrived, and that I show you every room and corner of the house’.[1] Thus begins the *Handbook of Chatsworth and Hardwick*, an irreverent and intimate room-by-room account of the rural Derbyshire residences of William Cavendish, sixth duke of Devonshire (1790–1858), penned in the winter of 1844–5 and privately printed by Frederic Shoberl Jr. Framed as an extended epistolary address to the duke’s sister Harriet Leveson-Gower, Countess Granville (1785–1862), the *Handbook* primarily comprises a personal tour of Chatsworth House, the ancestral home that the duke – a lifelong bachelor, artistic patron and collector of *objets d’art* – remade from a quintessentially Baroque country house into a Georgian playground of elite consumption.[2] For many decades the *Handbook* was the only full-length account of the House and its collections, printed in a very small run at the duke’s request (his prefatory address beseeches his reader to consider its contents ‘as private as a letter’).[3] At once personal memoir, architectural and art-historical account, and archival record, the duke’s *Handbook* has few literary antecedents – as John Martin Robinson notes in the introduction to a 2020 facsimile edition, the book is ‘entirely the duke’s own conception and achievement’, intercutting personal memories, family lore and private jokes with reflections on a lifetime of collecting everything from marble sculpture to rare books and manuscripts.[4] The *Handbook* is thus a canonical text within the Devonshires’ broader dynastic legacy and collective history, not least because it was inherited and thereafter periodically revisited by several of the duke’s female descendants, who refashioned it as a kind of iterative, intergenerational and highly personal archival tradition wherein objects and spaces are possessed of emotional and social lives, are not only status symbols but apparatuses of intergenerational memory. By augmenting the duke’s original text and undertaking their own revisions thereof, several generations of Devonshire women have embraced the *Handbook* as a means of

documenting Chatsworth as they have known and experienced it; in so doing, these women have forged a shared intellectual lineage and life-writing tradition.

Taking as its starting point an illustrated edition of the sixth duke's original text, this chapter explores how the *Handbook of Chatsworth* variously represents an intergenerational archival practice, a mode of knowledge transfer and intellectual exchange between Devonshire women, and a commercial tool to shore up the continued dynastic success of Chatsworth. It begins by tracing the efforts of the sixth duke's great-niece, Lady Louisa Egerton (1835–1907), to illustrate the large-paper edition the duke left unfinished, and her attempts to undertake her own revised version in the 1890s. Although Louisa's own revision ultimately went unfinished, it is salient to my consideration of the *Handbook* because it arguably signifies the start of an archival and intellectual tradition among Devonshire women, thereby representing Louisa's own commitment to cultivating a lineage of knowledge pertaining to the family and their cultural assets. As such, this chapter then explores the 1924 revision of the *Handbook* penned by Lady Louisa's niece, Duchess Evelyn Cavendish (1870–1960), as a mechanism for imprinting her own identity and memory on the family lore and handing this collective knowledge on to her daughter-in-law and successor, Mary, to whom the text is dedicated. Finally, this chapter considers the most recent iteration of the *Handbook* authored by Duchess Deborah Cavendish (1920–2014), her phenomenally successful memoir-cum-guidebook *The House: A Portrait of Chatsworth* (1982; revised and republished 2002), examining its clever utilization of what Kate Retford calls an 'invitation to prurience', a seductive appeal to readers' curiosity that plays into the trope of the country house as both lived-in family home and public-facing heritage attraction.[5]

In analysing the dynastic, emotional and social functions of this feminized archival tradition among Devonshire women, this chapter contributes to an emergent body of scholarship at the intersection of material culture studies, country house studies, and the history of emotions, wherein aristocratic women are variously positioned as key agents of intellectual, social and emotional life in and around the British country house, including as collectors of material culture, propagators of dynastic and social networks, and – salient to this volume – primary family documentarians and keepers of a collective emotional history.[6] Within this broader intellectual landscape, the *Handbook of Chatsworth* figures as an alternative form of inheritance and a documentary practice by which its female disseminators might weave their own emotional stories into Chatsworth's otherwise male-dominated grand historical narrative, imprinting a mark of ownership over an otherwise imposingly grand bastion of patriarchy and male primogeniture.

Lady Louisa Egerton and the *Handbook of Chatsworth*

Given its genre-straddling quality, it is difficult to situate the *Handbook of Chatsworth* within a pre-existing literary tradition relating to country houses: neither public guidebook nor factual inventory, it is perhaps best understood in its original iteration as a private family text and a mode of what Imogen Peck calls 'intergenerational archival

transmission'.[7] Having said this, it does have several potential literary predecessors in the form of scribal tours of country houses written by their owners, one of which is the writer Horace Walpole's catchily titled *Description of the Villa of Mr Horace Walpole, at Strawberry Hill near Twickenham, Middlesex: With an Inventory of the Furniture, Pictures, Curiosities etc.* (1774).[8] Walpole's account of his Gothic Revival villa intersperses personal narrative with descriptive prose, just as the sixth duke's *Handbook* does, and Walpole was likewise explicit in his desire that the *Description* remained private, stating that it was 'not . . . intended for public sale, and originally was meant only to assist those who should visit the place'.[9] Other descriptive and highly personal accounts that predate the *Handbook* include Sir Richard Colt Hoare's *Description of the House and Gardens at Stourhead* (1800), Nathaniel Curzon, Lord Scarsdale's 1869 guide to Kedleston Hall and the sixth earl of Carlisle's *Descriptive Catalogue of the Pictures at Castle Howard* (1805);[10] given that this latter title was written by Devonshire's brother-in-law, it may indeed have provided direct inspiration for his own account.[11]

The *Handbook* also inspired a direct imitation: the duchess of Cleveland's 1870 *Handbook for Raby Castle*, which explicitly references 'an account of Chatsworth, written in "colloquial" style by the last duke of Devonshire' as her source of inspiration, describing it as 'very light reading, and yet [it] contained every detail of all he had planned and done there, and an account of his various collections, as well as a description of most of the rooms in the house'.[12] The common impulse that motivates all of these authors, and thus links these ostensibly disparate texts, is posterity. There is a recurrent desire to create a written record of their legacy, and to thus pass this on as an important material corollary of that legacy – essentially, a book of family history and lore – which inherently positions the producer of the text as the propagator of a genealogical and dynastic tradition. At Chatsworth, the sixth duke's *Handbook* became an apparatus of intergenerational memory, (auto)biography and dynastic inheritance, sparking a tradition that would carry down the female line for over a century.

By the time the duke's great-niece, Lady Louisa Egerton, began revising the *Handbook of Chatsworth* in 1894, it had assumed canonical status among family members. Although Louisa rarely features as more than a footnote in published histories of Chatsworth and the Devonshires today, the archival traces she left behind at Chatsworth depict her as the family's primary documentarian and informal librarian-cum-archivist-cum-curator, duties to which she dedicated herself long after she married and moved out of her natal household.[13] Born on 16 March 1835, Lady Louisa Cavendish (later Egerton) was the second child and only daughter of William Cavendish, seventh duke of Devonshire (1808–91), and Blanche Howard, countess of Burlington (1812–40). Upon losing her mother at age five, Louisa became the sole woman in her immediate family: her father would never remarry and her elder brother Spencer (1833–1907), the future eighth duke, eventually married at the age of fifty-nine. As such, Louisa took on many of the duties, labours and obligations – social, emotional and economic – that might otherwise befall the wife of a titled man. Ruth Larsen's invocation of a *motherer*, an unmarried elite woman (often a daughter, aunt or niece) 'who fulfil[s] the maternal practice of motherhood separate from the biological role of maternity', provides a useful conceptual framework for understanding the kind of elite domesticity that Louisa performed, within both her father and her brother's

respective households.[14] In her study of elite single women in Yorkshire country houses in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, Larsen notes that unmarried sisters and aunts 'were often a crucial, and appreciated, part of country house society'.[15] Indeed, Louisa clearly commanded respect and recognition in her own lifetime, with one 1907 obituary describing her as 'one who from early youth had been called upon by Providence to be her father's chief companion and helper; one upon whom the duties of mature age fell at a time when such duties rarely fall upon those of her age, and responsibilities asked of her at a time when she was much below the usual age'.[16]

Louisa also keenly pursued many of the cultural and literary traditions set in motion by her eccentric great-uncle. In the early 1870s, she facilitated the first widescale cataloguing project in the Chatsworth Library to assess and impose some consistent organizational scheme onto the duke's sizeable book collection; thereafter, she would facilitate scholarly access to the Library and its treasures by relaying books and manuscripts by courier between Chatsworth and the reading room of the British Museum.[17] Indeed, the Chatsworth Library may be where she first encountered the bound, large-paper copy of the *Handbook* featuring prints and drawings of many of the scenes, artworks and architectural features described in the textual account, a half-finished illustrated edition which thus became her prized legacy project. Combining printed text and visual media in this way is known as extra-illustration, pithily defined by art historian Lucy Peltz as 'the process whereby texts, normally in their published state, were customised by the incorporation of thematically linked prints, watercolours, and other visual materials'.[18] Although extra-illustration was a popular cultural practice in the early nineteenth century, by the latter half of the century its popularity had dwindled, largely thanks to 'the inexorable rise of museums and libraries as repositories of history, [and] the faltering print market'.[19]

For Louisa, extra-illustrating the *Handbook* was at least as much an emotional and dynastic practice as it was a cultural one, and she clearly considered it an important contribution to the familial tradition of artistic patronage and furthering art-historical knowledge among future generations. This much is evident in an 1894 letter to her older brother, wherein she reflects on the *Handbook* as 'my pleasant and entertaining work for many years', a shorthand articulation of her love for the house itself and for furthering the familial heritage of which it is a material assemblage.[20] The skill and intricacy with which Louisa's 'little sketches' (a modest understatement: these are technically complex watercolours, ink drawings and pencil sketches, many of them original works) have been executed speak to both the depth of her knowledge of the collections and her clear veneration of her great-uncle, as she aims to represent them in ways which remain faithful to his description and original arrangement. Of note are her intricately detailed ink drawings of picture hanging arrangements as described textually by the sixth duke, complete with labels and attributions written in tiny cursive. Moreover, Peltz's contention that many engaged in the practice of extra-illustration by way of 'contributing to a communal project whose scope they could both refine and augment' makes way for a recognition of Louisa's illustration work as a means of contributing to – and making her own mark on – a much longer cultural tradition of collection, display and documentation, one in which the private and the public were by this point inextricable from (and in many ways mutually dependent on) each other.[21]

Figure 4.1 The Tribune between the Ante Library and Dining Room, designed by Sir Jeffry Wyatville (1766–1840), watercolour by Lady Louisa Egerton. © The Devonshire Collections, Chatsworth. Reproduced by permission of Chatsworth Settlement Trustees.

Indeed, Louisa's understanding of the *Handbook* as both a canonical text and an ongoing, communal project of life-writing and archival transmission are most clearly articulated in her own words. In the preface to her 1894 revision of the *Handbook*, Louisa states that she hopes the *Handbook* 'may continue to future generations to be the help [and] interest which it has been to me for over 30 years.'[22] This attempt to reprise her great-uncle's publication was a highly ambitious project that would remain unrealized – Louisa's own revision remained woefully incomplete, a sparsely populated notebook containing a handful of brief notes about the updated placement or disposition of objects at Chatsworth. Even so, its survival even in this unfinished form is important because it arguably signifies the beginning of an archival and intellectual tradition among Devonshire women, thereby representing Louisa's own efforts to cultivate and propagate the family's shared cultural, aesthetic and emotional histories.

The afterlives of the *Handbook*

Around thirty years after Lady Louisa Egerton's stalled attempt to write a revised *Handbook of Chatsworth*, her niece by marriage, Evelyn Cavendish, duchess of Devonshire, would pen her own revision with comparative success. Begun in January 1924, the duchess's handwritten *Handbook* runs to four volumes – or more accurately, paperback jotters, each bound in paper printed with tiny golden stars. A prefatory dedication to her daughter-in-law and successor immediately establishes that this is a familial text, the latest iteration of the longer tradition begun by the duke and taken forward by Devonshire women thereafter.[23] Having married Victor Cavendish (1868–1938), heir presumptive of the eighth duke, in 1892, Duchess Evelyn moved to Chatsworth upon her husband's accession to the dukedom in 1908. She set about remodelling some of the house's older features and fittings almost immediately thereafter, employing the architect W. H. Romaine-Walker to redesign and replace the stairs and balconies in the Painted Hall in 1912, and employing conservators to restore the ceiling mural by Louis Laguerre.[24] She also had the Great Conservatory, an enormous botanical glasshouse designed by Sir Joseph Paxton at the behest of the sixth duke and finished in 1840, dynamited in 1920, leaving only the supporting walls standing. For this and several other executive decisions, the duchess has since been maligned by her husband's biographer, Richard Davenport-Hines, as 'cold, authoritarian, and frugal', a rather harsh assessment which does not account for the fact that she was essentially charged with drastically economizing the Devonshire inheritance in the wake of a world war and, from 1925 onwards, her husband's limited capacity to manage the estate after suffering from a stroke.[25] Certainly, this notion of the duchess as a frugal and uncharitable woman does not carry through in her handwritten prose, which suffuses meticulous descriptions of the custodial and provenancial histories of particular objects and spaces with personal anecdotes and warm, heartfelt recollections of raising her seven children and a growing brood of young grandchildren in these rooms. A single room becomes a palimpsest of both the aesthetic tastes and emotional lives of successive owners – the Billiard Room, for instance, has variously been a setting for intricate eighteenth-century woodcarvings by local artisan Samuel Watson (1662–1715), fine Persian rugs and Georgian marble chimneypieces, a Victorian schoolroom for the duchess's children, and latterly, before the First World War, 'the children's breakfast and tearoom, where very rowdy teas which were much more popular than those upstairs [in the State Dining Room] used to take place.'[26] The duchess's prose slips easily between the aesthetic and the emotional in this way throughout, using rooms and objects as touchpoints to both the intellectual and emotional history of Chatsworth.

Duchess Evelyn Cavendish's revised *Handbook* opens by addressing her 'dear daughter-in-law', Mary (née Gascoyne-Cecil), stating her hope that the text 'will make it possible for you, who are fortunately just as much interested in the place as I am, to again identify objects which have been moved to fresh places'.[27] The degree of truth in this statement is debatable: the duchess's letters to her former librarian and confidante, Francis Thompson, in the final decade of her life belie a persistent

anxiety about her son and daughter-in-law's distinct *lack* of interest in the collections and historic fabric of Chatsworth – in July 1950, for instance, she offers up a searing critique of Duchess Mary's lack of adequate conservation measures for the pictures at Chatsworth, sardonically calling her 'my darling daughter-in-law' and questioning 'whether she wants anything to be left in ten years' time or not'.[28] These later letters offer some potential context for why, despite the prefatory dedication to Mary, the binding of the first volume is inscribed with the words 'For Andrew' – Andrew Cavendish, Evelyn's grandson, who would become the eleventh duke of Devonshire when his older brother William died before inheriting title in 1944. Evelyn's inscription of Andrew's name suggests she may have bypassed a generation and decided to hand the *Handbook* directly on to her grandson, possibly at a point when relations between her and her immediate successors began to sour. Taken together with this additional context, a seemingly innocuous cover annotation gestures towards a fraught relationship between mother- and daughter-in-law; the physicality of the archival record itself thus sheds light on some of the complex, emotionally charged family dynamics that are – likely deliberately – omitted from the text itself for posterity's sake.

Duchess Evelyn's *Handbook* continuously intercuts art-historical details with memoir, flitting between affectionate recollections of her infant children's 'loud singing of nursery rhymes' in the Chapel and the specifics of the exquisitely carved seventeenth-century marble altar that served as the backdrop to this joyous scene.[29] As if consciously positioning her text as part of a longer dynastic legacy, the duchess frequently refers to Lady Louisa Egerton as the primary source of her knowledge of particular objects and spaces, and occasionally, of a persistent quandary – the duchess writes, for instance, that her aunt 'says in her notes that [the scientist] Henry Cavendish's library was moved from Hardwick [Hall] to Chatsworth – where is it?'[30] Elsewhere, she forges familial lore all of her own as she marks out a place for herself in the architectural and social of the house – a particularly memorable example of this is her description of the refurbishment of the Painted Hall, wherein she recalls:

> The very mean little glass doors [on the ground floor] were altered to go better with the windows on the upper floors. There was some difficulty in getting old plate glass to match the other windows – new glass looks different from outside. Luckily for us the suffragettes broke some old windows in Bond Street. Mr Romaine-Walker bought them up and the glass when bevelled matched perfectly.[31]

The 'old windows' to which the duchess refers here are actually material remnants of a defining moment in the fight for British women's suffrage: the window-smashing campaigns that erupted across the West End of London in early 1912, led by increasingly militant suffragettes from the Women's Social and Political Union.[32] Duchess Evelyn and her husband, Victor, were not supportive of the suffragettes' fight – quite the opposite, in September 1910 the ninth duke donated £100 as a contribution towards the establishment of the National League for Opposing Woman Suffrage.[33] Any records associated with the purchase and fitting of the glass have long since eluded the archives at Chatsworth, but this tantalizing story has nonetheless been folded into the lore of the House by her successor, Deborah Cavendish (née Mitford), duchess of Devonshire.

Long regarded as the charismatic public face of Chatsworth, the late Duchess Deborah Cavendish is credited with transforming what was a debt-wracked post-war estate into a thoroughly modern, thriving commercial empire and heritage attraction. She trailblazed a phenomenally successful literary career, documenting Chatsworth as she knew it in her series of bestselling memoirs and, salient to this chapter, her phenomenally successful book, *The House: A Portrait of Chatsworth*.[34] First published as a public memoir-cum-guidebook in 1982 and reworked as an illustrated and expanded edition in 2002, *The House* explicitly adopts the same format of the sixth duke's *Handbook*: a room-by-room tour of Chatsworth, told as a personalized account wherein artistic masterpieces are first and foremost *aides-memoire* to humorous anecdotes and oft-repeated family stories.[35] Retford asserts that *The House* 'brings the revelatory quality of such accounts of country houses . . . to the fore,' playing into the well-trodden (and commercially popular) trope of the country house as dynamic family home rather than museum.[36] Both Duchess Deborah's text and Retford's assessment thereof call to mind Vita Sackville-West's declaration in 1941, as she confronted the possibility that her ancestral home of Knole would be handed on to the National Trust, that '[a] museum is a dead thing; a house which is still the home of men and women is a living thing which has not lost its soul'.[37] Indeed, *The House* enlivens not only the Devonshires themselves but the wider ecology of the estate and all those who lived and worked there during Duchess Deborah's time; it includes the duchess's interviews with lifelong estate labourers, diary entries from former domestic servants, and in the 2002 edition, glossy photographs of the contemporary house team clustered around the staircase in the Painted Hall.[38]

In many respects, Duchess Deborah's guidebook is the cumulative, public product of a much longer, hitherto private tradition, and it is the first text to explicitly bring together the intergenerational currents of knowledge of which the duchess was clearly a beneficiary. *The House* offers one of the only print descriptions, albeit brief, of the duchess's great-great-aunt (and the originator of this revisionary tradition) Lady Louisa Egerton, describing how she 'looked after [her father] and her brother Cav [Spencer Cavendish] (who did not marry for many years) and found herself in charge of the housekeeping of all the houses at the age of fourteen, a task she carried out to the entire satisfaction of everyone concerned'.[39] Duchess Evelyn is described in considerably more detail, depicted one the one hand as 'a great restorer and preserver . . . [a] perfectionist' and on the other as 'careful to the point of meanness' (perhaps this is the source of Davenport-Hines's assessment of her character).[40] Although Duchess Deborah is clearly ambivalent about her forebear's mercurial and meticulous character, *The House* also repeatedly positions its author as the inheritor of a great deal of knowledge and myth-making about the family and the estate, much of which was imparted to her by 'Granny Evie', as she was known to her family. Several stories can be directly cross-referenced between the 1924 *Handbook* and *The House*, including the legendary tale of the Painted Hall windows – of this, Duchess Deborah quips that '[t]he rampaging women in their quest for votes must have broken a lot of windows that day'.[41]

Indeed, although it is a public-facing text for devoted fans and visitors to Chatsworth, Duchess Deborah's iteration of the *Handbook* is continuously self-referential, quoting

or referencing its progenitors throughout as though the duchess is talking to old friends or fellow family members. In divulging snippets of family lore, the duchess cleverly refashions her family's collective emotional and dynastic history as an invitation for the reader to step into her private life and world, wherein historic interiors are not merely set pieces preserved in time, but animate spaces imbued with their own distinct social and emotional lives. The ornate Painted Hall, a highlight along the contemporary visitor route, is the stage for an annual Christmas party held for local schoolchildren, wherein the household comptroller plays Father Christmas and, for authenticity's sake, hides up the imposing fireplace before emerging to hand out presents ('If the conjuror goes on too long he is nearly suffocated, so the wait is as painful for him as it is for the children,' the duchess quips humorously).[42]

In essence, *The House* takes what was once an interior archival and dynastic practice comprising a small, but nonetheless significant, oeuvre of privately printed or unpublished texts, and externalizes it; personal narratives are thus repurposed as hooks for broader public and commercial appeal, and previous iterations and stories thereby enrich the carefully curated 'authenticity' of what is now a public text.

Conclusion

What does it mean when a familial book, and the dynastic tradition it represents, is refashioned anew as a public one? The most recent, public iterations of the *Handbook of Chatsworth* ostensibly appear to pull against its progenitor's wish that the family's history and lore remain 'as private as a letter,' but in many ways, it was borne out by the same impulses: to record and propagate the house as each author knew it, and to impart this collective history and wisdom as part of a communal documentary practice. For Lady Louisa Egerton, illustrating her great-uncle's original text and beginning to write her own iteration meant playing her part in an intergenerational tradition, choosing a mode of documenting Chatsworth and its collections as she understood them, and initiating a legacy project. Duchess Evelyn Cavendish embraced the *Handbook* as a means of asserting her own place within the family's storied history, forging her own narratives and taking forward the knowledge handed to her by her aunt. For Duchess Evelyn, the *Handbook* explicitly represented a tradition to be picked up by the women who succeeded her – and it was in this spirit that Duchess Deborah Cavendish embraced it, as an intergenerational conversation of which she was the latest interlocutor. Thus, although the sixth duke might have begun this literary tradition, the iterative and intergenerational practice of revising it was a distinctly feminized one, picked up by successive Devonshire women who augmented, reshaped and rewrote the original text anew as they attempted to leave something of their own impression on the family's collective history.

It would be ill-judged to attempt to extrapolate more generalized conclusions about the British country house based solely on the history of one object and its offshoots – as the other essays that populate this volume amply demonstrate, emotional and familial histories and their material corollaries are idiosyncratic, complex things which are necessarily contingent on the social and historical

contexts that they both inform and reflect.[43] Unpicking the narrative trajectory and gendered dynamics behind this treasured family object does, however, engender new understandings of how shared literary traditions have been put to emotional, social, and dynastic ends by elite women in the country house. Taken together, the resultant iterations of the *Handbook* situate Devonshire women as the primary documentarians and propagators of their family history, thus recovering something of these women's participation in Chatsworth's social, cultural and emotional life. In examining the feminized intellectual and archival history of the *Handbook of Chatsworth*, this chapter has thus pushed against the so-called 'shorthand of history' that has marginalized the intellectual and social contributions of women across the socioeconomic spectrum in the country house, arguing instead for a recognition of these women as archivists, (auto)biographers and collective, intergenerational storytellers.[44]

Notes

1 The Duke of Devonshire, *Handbook of Chatsworth and Hardwick* (London: Privately printed, 1845), 1.
2 Arguably the most enduring and evocative biographical sketch of the duke and his life at Chatsworth is provided by James Lees-Milne, *The Bachelor Duke: A Life of William Spencer Cavendish, 6th Duke of Devonshire, 1790-1858* (London: John Murray, 1991).
3 Devonshire, *Handbook*, 1.
4 John Martin Robinson, 'Introduction', in Duke of Devonshire, *Handbook of Chatsworth and Hardwick* (London: Roxburghe Club, 2020), 19; John Kenworthy-Browne, 'A Ducal Patron of Sculptors', *Apollo* 96, no. 128 (1972): 322–31; Mark Purcell, *The Country House Library* (London: Yale University Press, 2017), 180–8.
5 Kate Retford, 'A Family Home and Not … a Museum: Living with the Country House Art Collection', *Art and the Country House* (2020), https://www.artandthecountryhouse.com/essays/essays-index/a-family-home-and-not-a-museum-living-with-the-country-house-art-collection (accessed 1 October 2023).
6 Notable works include Judith S. Lewis, 'When a House Is Not a Home: Elite English Women and the Eighteenth-Century Country House', *Journal of British Studies* 48, no. 2 (2009): 336–63; James Daybell, 'Gendered Archival Practices and the Future Lives of Letters', in *Cultures of Correspondence in Early Modern Britain*, ed. James Daybell and Andrew Gordon (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016), 210–36; Meaghan Clarke and Francesco Ventrella, 'Women's Expertise and the Culture of Connoisseurship', *Visual Resources* 33, no. 1–2 (2017): 1–10; Madeleine Pelling, 'Collecting the World: Female Friendship and Domestic Craft at Bulstrode Park', *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies* 41, no. 1 (2018): 101–20; Ruth M. Larsen, 'An Archaeology of Letter Writing: The Correspondence of Aristocratic Women in Late Eighteenth- and Early Nineteenth-Century England', in *Pen, Print and Communication in the Eighteenth Century*, ed. Caroline Archer-Parré and Malcolm Dick (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2020), 75–88; Melanie Bigold, 'Women's Book Collecting in the Eighteenth Century: The Libraries of the Countess of Hertford and the Duchess of Northumberland', *Huntington Library Quarterly* 84, no. 1 (2021): 139–50.

7 Imogen Peck, '"Of No Sort of Use"?: Manuscripts, Memory, and the Family Archive in Eighteenth Century England', *Cultural and Social History* 20, no. 2 (2023): 184.
8 Horace Walpole, *A Description of the Villa of Mr Horace Walpole, at Strawberry Hill near Twickenham, Middlesex: With an Inventory of the Furniture, Pictures, Curiosities etc.* (London: Privately printed, 1774).
9 Ibid., i.
10 Robinson, 'Introduction', 34–5.
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37 Vita Sackville-West, *English Country Houses* (London: Prion, 1996 [1941]), 85.
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5

The Family Bible and the Early Modern Female Reader

Hannah Upton

On the blank rear pastedown of a 1597 copy of the Geneva Bible, there is written a note from its eighteenth-century owner, Arthur Onslow, detailing how this book came to be in his possession. He describes how it had previously belonged to his mother and she 'highly valued it'. It had passed to her from her father, Thomas Anlaby, who in turn had inherited it from his own mother, Susanna Beckwith. We are told also that Susanna was gifted it from her own mother, with whom she shared a name, and that this was 'the person that wrote the words at the end of the Apocrypha in this book'.[1] This informative history points to only a fraction of the marginalia contained within this volume, most of which contains advice on how to interpret the text directed from a mother to her eldest daughter. This marginal evidence gives us invaluable insight into not only how women read their books, but also how mothers used texts like the Bible to pass on spiritual advice to their children. It is not just an interpretative reading process that is recorded on these pages, but also an emotional appeal from mother to daughter to read prayerfully and to internalize the teachings within. Using the marginalia contained within this Bible, I examine women's role in religious instruction within the household, and what we can understand about the emotional influence of these inherited family heirlooms, particularly when we have evidence of use over several generations. The Bible in particular serves as an interesting case study as both a widely available and accessible text during the early modern period, and one where familial legacy is evident both in written content, and in how readers used their copies to record family history. For women such as Susanna Beckwith, a family Bible served as both a spiritual and educative tool, and a family archive.

Early modern women and the Bible

Before we examine the marginalia in one specific copy of the Geneva Bible, it is important to first note just how central the Bible was to the literary culture of early modern England. As access to printed books grew across the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the Bible was particularly popular with the growing numbers

of book owners. William H. Sherman notes that the Geneva Bible 'sold more than half a million copies in the sixteenth century alone', as well as going through 'more than 140 editions between the 1560s and the 1640s'. This makes it, he argues, 'in all likelihood, the most widely distributed book in the English Renaissance'.[2] It is near impossible to conceptualize the rise in the distribution of the printed book in England at this time without accounting for the demand for access to a vernacular Bible. As Sherman writes, literacy at this time 'did not just mean reading; it meant *reading the Bible*'.[3] As noted by Jennifer Richards, those with lower levels of literacy still belonged to an environment where those who were not literate could still participate in reading activities, most commonly involving the Bible and other religious texts.[4]

Within the family household, this often meant mothers reading to daughters, with Femke Molekamp noting that 'bible-reading at home' was usually 'the duty of mothers to enforce as part of the home education system'.[5] There are historical examples of this, one early one being in the memoirs of Rose Hickman Throckmorton, *Certaine old storyes recorded by an agèd gentlewoman a littel before her death* (1610), who noted that 'in the dayes of King Henry the 8th', her mother 'came to some light of the gospell' and 'used to call me with my 2 sisters into her chamber to read to us out of the same good books very privately for feare of troble'.[6] Throckmorton's story demonstrates that not only were women using the Bible to provide moral instruction from its earliest availability during the English Renaissance, but that their connection to the text was such that some were willing to risk real danger to provide such spiritual direction.

The marginalia in the Beckwith family Bible reveals how family Bible reading engaged the emotions and the senses, adding a deeper meaning to the activity. Helen Smith in her study of embodied reading practices describes reading – both oral and visual – as an act that has a 'transformative, psychophysiological impact' on the body that 'renders reading an urgent social concern' for scholars of this period. The act of reading 'engaged the will as well as the senses', which allowed women to 'choose which parts of what they read should be allowed beyond the *sensus communis*', or common sense.[7] While reading was certainly affective for women and appealed to their emotions on a psychological and physical level, this did not render them incapable of literary interpretation and understanding. As Molekamp writes, since 'the earliest days of the publication of the English Bible in print' women readers have been 'engaged in interpretative and activist reading' alongside 'affective, meditative reading of the scriptures'.[8] It is this combination of the affective and cognitive reading practice that I see as evident in marginalia such as Susanna's; she is at once making an emotional appeal for her family's immortal souls, and offering practical advice on how to read and interpret scripture. The purpose of this chapter is to demonstrate how this interpretation and meditation took place, and how these forms of reading practice acted as a familial inheritance from mother to daughter.

Susanna Beckwith and her Bible

Despite not leaving an ownership mark on this volume, there is little doubt who this Bible belongs to – Susanna Beckwith – or as Arthur Onslow writes, 'the person

that wrote the words at the end of the Apocrypha in this book'. The name appears handwritten in full and as initials frequently throughout the entirety of this text, and indicates an extensive, thoughtful perusal of scripture on Susanna's part. Though she bequeathed the text to her daughter, it appears that this text passed through multiple hands through the matrilineal line for over a century. In the previously mentioned note from Onslow, he details how this 'highly valued' Bible was his mother's, who was related to Susanna through both paternal and maternal lines; her father, Thomas Anlaby, and mother, Judith, were two of Susanna's grandchildren.[9] An additional provenance features on New Testament fol.1r that confirms Onslow's note. It reads: 'Given to me by my deare Grandmother Mrs. Susanna Beckwith TA'.[10] We can reasonably deduce from the information that this 'TA' initial belongs to Thomas Anlaby. It is clear that this much-loved volume had several owners over the years, but both Anlaby and Onslow explicitly trace the provenance back to Susanna as the original owner. This speaks to both her influence on the text and role in the family; Susanna's use of this Bible was as treasured within the family as the book itself. If we consider Julie Crawford's view that marginalia is 'less [. . .] traces of individual reading than . . . traces of reading under a name – of a person, a family, a household, a faction, a cause', it is clear that for this text, Susanna's is that name.[11] The later readers take care to note that this text belonged primarily to her, regardless of when it was given to them. Susanna is clearly the focal point for this text and its interpretations within the Beckwith family – it is this connection to her that endures even after the book changes hands.

Susanna Beckwith herself is very clear on who the intended audience for her writing was: her eldest daughter and namesake, Susanna. The most substantial example of marginalia in this text is a note from mother to daughter in a blank space at the bottom of a page. As Onslow highlights in his note, 'Susanna was the person that wrote the words at the end of the Apocrypha in this book, to her eldest daughter.' The note reads:

> Susanna Beckwith my deare childe I leaue the this booke as the best jewell I haue, Reade it with a zealous harte to understand truly and upon all thou readest either to confirm thy faith, orto Increase thy repentance: Beenot overcombd with evill: but overcome evell with godnesse; bee not wearie of well doing for in due season thou shalt reape if thou fainte not. Beenot high minded but make thy selfe equale vnto them of the lower sorte as our Lord Jesus christ himself and god euen our father which hath loued vs, and hath giuen us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace: comfort thy harte and stabilize the in euerie good work, and worke, to the waise of of god and patient waiting for our Christ his coming: come, Lord Jesus, come quickly for thy seruant I ame willing, helpe my unwilling. S.B. (Apocrypha 77r).

Described by Molekamp, who has previously written on sections of this marginalia, as being in 'a beautiful humanist italic', Susanna's writing here is not only a touching note from mother to daughter, but also includes advice for her on how to conduct her prayer life as a faithful Christian woman.[12] As she encourages her daughter to be 'patient' in her waiting for Christ's coming, Susanna encourages the practice of 'good work' in the 'waise of god' to prepare her for the spiritual afterlife (Ap. 77r). It is only in

'understand[ing] truly' the contents of the scriptures that the younger Susanna will be able to 'Increase thy repentance' and 'overcome evell with godnesse (Ap. 77r)'.

Instances of biblical marginalia like this imply a critical reading of the Bible, instead of a passive acceptance of the printed word. Sherman notes that there has previously been a tendency to overlook religious reading practices, for his own part under the mistaken assumption that 'in front of this sacred textual space even the most active readers [. . .] would set down their pens' in favour of 'quiet (if not altogether passive) veneration'.[13] Susanna's marginalia practice indicates that this was not the case. Here she is demonstrating interpretative skills in her reading of the Bible that helpfully instructs her daughter on how to read critically towards the improvement of her religious and spiritual life. The words in the Bible were not merely for passive reading; they were intended to ensure that the reader fully understood the truth of what was being asked of them by God in order to reach salvation.

Although this was an era with lower literacy rates for women, Susanna Beckwith was not unusual in owning a Bible. A large percentage of books owned by women at this time were religious texts, with Marie-Louise Coolahan and Mark Empey noting that, of the thirty-seven women they surveyed, 'religious or theological items were central to women's reading'. Of these, the Bible was '[b]y far the most prominent item' on women's booklists.[14] Joseph L. Black's work on women's private libraries similarly found that, in the Private Libraries in Renaissance England database, 'almost 70 percent' of books linked to women 'are categorized as theology', compared to '36 percent of the [. . .] book records associated with men'.[15] Women like Susanna, particularly among the nobility, were part of a (primarily Protestant) female literary community that engaged in the reading and interpretation of the scriptures in a way that not only increased their own understanding of Christian theology, but imparted this knowledge on to another generation of readers through their children. By using her Bible to construct a family archive through marginalia, Susanna not only encouraged further reading of the text, she also created a legacy item to pass through the generations and continue her spiritual guidance through the matriline.

Molekamp compares Susanna's message for her daughter to a popular genre of women's writing in the early modern period – Susanna was 'performing the spiritual direction found in mothers' advice books of this period' often 'left as legacies to children'.[16] Referred to as 'mother's legacies', these were primarily religious texts written by mothers who were dying, or had some reason to believe they would die soon, with titles including Elizabeth Jocelin's *The Mother's Legacy to her Vnborn Child* (1624) and Dorothy Leigh's *The Mothers Blessing* (1616). This text is slightly different; there is no evidence that Susanna believed that she composed her advice under similar circumstances, and she was using marginalia instead of a printed treatise. However, the function of the writing, and its emotional appeal, does seem similar. Jennifer L. Heller argues that this genre of text was written deliberately to transcend the corporeal body and temporality in order to 'create a sphere of command that stretches beyond their lives to influence readers across generations and time'.[17] She writes that these mothers are not simply choosing to offer their advice, they 'feel driven to leave these legacies [. . .] they are bound by biblical duty and driven by maternal zeal to instruct their children'.[18] These ideas can be extended to apply to the religious advice contained within Susanna's

marginalia. She did not just bequeath her Bible to her daughter, she used it to share advice on how to use the text to reach salvation. As she implored her daughter to read 'with a zealous heart' and 'to understand truly' what she was reading, we see Susanna placing her guidance within the scripture as a way of ensuring her advice was more likely to be followed. By utilizing the material properties of the printed book and the pen, Susanna ensured that her maternal advice would endure long after she was gone.

The Beckwith children

There is evidence that the younger Susanna heeded her mother's advice and made notes of her own in the Bible. The initials 'S.B.', in particular, are signed frequently throughout these pages, but in distinctly differing hands. Some are written in the small, neat italic letters seen in the above note from mother to daughter, and some are written in a tall, sloping, messy hand that could not look more different than the careful letter formations described as 'beautiful' by Molekamp. The difference in writing could be due to other factors, such as, the elder Susanna taking more care over her direct address to her daughter than in other sections of the text, or a change in handwriting due to age or time. However, I believe that since the text was dedicated directly to another Susanna Beckwith, it is not improbable that the different hand inscribing the same name and initials was the daughter's own annotations. I am being tentative in my analysis here, as there is always room for error in marginalia attribution, especially where two women with the same name are involved, but either way these annotations warrant some analysis here.

As indicated earlier, the most frequent marginal note found within the text is the initial 'S.B.'. This initial is surprisingly useful in my argument that there are two Susannas marking this text, as the substantial note examined above is signed with a small 'S.B.' that appears in almost identical fashion frequently in the margins of this book. There are also examples of the initials that look markedly different. Notably, a large, decorative initial beside the first line of music for Psalm 51 in metre (Psalms, p. 40), and two other large initials with similarly decorative features on OT f. 211r and f. 212v at the headings for Job 38 and 39, respectively. The full name 'Susanna Beckwith' appears in this same tall, sloping hand at two sections of this text: once on NT f. 27v next to the heading for Luke 5, and once on NT f. 91v next to Galatians 5. Aside from names and initials, the most substantial appearance of this hand is from OT f. 213v to OT f. 244r, where the words 'Mor' and 'Even' are written alongside numbers beside several of the Psalms (i.e. 'Mor 30' and 'Even 30'), replicating the designation for each psalm from the Book of Common Prayer, a text that the family would have undoubtedly also had access to. If we believe that these marks belong to Susanna's eldest daughter, we see not only that the text was used after it was given to her, but that she sought to heed her mother's advice by marking it as she did. She noted sections of scripture that were significant to her, demonstrating her understanding that she should not just read the Psalms, but that she should understand their purpose in her prayer life.

There are also traces of Susanna's other children included in her marginal notes. Most significantly, she recorded the birth dates of all of her children in the margins

next to different Bible verses. Sherman notes that where 'books had passed through multiple households or descended through multiple generations in a single family', it was 'common' to 'register the births, marriages, and deaths for decades and even centuries' within the pages.[19] In this case, these records relate only to the births of one generation of Beckwiths, but Sherman's analysis demonstrates that it would not have been unusual for Susanna to mark her children's birthdays in this way. Interestingly, these records are not found in chronological order, which implies that Susanna carefully considered where to place them. They are positioned next to certain prayers, verses concerning birth and/or motherhood, as well as verses that can be read as motherly advice. For her namesake, the record reads 'Susanna Beckwith eldest daught[er] to Susan[na] Beckwith was bor[n] the 21. Day of June Anno Dmi 161[4?]' next to Exodus 5 where 'Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto the Lord' that includes the phrases 'The Lord *is* my strength, and praise, and he is become my salvation' and '*hee is* my father's God, and I will exalt him' (OT f. 28r). Susanna echoed her maternal guidance to her daughter found in her dedication, by directing her attention towards a text that furthered her understanding of what was required of her in order to reach salvation.

For her son, Arthur, the record reads 'Arthure [B]eckwith [s]econd [s]one to Susanna [B]eckwith was [b]orne the .6. Day [o]f August Anno Dmi 1615' (OT f. 75v) next to Deuteronomy 6, which is 'An exhortation to feare God and keepe his commaundements' (OT f. 75r). Arthur's birth was recorded directly beside verses 9-12 that instruct believers to write God's commandments 'upon the posts of thine house' and 'Beware lest thou forget the Lord'. It is interesting to note that just above this, in verse 7, the reader is instructed to 'rehearse them continually unto thy children', which advice Susanna was evidently following here, and in other sections of the text. Her sons Marmaduke and William are honoured on the same page (OT f. 65r); Marmaduke's birth is recorded beside Isaiah 66, with a manicule underlining and pointing from Isaiah 65 in the opposite column of verse 20 that reads:

> There shall bee no more there a childe of yeeres, nor an olde man that hath not filled his dayes: for hee that shall bee an hundredth yeeres olde, shall die as a yong man: but the sinner being an hundredth yeeres old shalbe accursed. (OT 65r)

William's record is also beside Isaiah 66 with a manicule underlining and pointing from verse 13 that reads 'As one whom his mother comforteth'. This chapter also includes directions for worship and metaphors featuring Jerusalem as a maternal figure, 'That yee may sucke and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolation' (Isaiah 66.10-11, OT f. 65r). Here we see Susanna directing spiritual guidance towards her own children through the mediator of biblical verse. Perhaps she highlighted them like this to remind her what verses to keep in mind in her own private meditation; perhaps, these words simply reminded her of her children. However, I think that the presentation of this marginalia, the fact that multiple hands appear throughout and that this text was passed down to members of the family for over a hundred years suggest that these chapters were singled out with the intention of being read by the dedicatee.

The hands of family members other than the two Susannas may also appear throughout the text, albeit less frequently. These hands are unfortunately difficult to attribute to one agent, as they often sign multiple names, with one notable example being one who writes both 'Arthur Beckwiths chapter' and 'Matthew Beckwiths chapter' on opposite pages next to Proverbs 3 and 6, respectively. If I am to consider this Bible and the marginalia within as evidence of a form of maternal advice or guidance, it is interesting to consider the meanings behind the chapters highlighted here. 'Arthur Beckwiths chapter' is written on OT f. 245v in the margins next to Proverbs 3, a chapter which contains a parental warning that 'the Lord correcteth him, whom he loveth, even as the father doth the child, in whom he delighteth' (c.3.v.12), a suitable reminder that, like God, Arthur's parents will continue to love him despite their reprimands. On the page opposite (OT f. 246r), 'Matthew Beckwiths chapter' is written in the margins beside Proverbs 6 where Solomon continues to impart wisdom to a 'son' figure. Of note is the advice to 'keep thy father's commandment, and forsake not thy mother's instruction', to 'Bind them always upon thine heart, *and* tie them about thy neck' (6.20-21).

It is interesting to consider why the agent of this hand chose to dedicate these chapters to Arthur and Matthew, especially considering that there is no other example of this kind of dedication in any other hand at any other section in the text. Perhaps this information is lost as we now have no knowledge of the family's interpersonal dynamics, and there is no further elaboration on this written nearby or anywhere else. In addition, the initials 'M.B.' feature twice, once in what is clearly the elder Susanna's hand on OT f. 250v, and once in a hand very similar to the 'A.B.' initials that feature on OT f. 264r. The initial 'J.B.' features once on OT f. 278r, in a hand with features distinct enough (such as, flourishes drawn above and below the initial, the extreme slant of the italic characters) from either Susanna, and from 'M.B.' and 'A.B.', that causes me to speculate that this may actually be the second daughter Judith Beckwith's hand. I am hesitant on this as it does not appear again. Regardless, what is implied through this evidence is that the Beckwith children not only read and used their mother's Bible, they sought to understand scripture in the way she advised their older sister in her dedicatory note. While the text was dedicated specifically to Susanna Beckwith's eldest daughter, the other children were not forgotten, and also benefitted from the religious guidance contained within this volume.[20]

Family literary legacies

Although autobiographical information about the Beckwith family is sparse, there is some room for speculation based on the evidence we have. We can see from the Beckwith family tree found in *Dugdale's Visitation of Yorkshire* that Susanna outlived her husband, Sir Roger Beckwith, by almost four decades, with him dying just eleven years after the birth of their youngest child, William in 1623.[21] Perhaps the reason this Bible remained so treasured in the family throughout the years, and the reason Susanna can be seen here as such a central family figure, are due to an attempt to keep the family close after the death of the patriarch.

Barbara J. Harris describes being a wife as a 'lifelong career' ensuring 'the survival and prosperity of their husbands' patrilineages'.[22] There is the potential to view Susanna's marginalia as an attempt to fulfil this function through spiritual guidance. From this record of Susanna's year of death, we can also see how temporal factors are crucial in understanding how this kind of performative marginalia functioned. By the time Susanna died in 1670, she had lived to see the birth of her great-granddaughter, Susan (Anlaby) Onslow – Arthur Onslow's mother – in 1664. This book was passed around, not just by descendants of an owner in living memory, but by relatives of a woman who was *still living*. It's entirely possible that this Bible and its markings were discussed, either in person or through letters, with the woman who wrote them. Jardine and Grafton, in their seminal study of early modern scholar Gabriel Harvey's marginalia, conceptualized a form of 'active reading' which saw marginalia as a 'public performance, rather private meditation, in its aims and character'.[23] Their work was very much focused on the scholarly reader, but I argue that this idea of marginalia as public and written with the intention to be seen by others, can be applied to the kind of family archive produced by the Beckwiths and their descendants. When we consider that marginalia was written with the intention of it being read by an audience after the fact, it's important to recognize that this included families reading each other's writing for spiritual and religious direction as well as learned men directing other learned men in their studies. Marginalia is not simply an academic process restricted to those with access to extensive education, it also serves as evidence of learning on a smaller, more personalized scale for the generally less educated, such as women and children.

Onslow's provenance takes Susanna's archiving further, ensuring that family members who saw this Bible were able to trace its readers through time back to its original owner. The emotional connection here is evidenced in Susanna's dedication to her daughter, where she described this volume as 'the best jewell I haue', as well as Onslow's note that it continued to be 'highly valued' by his mother several decades after this. I find it significant that despite this text passing through several hands and having been in the archives since the eighteenth century, it is in an almost pristine state. Much care has been taken to preserve not just the scripture, but the marginal notes left by Susanna Beckwith and her children. This very public display, not just of family history, but of familial connection, indicates the kinship and deep emotion felt through the shared ownership of this text. For the Beckwith family and their descendants, the significance of this Bible was not necessarily the printed words, it was also that Susanna took up the book and left her marks on it, and in turn encouraged them to do the same. As Heller argues, this kind of recorded maternal advice ensured that multiple generations of family members would continue to be influenced by their words many years into the future.[24] We see evidence of this not only in the marginalia left by family members, but also in the fact that the Bible was kept in (and presumably used by) the family until Onslow donated it to the British Museum in 1768. This book serves not only as a family archive but also as a memorial to Susanna since her maternal advice continued to be read by and influenced family members almost a hundred years after her death. This kind of memorial demonstrates how annotated texts like the Beckwith Bible serve as not just a family record, but as an example of the emotional histories contained with shared material objects.

Notes

1 British Library General Reference Collection 464.c.5. All references to the Bible, including quotations from scripture, come from this copy.
2 William H. Sherman, *Used Books: Marking Readers in Renaissance England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007), 71.
3 Ibid., 71.
4 Jennifer Richards, *Voices and Books in the English Renaissance: A New History of Reading* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), 17.
5 Femke Molekamp, 'Using a Collection to Discover Reading Practices: The British Library Geneva Bibles and a History of their Early Modern Readers', *Electronic British Library Journal* (London: British Library, 2006), 6.
6 Eric George Millar, 'Narrative of Mrs Rose Throckmorton', *The British Museum Quarterly* 9, no. 3 (1935): 74.
7 Helen Smith, '"More swete vnto the eare / than holsome for ye mynde": Embodying Early Modern Women's Reading', *Huntington Library Quarterly* 73, no. 3 (2010): 431.
8 Femke Molekamp, *Women & the Bible in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 3.
9 Onslow himself was a noted supporter of the British Museum's efforts to preserve historical books for future study, with P.R. Harris noting that as a 'Principal Trustee' Onslow had 'bequeathed his collection of books' to the museum in 1768, the same year as his death. *A History of the British Museum Library, 1753-1973* (London: British Library, 1998), 19.
10 As this book is several texts bound together as one volume, pagination restarts at several points (at the end of the Old Testament, at the end of the Apocrypha, and at the end of the New Testament). For ease of understanding, I will indicate what section of the volume each leaf comes from with 'OT', 'NT', 'Apocrypha' (or 'Ap.'), and 'Psalms'.
11 Julie Crawford, 'Reconsidering Early Modern Women's Reading, or, How Margaret Hoby Read Her de Mornay', *Huntington Library Quarterly* 73, no. 2 (2010): 211.
12 Molekamp, *Women & the Bible*, 36.
13 Sherman, *Used Books*, 72.
14 Marie-Louise Coolahan and Mark Empey, 'Women's Book Ownership and the Reception of Early Modern Women's Texts, 1545–1700', in *Women's Bookscapes in Early Modern Britain: Reading, Ownership, Circulation*, ed. Leah Knight, Micheline White, and Elizabeth Sauer (Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 2014), 240.
15 Joseph L. Black, 'Women's Libraries in the Private Libraries in Renaissance England Project', in Knight, White, and Sauer, *Women's Bookscapes*, 224.
16 Molekamp, *Women & the Bible*, 38.
17 Jennifer L. Heller, 'The Legacy and Rhetoric of Maternal Zeal', *ELH* 75, no. 3 (2008): 604.
18 Ibid., 619.
19 Sherman, *Used Books*, 76.
20 As with my speculation regarding which marginalia belongs to the elder Susanna, and which to the younger, there is also room for speculation here that this could be either one of them testing out a new hand. There is handwriting similar to this one that Molekamp has previously attributed to the elder Susanna Beckwith, but as I have identified multiple hands throughout, and the letter formations are so different

to sections where she has signed her name, I am hesitant to wholly agree with this analysis.

21 *Dugdale's Visitation of Yorkshire*, vol. 2, ed. John William Clay (Exeter: W. Pollard & Co., 1899), 110. Interesting to note here is how the younger Susanna is listed as 'Susan' and Esther as 'Hesther'.

22 Barbara J. Harris, 'Sisterhood, Friendship and the Power of English Aristocratic Women, 1450-1550', in *Women and Politics in Early Modern England, 1450-1700*, ed. James Daybell (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), 21.

23 Lisa Jardine and Anthony Grafton, '"Studied for Action": How Gabriel Harvey Read His Livy', *Past & Present* 129 (1990): 31.

24 Heller, 'Legacy and Rhetoric', 619.

6

Florence Kate and the Library Chair

Sue Child

One day a delivery van pulled up outside my door. The driver delivered an old chair with the stuffing coming out and in a neglected state. I asked the driver if he had the right address. He told me that it had been sent to me by my grandmother as a present. I thought that it was just more 'JUNK' and asked the man to place it with all the other stuff in the garage as I would examine it later.

Seeing my grandma during one of my visits, I thanked her for the gift and she told me that it had belonged to my grandad's mother Florence Kate.

Grandma often mentioned Florence in hushed tones to denote respect and deference. I was a young mother with two children and having just lost both my parents suddenly, I had not the capacity to ask much about her as my mind was often elsewhere. Grandad had just passed, and Grandma was still recovering from a cancer operation, so my brother and I were doing our best to make sure that Grandma had all the help she needed. Life was lived at 100mph.

Grandma passed too and I forgot about the old chair languishing in my garage. My husband had mentioned it a few times as the children were now teenagers and the garage gradually filled up with sports equipment and even a multi-gym, as our poor old lawn mower, spades, etc. took a back seat. Space was at a premium.

My son Matthew said that I could do with looking at the chair more closely as it was made of good, polished wood and might look good with a bit of renovation.

We had an upholsterer in the next village, and my son took the chair to be re-covered sympathetically in a red material. The upholsterer offered to buy the chair and told Matthew that it matched a chaise-longue he had in his house. Declining his offer, my son said that it was an heirloom from my Granny's house and I wanted to keep it to put in my bedroom. The man said that it was a good example of a late Victorian ladies' library chair and although only worth a few hundred pounds as it had been re-covered, it was certainly worth having.

When the chair came home it was beautiful, and I was taken by its now shiny wood and general appearance. It was certainly a chair for a small woman: being low to the ground and a short seat made it uncomfortable for any average man.

I was filled with emotion and rued the day I did not ask Granny more about Florence Kate and her life.

Figure 6.1 The chair inherited by Sue Child.

This was the start of my adventure, researching the life of my great-grandmother who had lived three doors away in the house my grandad and grandma had once occupied.

I started to look into Florence's life with the facts I remembered as she was talked about often in conversations with my grandparents.

I know that she was a schoolteacher and she taught at the local Board School, which was York Road School. I found a film of the school from 1901 on the internet while researching the location.[1] A very interesting film with young laughing teachers and pupils, it's a snapshot of early education and local pupils, even though it's from a later date – Florence was a young wife at the time of the short film.

Florence Kate was born on 6 October 1859 in Scarsdale Street off Meadow Lane. Her father was William, a Railway Drayman from Hucknall Torkard, Nottinghamshire. Eliza, her mother, was from a family of weavers who had lived in Leeds since the 1600s. Florence had an older sister, Mary, and a younger brother, Tom, who was born in 1863.

The family were Unitarians and attended Mill Hill Chapel, a short walk from Meadow Lane. Eliza's father, Edward Cooke, was a parish clerk at Mill Hill and he was also a registrar of births, marriages and deaths in East Leeds and Kirkgate.

Florence's parents believed that girls should be educated and also taught music. Edward, her grandfather, had a shop in the centre of Leeds selling organs, which

Figure 6.2 Portrait of Florence Kate Oldham, b.1859.

were made by his family in Richmond Hill. Described on Eliza's birth certificate as a musician, he was very much part of the Leeds music scene of that day.

Florence sung in the Leeds Parish Church Choir, now Leeds Minster. This was a leading choir in the city and had been part of the popular Leeds music scene, attracting soloists from all over Europe.

When Florence was twenty-one, she was living at 30 Pontefract Lane. According to the census of 1881, she was described as a 'Schoolmistress'. Did the chair arrive in the family around this time? Perhaps Florence sat on it to prepare her lessons. She taught until her marriage on 30 July 1882 to Sanderson Woodhead, a grocer who was born in Shelf, Halifax. She was twenty-two, and I wondered how she must have felt at the prospect of being a housewife as opposed to earning her own money and giving up her post of a schoolteacher which was always regarded as a vocation in those times.

The portrait I have of Sanderson is one of a handsome young man with a generous mouth and a fashionable moustache. Even today I can see her attraction to him, and it must have been love as they were from very different families. Sanderson's father, Henry, was a Primitive Methodist Preacher and Florence came from a Unitarian background, very much a free-thinking religion. The couple will have had education in common as Sanderson's brothers all became teachers and a younger brother, James,

became principal of Thorne Grammar School, Doncaster. All the boys had worked in a worsted mill in Shelf from ten years old, and their parents were weavers too.

Florence gave birth to a son, Clifford, in 1884. I remember him as an elderly man, very kind and gentle. He was described as a Railway Clerk in the 1901 Census, and Florence can be seen in the background in a photo of Clifford's wedding, wearing a fashionable hat and smiling, a happy occasion for her.

I found out that by now Florence and Sanderson were living with her parents, William and Eliza, at 30 Pontefract Lane.

I often wondered where they all slept, as Granny's had small bedrooms identical to ours. By now, in the 1950s, we had a bath in one bedroom. This will have been a modern fitting as most of my friends had to go to York Road Slipper Baths for a weekly soak. My young brother had to sleep on a small bed in the bathroom with only an inch or two between the bath and his quilt.

Florence gave birth to another son, Edward, in July 1887, but he died at three months old. I sent away for his certificate. I did not expect to be so emotional when I saw the cause of Edward's death. He died from 'Specific Psoriasis Convulsions'. I looked this up in an old children's diseases book and found that in those days there was very little they could do for infants to ease this condition. I felt very upset and wondered if Florence nursed the tiny babe in this small chair in our bedroom. It all seemed very likely given the very cramped conditions they all lived in. Florence was the mother present at death on 29 November. I did not sleep very well for a few nights, remembering how exhausting it is with a small child who has generalized eczema and asthma too and psoriasis is still in my family, although of a milder condition.

Florence, my heart goes out to you. I am sure that Eliza and William comforted her and her young husband at this sorrowful time.

Five years passed and Alfred my Grandad was born to Florence and Sanderson, a young brother to Clifford.

There must have been concern and worry throughout Florence's pregnancy as the time arrived to give birth, but a strong son was delivered and Alfred continued to be a strong individual all his life, though he too had seasonal bouts of psoriasis. Even when I was a little girl, I remembered the patches on his forearms.

Her father died in 1899 when Florence was thirty-nine. I have a photograph of William, a smiling red-headed man with a generous build. A carter by trade he worked as a Railway Drayman transporting foodstuffs off the local Marsh Lane train depot to Leeds Market. William died of apoplexy which he had suffered from for thirteen months, as his death certificate would say. This may have been a stroke or a brain bleed.

How did Florence manage with William's condition in a small house with Eliza, Sanderson and two boys? Sanderson also worked part-time as a lithographer, an artist who drew designs for play bills and theatres, employed by the famous Alf Cooke who was a leading printer in Leeds at this time.

Florence had a terrible time in 1902. Sanderson died of what has been interpreted as a strangulated hernia. He was working at Alf Cooke's when he collapsed in a toilet and had to be taken home in agony. He died suddenly at home with Florence present; she had become a widow at forty-two. Reading between the lines, Eliza was probably

suffering from dementia then as well, as she was to pass away on 11 January in 1903. Her death certificate gave the cause of death as senile decay.

Florence was now alone with two boys. Clifford who was now a Railway Clerk at 18, and Alfred, my grandad, who was ten years old.

Florence became a 'Wardrobe Dealer' which meant that she sold re-conditioned second-hand fashionable clothes to clients who would visit her at home. I know that her good friend lived at number 24, the house I was brought up in, and she was a dressmaker so I would presume that she did the alterations, and they had a business going together. I feel so proud of Florence's stamina and enterprise. This makes me feel that although she was diminutive in height, her heart was that of a lion and I feel full of pride and warmth for her. She had endured a house filled with pain and sorrow but had still come out fighting for her family to keep them living in a comfortable way. Clifford's wage will have been a boost to the budget too as Alfred was still so young. Florence still kept up her singing in the Leeds Parish Choir.

She gave piano lessons and I can still see in my mind's eye the bust of Chopin which sat on Grandad's piano. I wish I asked more questions, but the evidence shows what a full life there was to have even though her grief must have been enormous. She diligently supported her family with her work and strength of character.

When she was fifty-two in 1912 she married a widower, Joshua Schofield, an Insurance Agent. They had all been friends for many years and family stories describe him as a kind man. I have a photograph of Clifford's wedding with Florence and Joshua together, and they were smiling and looked very happy. I do pray that they shared many good times. The couple moved to Beeston in a small house and Clifford and his wife Mary Ann moved into number 30 Pontefract Lane, where the chair stayed.

My beloved great-grandmother died aged fifty-eight in 1917 of the Spanish Flu. She has left a lasting imprint on me and I feel a connection with her now – she is not just a sepia photo. I feel as though I know her and have felt some very acute emotions when telling my daughter of her life.

The small library chair is at the back of me as I write this – if only it could speak, it would tell of the music, fun and laughter, the sorrow and grief and finally the happy times with me as my grandchildren have sat on it as I read them books and sang songs. I will pass it on when I die and transmit the backstory to this lovely piece of furniture.

Note

1 York Road Board School, Leeds (1901), BFI Player, https://player.bfi.org.uk/free/film/watch-york-road-board-school-leeds-1901-1901-online (accessed 21 July 2022).

7

A Mantelpiece of Memories

Janet Coles

My maternal grandmother, Emily Maria Gaskin, died when I was seven. I still remember her clearly, visiting her in her tiny old person's bungalow and being fascinated by the objects on her mantelpiece: a silver clock, a glass dish, a watch and a vesta case.

It seemed likely that the watch and vesta case had belonged to my great-grandmother and been passed down to my grandmother, and then to my mother. It now seemed the right time to find out more about the three women and the way they were linked by these items. In so doing I uncovered much hidden family history. All three women concealed secrets and faced challenges of which I had been unaware. I am proud to be the fourth generation to own the vesta case and watch as reminders of three strong, resourceful and determined women.

My great-grandmother, Rachel Anne Maria Glibbery (1859–1937)

Born in 1859, Rachel Glibbery married William Samuel Pearce Gaskin, a stationer's assistant, in April 1877, at seventeen years old. William's father (a tailor) had spent time in jail and William, aged twelve, in the workhouse. Rachel's father was a silk weaver and, later, a porter.

Rachel was already pregnant; Eleanor was born on 22 July 1877. It could not have been easy for Rachel, thrust into married life and motherhood at this young age. The couple had two further children, including my grandmother Emily Maria in 1884. William worked for the Inland Revenue as a 'teller for stamps', while Emily was a machinist. They lived at 7 Lyall Road in Bethnal Green.

By 1921 Rachel's life had changed dramatically. She had moved out of the family home and was living at 22 Gladstone Road, West Ham, employed as housekeeper to William Tyson, a railway clerk. It may be that William Gaskin was still living at Lyall Road. Emily, my grandmother, was living as a boarder with the Hart family at 23 Monega Road, Forest Gate, and working as a 'teller, printing, De La Rue', a similar occupation to her father.

It seems Rachel and her husband had been living separate lives for several years. In 1907, Emily sent her mother a studio portrait postcard. Emily had written on the back:

I had no idea when I started out, it is not very good but I thought you would like one.
Hoping you are quite well and that I shall see you soon.
With love, from your Emily

Mother and daughter were not living together but remained on good terms.

In 1919, William Gaskin died. The following year Rachel married William Tyson. The 1921 census shows them living at 223 Wanstead Park Road, Ilford and describes Rachel Gaskin, sixty-two, as Head of Household, and William Tyson, boarder aged fifty, clerk, Great Eastern Railway Company. Emily Gaskin, was also there, described as 'daughter', thirty-six, single.

The form was signed 'Rachel Gaskin'. Rachel had legally been Rachel Tyson for over a year. Why continue calling herself Gaskin? We don't know the nature of the relationship between Rachel and William; they had been living in the house for several years and perhaps wanted to preserve the appearance of employer and employee. Was Rachel, rather than William, described as 'Head of the Household' because of their relative financial status? Perhaps her relative wealth allowed her to buy herself things like the watch and silver vesta case?

By 1924, the couple had left London and moved to Hastings. Rachel died in 1937, at the East Sussex County Mental Hospital. It is believed that she was admitted because of a drink problem. Rachel was described as the 'wife of William Tyson'. The amount she left, £1117, 10s, 7d, more than £56,000 in today's terms, was unexpectedly high for the daughter of a porter and wife of a railway clerk, considerably more than that left by any of her siblings. Is it possible that she inherited it from her first husband, William Gaskin?

Despite the relative affluence of her later years, Rachel's life was undoubtedly challenging and at times unhappy. Her employment as William Tyson's housekeeper must have given her some security. It is to be hoped that their years together were happy ones, not marred by her apparent addiction to alcohol.

There are several periods of Rachel's life of which we know little.

Could the vesta case and watch have belonged to her? It's impossible to know, but inheriting these objects has encouraged me to think about her life and experiences.

My grandmother, Emily Maria Gaskin (1884–1956)

There is little evidence about the life of my grandmother Emily in the years following the 1911 census when she was employed as a 'teller printing'. By 1921, aged thirty-six, she was living in Ilford with her mother Rachel and stepfather William Tyson. By then she was employed as 'manageress, dairy' for the Eastern Counties Dairy Farmers Co-operative in Goodmayes.

A momentous event occurred in July 1918, of which even members of her family were unaware. Emily gave birth to a daughter whom she called Freda Kathleen. The

father's name (recorded much later on Freda's marriage certificate) was given as William Gaskin, Accountant.

Emily chose to keep her daughter's birth a secret. How she dealt with her pregnancy, whether she was working at the dairy at that time and if she invented a story about the child's father we do not know. One suggestion, that he was a distant cousin, remains unsupported. Even now, the details about his identity are unknown. Perhaps he also worked at De La Rue and that is where they met.

The 1921 census shows that Emily's daughter had been born in York and was staying with Alfred Petchey, an engine driver and his wife Edith at 37 Price Street in the city: 'Freda Kathleen Gaskin, age 2 years 11 months, visitor.' Freda effectively lived with the Petcheys until her marriage in 1943. We do not know why the Petcheys became involved in caring for Freda, or what contribution her mother or father might have made. One theory is that a Church organization facilitated the arrangements, perhaps seeing the 200-mile distance as an advantage. We do know that Emily and Freda spent time together in York and later London.

Emily continued to live in London, apparently maintaining the fiction of being a 'respectable' spinster or widow with no responsibilities. Apart from the Petcheys, only her mother Rachel and her close friend Bertha Hart knew about Freda's existence. Emily lived in both York and London before moving to the old person's bungalow in Danebury Court which I remember, with its mantelpiece of memories.

The most interesting of the items on this mantelpiece was a silver clock which would only work when lying face down. Even to a seven-year-old this seemed rather weird. There was also a delicate glass dish, which I now know was designed for serving grapefruit. And then there were the two items which became more important to me over the years: the antique lady's pendant watch and the silver vesta case, designed to transport matches safely (Figure 7.1).

My mother, Freda Kathleen Gaskin (1918–95)

The life of my mother, Freda Gaskin, can be divided into two halves. For almost forty years she believed herself to be the daughter of Emily Gaskin and William Gaskin. It was not until her mother died that she learned the truth: Emily had never been married; William was her invention.

I was seven when Emily, my gran, died; it was years later that we pieced together how my mother dealt with the situation.

In 1957, she and I first visited her relatives. We were welcomed by her aunt, Eleanor, and two cousins. Looking back, I can only admire my mother's behaviour. She must have contacted her relatives who had previously been unaware of her existence. It would surely have been easier not to have faced the challenge. Eleanor must have been almost as stunned as Freda when they learned the truth. They, too, deserve credit for

Figure 7.1 The antique lady's pendant watch and silver vesta case.

making us so welcome. One happy outcome was that Freda remained on good terms with her new-found family for the rest of their lives.

We can only imagine how my mother dealt with the news that her mother had been living a lie and that she unwittingly had done the same. She made the occasional comment about it, but we never took the opportunity of finding out the details. Freda died in 1995, almost forty years after Emily's death. During those years Freda's feelings about her mother must have been complicated and contradictory. She no doubt recalled the happy childhood times when Emily visited the Petcheys in York or she went down to London.

Occasionally she met 'Uncle Fred' whom she came to realize was her biological father, true identity unknown. At one time, Emily told Freda that her father was living in Australia. Sadly too, on another occasion Emily told Freda that he had died. Freda believed that this was at a significant time in her mother and father's relationship. He was a married man and had convinced Emily that he would marry her if he were 'free'. Unfortunately, when his wife died a clause in her will meant he would not inherit from her estate if he were to remarry. He chose financial gain over marrying Emily; from then, she regarded him as no longer part of her life. When Freda married in 1943, the certificate showed her father as 'deceased'.

It remains hard for me to accept that the gentle, elegant woman I knew as my gran had such a complicated life. Even more difficult to comprehend is the burden she had, however well-meaningly, inflicted on her daughter Freda.

Above all, I regret not having spoken to my mother about her life.

One indication of her feelings occurred after my father's death in 2009, as we cleared their house. In what had been my mother's chest of drawers were the silver vesta case and watch. She had chosen to preserve them. In the kitchen cupboard, we also found the grapefruit dish.

(Unsurprisingly there was no sign of the clock which would only work lying down.)

Conclusion

Both the watch and the vesta case can be dated. The watch bears the number 1491 and a 'fineness mark' of 93.5 per cent fine silver. It carries the Swiss hallmark of three bears, indicating the watch case was hallmarked in Switzerland between 1888 and 1914.[1]

Vesta cases were designed to carry matches safely at a time when they could ignite simply by rubbing together. From the hallmarks, we believe this case was made in Birmingham in 1920, by silversmith William Henry Sparrow. This case is engraved with the initials AW. Unfortunately, we have found no one in our family tree or connected to it with these initials, so we have no hint as to who might have bought it, to whom it might have been given or who might have owned it.

Rachel Glibbery would have been in her thirties when the watch was made and sixty when the vesta case was made. Her daughter Emily Gaskin would have been thirty in 1914 and in her mid-thirties by 1920.

For many years I assumed the objects had belonged to my grandmother Emily. I had seen them on her mantelpiece. I associated them with her. Further research into the family made me wonder if they had belonged to Emily's mother, Rachel. Both women had led complicated lives; both had 'missing years' of which we can learn little. The dates of the two objects appear to make it likely that Emily was in fact the original owner.

In one sense it is not important. The items have brought the two of them alive and also shed light on my mother's early years. I have got to know them all and they will remain part of my life. We may never know whose initials are engraved on the vesta case – those of Freda's elusive father? – but they remain three women to be proud of.

Note

1 Vintagewatchstraps.com, https://www.vintage watchstraps.com (accessed 23 April 2022).

Embodying Inheritance

8

Untangling the Family Archive

Hairy Objects and the Stories We Weave

Leanne Calvert

Hairy objects have long been employed by families to mark important milestones and rites of passage in their life-stories. It is in relation to the customs of death and mourning that the role of hairy objects is perhaps most well-known. Beginning in the eighteenth century, it became popular to memorialize deceased loved ones with mourning jewellery made from hair. Items such as rings, brooches and lockets were manufactured with locks of hair, and were worn by grieving family members. Hair, as opposed to other materials, was chosen for these items because of its special, affective value. Scholars have argued that it is the enduring power of hair and its ability to bridge the gap between the worlds of the living and the dead that makes it such a special vehicle of memory. As Marcia Pointon has argued, the 'vitality' of hair 'defies the very thoughts of death that it raises'.[1] For others, the affective power of hair lies in its ability to tell stories in ways that are not possible with other objects. As Christiane Holm and Deborah Lutz have both demonstrated, the ability of hair jewellery to remember the dead lies not just in its design but in the 'stories' that emerged from the objects themselves.[2]

Hairy mementos have been employed by individuals (and their families) to record other aspects of their life-stories. Scholars of courtship and marriage, for example, have noted how hair was exchanged between couples as a marker of emotional intimacy.[3] Hair was also fashioned into jewellery that was gifted to individuals as physical manifestations of their family histories. Helen Sheumaker's study of hairwork in nineteenth-century America, for example, has noted how hair jewellery 'tie[d] generations together'.[4] Whereas sisters might send one another locks of hair for the purpose of making them into one object, mothers would combine their own hair with that of their children to 'represent both familial and biological ties'.[5] Others turned to hairy objects in order to craft archives of sexual memory. A number of historians have pointed to examples of hairy archives that stand testament to their maker's sexual histories. My own study of Robert James Tennent, a middle-class man who lived in nineteenth-century Ireland, revealed how Tennent kept locks of hair that belonged to women with whom he had a sexual or intimate relationship. Tennent crafted 'a site

of curated memory' with his hairy objects, using them to make manifest his carefully crafted sexual history.[6] A similar collection was the focus of Marika Cifor's work on the materiality of 'stains and remains' in the queer archive. Cifor analysed the 'stud file' that was kept and curated by Samuel Steward, who chronicled his sex life between the 1930s and 1960s. Steward wrote down information about his sexual partners and their sexual encounters on specially curated cards and, in some cases, affixed strands of their pubic hair too. In her analysis of the collection, Cifor noted how the hairs served as 'enduring and enticing evidence of sexual intimacies' and their 'documentation practices'.[7]

This chapter extends the discussion of historical hairy objects to consider how families employ hair in their archives today. It draws on the results of an online survey, created using Qualtrics, that asked participants about their experiences of keeping, curating, and encountering hairy objects.[8] The survey received forty responses. Respondents were asked to share how they came into possession of their object, how it made them feel and if its hairy qualities were important in shaping that feeling. As revealed in the chapter, the majority of hairy objects that respondents had in their personal possession were locks of hair that belonged to family members – both human and animal, or hair that had been cut from their own heads. Smaller numbers of respondents possessed or encountered items that had been crafted from hair, including pillows, toys, books, taxidermy, clothing and art. The chapter reflects on how and why families employ hair to make manifest their histories, and the stories that they subsequently weave with it.

'A snip in time': Hairy objects and human families

The context in which we come into possession of family objects is an important factor in shaping our engagement with them. In their study of the 'family archive', Anna Woodham et al. found that some families felt 'anxiety' over the preservation of their histories, either because of a 'perceived lack of interest in family history' across generations, or because of a concern that their family 'stuff' would be a 'burden' on those who inherited it.[9] Of critical importance to recognizing the 'value' and 'importance' of family objects was an understanding of their story.[10] As one of the participants in their study remarked, 'people die with boxes and boxes of photographs in their shoe boxes . . . and nobody knows who they are or where they are'.[11] The meanings that we attach to family objects may also change over time, as the distance between us and the person who first passed the object into the family archive lengthens. As noted by Liz Gloyn et al. in their study of the 'things families keep', objects have 'cycles of significance' that 'ebb and flow' in line with 'where the object is located and who owns it at any given time'.[12] The same themes can be applied to our discussion of hair and hairy objects in the family archive.

In 2023, the 'Inheriting the Family Research Network', led by Joanne Begiato and Katie Barclay, commissioned a series of films that interrogated the relationship between people, objects and emotions. One of these films was entitled *Encounters with Hair,* and it asked participants to reflect on the emotional properties of hair, both past and present. Interviewees (myself included) expressed an array of emotional responses to

encountering hair in family and public archives, ranging from disgust, shock, loss and curiosity.[13] A number of contributors understood their reactions in the context of their relationships to the stories that were associated with the hairy objects they encountered. Laura Baldock, for example, shared a memory of encountering 'long lengths' of 'shiny' 'honey-blonde' hair belonging to her grandmother that were kept by her mother in a special compartment in her top drawer. Laura recalled how, as a child, she felt quite 'spooked' by the hair and did not want to touch it. While Laura's mother 'kept her [grand]mother alive' with the cut hair, Laura herself never met her grandmother, and did not share that same fascination. For others, finding hair that had belonged to a deceased loved one with whom they shared a deep, personal connection felt like a 'gift'. Thalia Allington-Wood emotively recalled discovering hair that her mother had cut off before undergoing treatment for breast cancer. When she realized that the hair, kept in a zip-lock bag, was 'mum's hair', she saw the 'beauty' in the discovery because 'nothing else of her [mum's] body . . . remain[ed]'.[14]

The importance of a personal connection to a hairy object was also commented upon by participants in my survey. One respondent, for example, had very different reactions to objects that appear, on first reading, to be superficially quite similar. The respondent is currently in possession of 'two plaits of hair' that they found among their 'Granny's things'. They 'guess' the hair belongs to their grandmother and great-grandmother, who kept the hair when they cut it 'for new fashions, probably in the 1920s'. While the respondent was 'not very fond' of the plaits, they felt 'obliged to keep them' because 'someone else' to whom they were 'related . . . felt they were important enough to be kept'. Their decision to keep the plaits stands in sharp contrast to another hairy object in their possession – 'a big lump of blonde hair' that accompanied a mourning poem that they purchased on Ebay. The respondent described this object as 'unsettling' because 'there was no sign of where it had come from or what was its relationship with the . . . item' they had bought. While they may not 'like' either object, they felt 'obliged' to keep the former precisely because of its familial connection.

The importance of an intimate link to a hairy object, however fleeting, was also raised by other participants to the survey. Some reported feeling unnerved by hairy objects of uncertain origins. For example, one respondent to the survey recalled feeling 'uncomfortable' when they encountered 'A hat made from human hair' at an exhibition they attended in Amsterdam. Their discomfort with the hairy hat stood in stark contrast to their own hairy object – hair that belonged to their beloved dog, whom they described as their 'oldest and truest best friend'. Reflecting on why the hairy hat provoked such a reaction, the respondent replied that a 'hat made of hair is questionable' – an answer that reveals much about the personal meanings that we ascribe to hairy objects. Similar feelings were reported by another participant who recalled initially feeling 'Like a kid yelling EWWW!' when they encountered Meret Oppenheim's 'Object' at the Museum of Modern Art (MOMA). For this respondent, the fur covered cup, saucer and spoon elicited a mix of feelings that included 'glee, childlike enthusiasm and humorous repulsion'. Their feelings towards the 'Object' were different from how they described their own hairy assemblage, a bag of dreadlocks, of which they were 'proud'. Another respondent recalled feeling 'unsettled' and 'repelled' by hair that they later recognized as their own. One respondent shared how they

'rediscovered' a 'plastic bag' that contained their 'own hair matted into dreadlocks'. They had forgotten about the hairy assemblage and its discovery evoked a 'feeling of slight revulsion'. For this respondent, it was the context of the hair – divorced from the body and kept in a strange place, that explained their reaction: 'Hair on the head is beautiful, off the head it is rather unpleasant'.

Some of the objects that we have in our possession are likely to be found in the archives of other families too. Liz Gloyn et al. have noted that many families have 'otherwise unremarkable' documents, such as swimming certificates, in their archives.[15] Viewed with a 'life-course lens', however, the importance of these objects to the stories of individual families becomes clear. As Gloyn et al. argue, the power of everyday objects lies not so much in their 'function' as it does in 'their association with events'.[16] We can apply this approach to the hairy items that were kept by participants in my survey to illuminate their individual, family stories. For many respondents, the hairy objects they had in their possession were kept precisely because they embodied important events in the keeper's life-story. While their responses indicated a shared agreement on the power of hair to capture specific memories, each of their stories were individual and revealed a special moment in their family history.

A number of participants had come into possession of their item as they collected locks of hair to commemorate 'big firsts' in their family stories. Angela Rosenthal has argued that hair is often regarded as 'containing the essence of individuality and personhood' and as a result, the 'growing, grooming, cutting, shaving, or losing of hair' is often associated with 'transformative life experiences'.[17] In other words, what we do with hair is often a reflection of how we feel; it is who we are. This same sentiment marked the locks of hair that were accessioned into the family archives by the individuals who participated in the survey. Whereas some participants kept locks of their children's hair to commemorate their 'first haircut', others took the hair into their possession in order to memorialize the babyhood of their child. One respondent, for example, shared that they had kept locks of 'blonde baby hair' that were left over from their child's 'first haircut'. Explaining their reasoning for keeping the locks, they noted that they 'wanted to keep a lock of their [child's] first curls' and had stored them in a special 'baby box' for safekeeping. Similar themes cut across the explanation of another participant who revealed that they were 'strongly thinking of keeping a length of hair' belonging to their infant daughter following their impending 'haircut next week'. Like the previous respondent, this participant had decided to keep a lock of their daughter's hair in order to capture her babyhood. Having watched the 'hair grow for over two years', the participant explained how the story of their daughter's progression from newborn baby to infant was made manifest in their hair. Whereas the 'very tip' of their daughter's hair was black – 'she had black hair when she was born', the colour had changed 'lighter and then darker' over time, as the child aged. In common with the previous respondent, the hair would be kept among their daughter's 'museum of objects'.

The relationships that we have with the 'things we keep' is in constant flux, as our memories of objects and the ways we engage and then re-engage with them, makes and re-makes their meaning. Joanne Begiato's observations on 'emotional artefacts' as 'time travellers' are a case in point. Whereas some objects – like wedding rings – are

emotional artefacts by virtue of their function, other items that we possess acquire this quality because we associate 'them with events and circumstances that produce particular emotions'.[18] These emotional objects enable us to move with them through time: we may look back with nostalgia, grief or happiness, and we may also project our feelings forward to future generations by passing on objects through inheritance.[19] For some of the respondents to my survey, their hairy objects also served this purpose. A number of participants associated locks of hair that they had in their possession with pivotal points in their own lives, commenting on how the hair enabled them to look back and revisit those memories. One respondent reported feeling 'pride' when they reflected on the provenance of their hairy object – their 'own set of neatly maintained dreadlocks' that they had worn for four years. For this individual, their object was 'special' because of the 'self-care and artistry' that was necessary to 'create and maintain the dreads'. Their object also embodied a stage in their life that had now passed, heightening their 'Awareness of the weight of the passage of time' and their 'Gratitude for that creative/expressive journey, and . . . peace that it is over'. Reflecting on the decision to cut their dreads, this participant likened the experience to a 'big chop' – a comment that has much in common with the decision of parents who keep hair to memorialize the 'firsts' in their children's development.

Other participants acquired their hairy object with the future in mind, revealing their desire to use the hairy memento as a time-travelling device that enabled them to connect past memories with their future selves. One respondent cut a lock of their own hair as a 'memento to [their] relative youth'. Noticing that their siblings had turned 'grey', they wanted to preserve a lock of their 'natural hair colour' so that 'As an old man' they could 'look at [their] hair in [their] 20s'. While they did not believe that their object was 'overtly special', for them, it was 'a snip of time'. Other participants revealed how they intended to use their hairy object to tactilely transport themselves back through time to relive happy moments. For example, one parent shared how a lock of hair belonging to their daughter not only 'makes [them] remember all the stages of her life as she grew', but the memories of physical touch that they shared. Looking at the hair helped this parent remember 'the lovely feeling of placing [their] hand on the back of her [daughter's] head' as she felt 'her lovely curls', and the sight of 'her brushing her hair off her face'. This participant planned to share the lock of hair with their daughter 'when she is older' and, we may speculate, the memories associated with it too.

Importantly, not all respondents associated their hairy objects with positive memories. For some respondents, their hairy object acted as visceral reminders of traumatic experiences and strained family relationships. One individual, in particular, shared that their hairy object evoked feelings of 'horror'. Their hairy object, a 'long plait' of their own hair about fourteen inches in length, carried traumatic memories of an incident, when aged twelve years old, their mother cut their hair without consent. In the words of this respondent, 'It was traumatic to have all that hair cut . . . I have never forgotten the day it happened and I cannot watch long hair being cut'. That it was the story associated with the hair, rather than the hair itself, that horrified the respondent is indicated in their admission to keeping the plait for a period of time. The plait was kept 'in a box' until they 'emigrated', after which they 'threw it away'. Moreover, in response to other questions about hairy objects they had encountered, the participant

drew a link between the story of the object and their feelings towards it. The 'horror' embedded in their own object stood in stark contrast to their self-styled 'blasé' attitude towards a lock of baby hair that they came into 'accidental' contact with in a 'small local museum'. As the hair 'was in relation to a good situation', the respondent noted that 'it did not really affect [them] except to think it odd that someone would keep a lock of hair' – an interesting comment in itself, given that this respondent had once kept a plait of their own hair.

'It's his essence': Hairy objects and human-animal families

The hairy objects that were kept and curated by participants in the survey were not limited to the human; a number of respondents reported keeping hairy mementos from beloved pets, including dogs, birds and horses. That respondents included hairy mementos from pets is not, however, that surprising. As a number of scholars have pointed out, pets and animal companions can be regarded as 'fictive kin'. Nickie Charles and Charlotte Aul Davies's study of kinship in South Wales, for example, revealed the important place that pets and animals played in constructions of 'family'. While they never specifically asked participants in their study about their pets, many 'interviewees spontaneously included pets as part of [their] kinship networks'.[20] This led them to conclude that family and kinship are not only social constructs, but these constructions 'ignore the species barrier'.[21] Others have drawn attention to how humans incorporate pets into their family practices. As Dana Zarhin et al. argued in their study of co-sleeping practices between humans and animals, sharing a bed with a pet blurred the species boundary, enabling individuals to constitute their pets as kin.[22] Similar points have also been raised by historians. Peter Stearns and Ingrid Tague, for example, have each explored change and continuity over time in the emotional practices of pet ownership, situating animals in histories of the family and its relationships.[23]

As indicated by the responses to my survey, animal companions were not only regarded by some individuals as family members, they were incorporated into family archive practices that are usually reserved for human kin. Importantly, the inclusion of animals in these practices is not new. Adria L. Imada's study of kinship practices in a twentieth-century leper colony in Hawai'i revealed how 'patients pursued various aesthetic modes of capturing their kinship with animals'.[24] Separated from other humans on account of disease, patients in the colony 'forged intense cross-species and queer kinship with domesticated and feral animals'. Significantly, patients chose to capture these relationships in forms and medium such as photo albums, complete with annotations.[25] Similarly, Claudia Soares's examination of the relationships between pets and children in late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century residential institutions demonstrated how animals were 'celebrated as integral and memorable facets of home and family life' for children in institutions.[26]

In a similar vein to those participants who kept hair as a way of marking the big 'firsts' in the lives of both themselves or their children, some respondents did the same for their pets. One participant reported that they had kept a 'bunch' of hair that belonged to their dog, Dino, that was collected after 'his first "hair brush" after bringing

him home' in 2005. Similar to the comments made by others on their child's 'first cut', this respondent was likewise motivated 'to commemorate' Dino's arrival by keeping his 'baby hair'. Other participants extended their memory-making practices to both children and pets, indicating the permeability of the species divide. One respondent described how they collected hairy mementos from both their child and their pet budgie. While they kept a lock of their child's hair following their 'first haircut', they came into possession of the budgie's feathers after it 'sadly passed away'. Both items were kept under conditions to ensure their preservation. Whereas the lock of baby hair was kept 'in a little curl inside a baby photo album' and was never touched 'so the strands stay together neatly', the 'Blue bird feathers' were securely kept in a 'ziplock bag with [a] photo' of the budgie. Indeed, the respondent planned on ensuring the longer-term survival of their pet memento by 'making [a] resin ornament with the feathers inside'.

The keeping of tokens and mementos of deceased pets is also not new. Ingrid Tague's study of animal companions and pets in eighteenth-century Britain, for example, revealed how Lady Isabella Wentworth commissioned a portrait of her dearly loved pet monkey 'Pug' when he died in 1712.[27] Katherine Grier's work on pets in America has likewise shown how families, and especially children, immortalized deceased animals in poems, arguing that 'bereaved pet owners appropriated and adapted the rituals and rhetoric of funerals and mourning for people to their own needs and ends'. Pet funerals, with homemade coffins, and bespoke graveyards, were not uncommon by the mid-nineteenth-century.[28] In her study of 'pet mementos' in New England, Nancy Carlisle has also suggested that the relatively good survival of dog collars among museum collections may indicate how they were kept as 'final remembrances of treasured family pets'.[29]

For the respondents to my survey, however, it was hair rather than material objects that was chosen to memorialize their pet. In her study of pets and family life in late Victorian and Edwardian Britain, Julie-Marie Strange drew attention to the 'intimate tactility of pet relations' and 'embodied character of human-animal relations'.[30] Commenting on photographs that depicted men touching, cupping, and holding their dogs, as well as one image in which a man touched the front paw of his terrier with his fingertip, Strange drew attention to the 'grip of touch, and the feel, smell and taste of another being's breath'.[31] It is this sense of embodied closeness that shapes how pet owners remember their animal companions today. Gemma Koontz, for example, has argued that sensory experiences play an important role in how humans choose to memorialize their pets through objects. Whereas impressions of paws may be made with paint to recreate the aural and visual experiences of dirty paws on floors, those made with clay or plaster enable pet owners to 'capture the embodied gesture of holding pets' feet in life'.[32] Some pet owners also arrange for impressions to be taken of their pet's nose. As Koontz notes, these casts recreate 'the various sensory components centered around the nose'.[33] One can stroke the cast, feeling the 'bumps' of their pet's nose on the surface, while the 'cool' surface may also evoke memories of cold, wet noses.[34]

For many pet owners, however, it was the affective and tactile properties of hair/fur that best captured their deceased companion. Rachael Harris has argued that

some pet owners choose to remember their animals through hair because 'they create narratives for their pet' that are centred on touch.[35] Hair, for many pet owners, becomes associated with the individual attributes of their animal companions, and they 'mourn these personalities alongside the physical' loss.[36] Similar comments were made by participants to the survey, who indicated that they had chosen to remember their pet with hair because it embodied their spirit. One individual shared that they had in their possession 'a tuft of soft white hair' from their west highland terrier that was 'cello-taped' to a 'sorry for your loss' card in their bedroom. For this respondent, their object was 'special' because it 'remains soft and fluffy like the dog was in life. It is a reminder of him'. Likewise, another respondent explained that they kept their dog's hair precisely because 'It's his essence'.

For other respondents, the tactile properties of hair enabled them to 'feel close' to their pet in ways that were not possible with other objects. One participant shared how they 'snipped' fur from the tail of their dog, Willough, in 'her final days' as a 'keepsake' and 'comfort' by which to remember her. The choice of fur was deliberate because it enabled the respondent to stroke, gaze at, and 'feel' their dog. Like the 'emotional artefacts' discussed by Joanne Begiato, this respondent used Willough's hair as a time-travelling device to bring comfort to their present with memories from the past:

> In life, she was the greatest dog, especially in her last years when I was going through a particularly difficult period. She could sense when something was wrong, and would snuggle in. Having a lock of her hair still brings comfort . . . It feels soft, just like her. . . . I like to look at it, feel the softness, and be comforted by all the wonderful memories.

Importantly, these tactile experiences cannot be replicated in the same way as another 'much loved dog' called Peppa, who 'was short-haired'. While the respondent kept Peppa's ashes, these cannot be 'stroke[d] . . . in the way [they] can [as] Willough's tail hair'.

Conclusion: Telling hair-stories

This chapter has explored the enduring power of hair, the things we create from it, and the stories that we weave with it, as they impact our lives past, present, and future. We keep hair to remember important life events, to 'remember' and commemorate persons and pets that are no longer with us, and we construct stories with and about hair to make sense of the world around us. I would argue that the power of hair to do these things is made possible by its partiality. Here, the work of Susan Stewart on souvenirs is particularly helpful. Like the hairy objects discussed in this chapter, Stewart has theorized that souvenirs are always incomplete; they represent traces of things and experiences that are divorced from their original contexts. In common with souvenirs, hair may enable an individual to 'remember' a loved one (human or animal), but the realization of that experience may never be replicated; the hair exists 'as a sample of the now-distant experience, an experience which the object can only evoke and resonate . .

. and can never entirely recoup'.[37] Moreover, like souvenirs, hairy objects tell us much more about the 'second-hand experience of its possessor/owner' than they do about the object itself.[38] In other words, the power of hairy objects lies in their ability not only to connect with their keepers on a personal and individual level but also to capture the imagination of those who come into contact with it.

I want to conclude by reflecting on how the materiality of hair, and its special ability to tell stories and connect with audiences, continue to be harnessed today. When Jane Wildgoose, an artist and art historian, was commissioned by the Rothschild Foundation and National Trust to present an exhibition at Waddesdon Manor, the country mansion built for the collector Ferdinand de Rothschild, she chose hair as the medium through which to tell his story. Eschewing the 'grandeur of the house or the luxury of its contents', Wildgoose chose to devise her subsequent exhibition, *Beyond All Price,* around 'a simple lock of hair and a tiny photograph of Ferdinand's wife, Evelina'.[39] Explaining her decision to focus on the hair, Wildgoose noted how she felt it was that object that could best capture 'the shadow that impressed itself so strongly' on her during her initial visit to the house.[40] While she was 'dazzled', 'dizzied' and 'dazed' by Ferdinand's treasures, Wildgoose remarked that the house left her with a 'profound sense of melancholy' – a melancholy that 'must have lingered in the fabric of Waddesdon' because she 'felt it' on her train ride home.[41] In common with the respondents to my survey, and the very many other families who keep and curate hairy objects, it was hair that provided 'the impetus for storytelling in ways that [were] far more resonant than words alone'.[42]

Notes

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3 Sally Holloway, *The Game of Love in Georgian England: Courtship, Emotions and Material Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018).

4 Helen Sheumaker, *Love Entwined: The Curious History of Hairwork in America* (Philadelphia: Pennsylvania University Press, 2007), 72.

5 Ibid., 72.

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13 Lily Ford, dir., 'Encounters with Hair', Inheriting the Family Research Network 2023, https://vimeo.com/779664939?embedded=true&source=video_title&owner=112628443.
14 Ibid.
15 Gloyn et al., 'The Ties that Bind', 168.
16 Ibid.
17 Angela Rosenthal, 'Raising Hair', *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 38, no. 1 (2004): 2.
18 Joanne Begiato, 'Moving Objects: Emotional Transformation, Tangibility, and Time Travel', in *Feeling Things: Objects and Emotions Through History*, ed. Stephanie Downes, Sally Holloway and Sarah Randles (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 231.
19 Ibid., 238. See also, 'The Doll's House and its Links with Home and Identity', Joanne Begiato Muses on History, 17 November 2015, https://jbhist.wordpress.com/2015/11/17/the-dolls-house-and-its-links-with-home-and/.
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34 Ibid., 73.
35 Rachael Harris, *Skin, Meaning and Symbolism in Pet Memorials: Tattoos, Taxidermy, and Trinkets* (Bingley: Emerald Publishing, 2019), 77–84.
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41 Ibid., 702.
42 Ibid., 722.

9

Connecting with Ancestors

'The Sweet Smell of Success'

Kate Wvendth

> 'Smell is a potent wizard that transports you across thousands of miles and all the years you have lived.' *Helen Keller*[1]

The connection between the sense of smell, emotion and memory within history has yet to attract significant attention.[2] This is surprising given how the body forms subconscious links between the three.[3] This chapter investigates these connections to reveal the intimate links between our sense of smell and emotions. It looks at how smells can drive our need to know, understand and recall loved ones. The discovery of my ancestor's perfume, locked in a dressing case for almost a century, is the focus of an emotional journey. This 'scent trail' following the life of an ambitious, successful family member evokes my admiration, respect, and affection. However, my unearthing of a misdemeanour elicits unexpected emotional tension.

A case reopened

As a regular searcher of online sale rooms, Lot 246, in Dawson's sale on 30 September 2021, immediately caught my eye. The auctioneers described the item as 'an early 20th-century crocodile skin dressing case'. The makers were the Goldsmiths and Silversmiths Company Ltd, established at 112 Regent Street, London, now Garrard & Co.[4] Unfortunately, most of the contents had long since been parted from the case, but this did not dissuade me from bidding for and winning it.

As I removed the case from its packaging, I saw the letters 'E. B. D.' on top of the lid, inscribed in gold. On one of the sides, there was a red wax seal stamped with 'Barclays Bank, Esher' and further marks on the other sides where previous wax seals had been applied. The case had spent much of its life as a safety deposit box, locked away in a bank vault, possibly holding important documents and jewels. It was in relatively good condition, although the key to the lock was missing, as were the original contents.

A 'must-have' accessory, dressing cases contained all the necessary beautification tools and personal items a lady in the 1920s would take with her on her travels. These included items such as toilet jars, brushes, combs, mirrors, powder bowls, a tray for jewels, scent bottles, a manicure set, a button hook, a shoe horn, a glove stretcher, a hat pin, scissors, a toothbrush, photo frames, a clock, writing materials and jewellery.[5]

Knowing there was not much to see inside, with the case and contents having long since been separated, I lifted the lid with little expectation of what I would discover. The hand-stitched lining of tan moiré silk was in remarkably good condition considering its age. However, as I noticed the only remaining tools, the tortoiseshell button hook, comb and shoe horn, I was taken aback by the sudden bold, striking fragrance ingrained in the fabric. An intensely musky (and musty) aroma left me feeling heady.

My eyes were drawn back to the case where the original owner's name and address, inscribed in gold, were now revealed. This, of course, gave me the identity of the wearer of the animated and dramatic scent. I was smelling the perfume worn by my step-great-great-grandmother, Lady Eugenia Bertuance Doughty, almost 100 years ago.

The powerful perfume conveyed confidence, success and opulence that mirrored what I already knew about Eugenia's personality, achievements and social status. Her scent instantly commanded my attention as I opened the case, in the same way I imagine it would on her entering a room in the 1920s. Through her perfume, this captivating Australian authoress had just launched into my world with a similar rapidity to her entering my great-great-grandfather's life in 1907.

Eugenia was my great-great-grandfather's second wife and, therefore, not a blood relative. While it was interesting to know of her and appreciate her illustrious journalistic career in Australia, I had not imagined building any deeper attachment. However, the unexpected smell of her perfume that I began to associate with Eugenia

Figure 9.1 Lady Eugenia Bertuance Doughty's dressing case (author's photograph).

led me to consider the possibility of forming a closer connection. I felt compelled to get to know the person behind the perfume, so I started researching her.

An emotional sense of smell

While a number of academic works on the senses have been published since the 1980s, the connection between the sense of smell, emotion and memory in history has received less attention.[6] To help understand the body's response to smell, it is worth considering how the body receives and processes odours. When molecules of an aroma are smelled, they trigger an electrical impulse transmitted to the part of the brain known as the 'olfactory bulb'.[7] Located at the front of the brain, the 'olfactory bulb' is directly connected to the limbic system, which links the outside world to the internal processing of smell within the body.[8] Described as the 'seat of emotion' and one of the earliest formed systems of the brain, the limbic system is the area related to emotion and memory.[9] It is the combination of smell and the body's response to it in the form of emotion that creates a memory.[10] Therefore, in investigating emotions within history, the sense of smell is a valuable exploratory and analytical tool.

Although smells are frequently experienced involuntarily and unconsciously, they can evoke strong reactions and emotional responses we associate with objects, people, places and experiences.[11] For example, the smell of fresh peas transports me to my grandmother's garden, where we picked vegetables over thirty years ago. It reminds me of our loving relationship and the pleasurable times spent together. The scent of freesias, the flowers of our wedding, reminds me of the joy I felt on the day and the people surrounding us.

Johan Willander and Maria Larsson's study of autobiographical odour memory found that smells evoke different and stronger memories from those of other senses.[12] Aromas can attract or repel us and act as cues for social bonding.[13] If we like the smell of a person or the fragrance they wear, we are more likely to form a connection with them.[14] The perfume industry bases its marketing strategy on this premise.[15] Manufacturers describe fragrances as sophisticated, sensual, exotic, rich and passionate. The intention is to lead the wearer to the scent that best represents their self-image and the emotional response in others they wish to evoke.[16]

Up to this point, my only knowledge of memories generated through the sense of smell had been created first-hand. For example, picking fresh peas with my grandmother was something we experienced together in our space and time in the context of our relationship and close bond. However, I had little understanding of Eugenia when I smelled her perfume. I never knew her. Therefore, we had no shared experiences, and I had no memories of her. In light of this, I wondered whether forming a connection with Eugenia would be possible and, if so, whether her perfume would play a part in shaping it.

A lady's writing materials

First, I found out more about Eugenia Bertuance Stone (later Doughty), who was born on 29 August 1872 in Melbourne, Australia.[17] Her parents, John Stone and Margaret

Moran, came from Irish farming families.[18] John and Margaret emigrated to Australia from Ireland shortly before their marriage in 1860.[19] Eugenia, or Caroline Eugenia as she was named at birth, was the couple's sixth child and fourth daughter.[20] When Eugenia was born, her father, John, worked as a doorman in Melbourne.[21] However, by 1884 when his wife, Margaret, died, John had found better-paid employment, working as a public servant in the 'Titles' office.[22] John's rise in fortune ensured Eugenia received Catholic schooling at the Vaucluse Convent in Richmond, Victoria, followed by two years of education with a theatrical and musical tutor.[23]

Eugenia was headstrong, confident, determined and self-assured as an adolescent. At seventeen, Eugenia's audacity led her to request to interview the editor of the weekly Melbourne socialite newspaper, *Table Talk*, regarding the advertised vacancy for a new journalist.[24] The request surprised the editor, as no such advertisement had been published in his paper.[25] Intrigued as he was, he invited the plucky Eugenia into his office.[26] Following Eugenia's 'interview' with *Table Talk's* editor, the publication hired their new female trainee journalist at a rate of 5/ a week.[27] As a result of her efforts at the paper, Eugenia's published literary works soon earned her awards and prizes. This was the beginning of a brilliant and infamous journalistic career in Australia.[28]

With a clear sense of self, this tall, confident and vivacious Australian woman appears to have set her sights on becoming a successful independent woman. Her experiences and opportunities suggest she was determined to raise her social standing and focused on becoming a successful independent 'lady'. By 1900, Eugenia had worked on the magazine *Table Talk* for over eight years.[29] While living in the family's terraced home at 16 Maribyrnong Rd, Moonee Ponds, Eugenia immersed herself in activities that interested her high society readers and reported on fashion, politics, women's suffrage, arts, theatre and socialite relationships.[30] Her high-class gossip columns, verse and stories earned her much acclaim, leading to increasingly prestigious and prosperous opportunities and invitations to society luncheons, dinners and events.[31]

In addition to her position at *Table Talk*, in around 1900, Eugenia became the Melbourne correspondent for the controversial Sydney-based *The Bulletin*, writing their regular 'Woman's Letter'.[32] Furthermore, her work was published in the critically acclaimed *The Critic*, the weekly Adelaide magazine through which she became infamous among Australian literary circles.[33] Eugenia was introduced to every facet of high society throughout her illustrious career in Australia. Her writing earned her a lifestyle similar to that of her high-class readers. She made friends and acquaintances with academics, politicians, artists, actors, singers and important and respected members of Australian society. It was through these contacts that her life took an unexpected turn.

Travel was an entrenched element of Eugenia's career and lifestyle, making a lady's dressing case her essential accessory. Not only was it the secure place to store her writing materials, but it also contained the tools, lotions, creams and scents necessary to perfect her appearance for social interactions and high society occasions. Eugenia's scent, in particular, is likely to have been carefully considered. Seen as a luxury item, perfume as a manipulator of health and sexual desire dates back to the seventeenth century.[34] According to Holly Duggan, various scents were frequently used in stage performances as writers attempted to situate their plays in particular environments

Figure 9.2 Lady Eugenia Doughty, Bains News Service, Library of Congress

and influence the audience's emotions through aroma.[35] In the eighteenth century, strong perfumes aroused suspicion that the wearer used them to mask disease or a lack of hygiene.[36] However, the application of perfume was fundamental to an individual's persona. As described by William Tullett, 'the need to appear easy, natural, self-disciplined, and pleasing to others at the same time was especially important in the context of smell'.[37]

Eugenia's beauty routine suggests she was careful to ensure she looked every bit like a high society lady and smelled appealing. Acutely aware of how she presented herself, Eugenia would surely have selected a perfume that conveyed her intended message.

Perfume adverts from the 1920s inferred that a 'woman of fine taste or feeling' or 'young, dainty, and blonde' should not choose a thick heavy oriental scent over thin perfumes like lilac.[38] However, heavier mysterious oriental scents were advertised as better suited to dark-haired women like Eugenia.[39] The headiness of the aroma in the dressing case suggests that Eugenia had the confidence to break from the tradition of thin scents. She was prepared to stand out from the crowd and was happy to convey an air of mystery through her musky oriental perfume. The same adverts advocated using a single perfume, so the wearer became associated with a particular scent among their circle of family and friends.[40]

Eugenia's level of self-assurance is beguiling, and undoubtedly she attracted many admirers. Her sense of self, freedom and independence inspires me, especially considering she lived during the period 1890 to 1918 when women in Australia, Britain and worldwide fought for more rights and for suffrage. The potency and character of Eugenia's perfume reflect her personality, furthering my understanding of her as the beginnings of our connection emerge.

A romantic journey and dutiful wife

Using her political, theatrical and literary connections, Eugenia embarked on a six-month trip to London in 1907 to experience the best London offered.[41] Her trip coincided with the Imperial Conference in London, and Eugenia travelled with Alfred Deakin, Australia's then prime minister, and his entourage. Also travelling on a business trip and accompanying Eugenia on the journey to London was her good friend and beauty pioneer, Helena Rubinstein.[42] While reporting for *Table Talk* in 1903, Eugenia wrote an article on 'Valaze', a new face cream or 'skin food' introduced by Rubinstein. As Eugenia reported, this new 'skin food' was set to revolutionize the beauty routine of countless Australian women.[43] The response to the article was overwhelming as stocks of 'Valaze' quickly sold out and back orders mounted up. Recounting Eugenia as 'Sydney's foremost woman journalist' in 1965, Rubinstein described this moment as her 'really lucky break'.[44] The pair went on to develop a lifelong friendship.[45]

Through her theatrical and music tutor, Eugenia was already a close friend of American actor and theatre and production company owner, James Cassius Williamson, his wife and the Australian soprano, Amy Castles.[46] During her visit to London, Eugenia's actor and musical friends provided her with an open door into the theatrical world.[47] On board the cruise liner en route to England, Eugenia's life would alter its course.[48] Returning to England following a trip to India, a gentleman boarded the ship.[49] This gentleman was my great-great-grandfather, Sir George Doughty, a ship and fishing magnate and newspaper owner, and the Member of Parliament for Great Grimsby.[50]

Despite the eighteen-year age difference, the couple had much in common: a shared love of literature and writing, politics, newspapers, religion and supporters of woman's suffrage. Neither had been born into the upper echelons of society.[51] However, Eugenia's considerable success as a journalist from a young age and George's early commercial and political achievements significantly elevated their positions within society. Three years a widower and a father to two grown-up children, George immersed himself in public, charitable and commercial work. In a chance meeting onboard a cruise liner, George met Eugenia, the 'sometimes pungent but never spiteful', independent and successful Australian writer and socialite who would become his second wife.[52]

Their engagement was announced three weeks before their wedding on 15 August 1907.[53] Owing to their differing religious denominations (George was a Methodist and Eugenia a Roman Catholic), the pair had a 'mixed' marriage ceremony (without the full music service) at the Roman Catholic Church of St. James, Spanish Place, Manchester Square in London.[54] As expected, the occasion was an elaborate affair, with many

politicians and well-known and well-heeled guests.[55] The bride, always one to break the mould of tradition, dispensed with the bride's wreath and veil, opting for a big white picture hat encircled by a magnificent ostrich feather instead.[56] Colonel Outtrim gave her away; deputy postmaster general for Victoria, and the shipping magnate, Mr Herbert Cayzer, was best man to the groom.[57] Following the wedding breakfast at the Hyde Park Hotel, the newlyweds first travelled to Paris, staying at the Elysée Palace Hotel before continuing their honeymoon on the continent.[58]

On their return to Great Grimsby several weeks later, Sir George and the now Lady Doughty received a rapturous welcome home.[59] The streets were lined several people deep as the couple rode through the crowds on their way to Waltham Hall.[60] Settling quickly into her new home and life in England, Eugenia immersed herself in public, social, and charitable work.[61] She was a hard-working and immensely supportive helpmeet to George in his political career.[62] She continued to write for George's newspaper.[63] She penned a self-help book called *The Cheerful Way*.[64] The townspeople took Eugenia to their hearts, and for their time, George and Eugenia were the celebrity couple of Great Grimsby.[65]

George's commercial and political affairs required him to visit Canada, America, South Africa, India and towns and cities across the UK.[66] Eugenia took the opportunity to explore new places, and the happy couple travelled regularly together.[67] Alongside her husband, Eugenia attended numerous dinners, functions and political rallies during George's commercial and political tours. The jars in Eugenia's dressing case would likely be filled with the latest Helena Rubinstein creams and lotions to ensure the finest preparation for these occasions. The photo frames probably held images of loved ones or special places and would undoubtedly help maintain emotional ties. Considering Eugenia's deep affection for her family and beloved Australia, these are likely to have been important items in the dressing case on every trip she made.

My connection with Eugenia develops gradually as I learn more about her and the experiences she encountered during the course of her life. I continue to piece together the person behind the perfume by delving into documents, newspapers, her writing and photographs. I even managed to uncover a silent 38-second video of her opening a garden fete in 1931.[68] I visualize Eugenia with her dressing case on her travels to London, Australia and America. I imagine her being the centre of attention at high society parties, supporting George on his political campaigns and attending charitable events. Each fresh insight into Eugenia's life and personality sparks additional thoughts and emotional responses as I am transported to her place and time.

Investigating the use of smells in multisensory museums, Andreas Keller compares the use of the senses of smell and sight. Thoughts, Keller argues, are more easily generated through visual stimuli, whereas emotions are evoked through smells. Therefore, museums designed to evoke intense sensory experiences appreciate the added value the sense of smell brings through its power to induce emotions.[69] According to Tim Morton and Clare Brant, our sense of space is altered through smell. Scents extend physical bodily boundaries due to their emission into the air around them.[70] Considering these academic and professional insights, I wonder whether my increasing connection to Eugenia was strengthening due to the scent emanating from her dressing case.

A seductive scent

Their marriage was, however, destined to be a short seven years long. Following a decline in health during the preceding year, George suffered and died from a heart attack at home just before midnight on the evening of 27 April 1914.[71] While Eugenia continued supporting local institutions and charities after George's death, she spent more time in London with friends.[72] In August of 1920, Eugenia attracted the attention of Mr Arthur Tickler, a son of the Grimsby Jam manufacturer Thomas Tickler of the First World War, Tickler's Jam fame.[73] Arthur was a married man, and after pursuing the affair with Eugenia for a year, his wife discovered passionate letters from his lover. When confronted about his affair with Eugenia, Arthur got his shotgun, threatening to shoot his wife first and then himself. Both his wife and their thirteen-year-old daughter, who was in the room at the time, were traumatized by the event.[74]

Despite Kathleen Tickler's pleas to Eugenia to stay away from her husband and Eugenia's assurances that she would, the lovers continued their affair. Eventually, realizing there was no future in her marriage to Arthur, Kathleen Tickler started divorce proceedings.[75] Eugenia's position within high society meant she, the affair, the court case and the flamboyant love letters attracted significant attention. The industry that made her successful and wealthy exploited her misdemeanour. The passionate and dramatic love letters that gave their affair away were published in newspaper reports of the court case worldwide.[76] Possibly due to the immense publicity surrounding their affair, their relationship did not survive the Tickler's divorce in 1923. It would appear that, for once, Eugenia chose to avoid publicity following the court case by moving to Paris.[77]

In France, Eugenia resumed a full and active part in socialite activities.[78] She spent time with established friends and made many new ones.[79] She regularly entertained French, American, English and Australian friends.[80] She visited the theatre often, frequently appearing at the stage door after rehearsals with a group of friends.[81] She continued to write, pen songs and had composers set her words to music.[82] She regularly visited the French Riviera in the 1920s when the Cote d'Azur was famed for its artists, writers and famous clientele.[83] She also visited England, Australia and America with friends.[84]

In 1929, Eugenia sold her home in Paris and moved back to England permanently.[85] She bought a beautiful country home, 'The River House', at Esher in Surrey, although she continued to return to Paris for the 'season'.[86] At home in Esher, she was active in social and charitable events and, in particular, supported fundraising for the local Catholic Church in Walton on Thames.[87] In 1931, she opened a garden fete to raise proceeds for building a new Catholic Church, and in 1932, she purchased the site on which the current Catholic Church now stands.[88] Eugenia's fascinating and colourful life ended on 20 June 1934.[89] She died of heart failure at her home, River House in Esher, and is buried in Scatho cemetery in Great Grimsby.[90]

After piecing together her life and personality, I realize that my emotions and connection to Eugenia are complex. I admire and respect her confidence, sense of self, determination, focus and success. And yet, my new knowledge brings unexpected

tension. I am troubled by the pain and distress her affair caused Arthur's family. This comes in no small part through my childhood experience and the memories and emotions I associate with them. I empathize with Arthur's wife and children for the turmoil they endured. Despite Eugenia's bold assertion to Kathleen Tickler that she would end the affair with her husband, her words appear empty. The very same day Eugenia professed her support to Kathleen Tickler, she wrote a passionate letter to Arthur without any suggestion of breaking off their relationship.[91] Eugenia clearly lied to Kathleen Tickler, and, like every other area of her life, she seems fixated on getting what she wanted.

Everything I have learned about Eugenia is now embodied in her perfume. When the case is opened, and the fragrance permeates the air, there is an awareness of Eugenia in the room. I have no memories of our exploits or time spent with Eugenia, who died thirty-five years before I was born. However, due to my research, I can visually recreate her life experiences in my mind and sense her strong character. The involuntary, unconscious power of the sense of smell instantly brings Eugenia's presence and personality to me. I am transported to Eugenia's time and place through documents, photographs and writing, yet we connect in the present time and place through her perfume.

Acquiring Eugenia's dressing case has thus given me an unexpected and unintended heirloom. I did not anticipate finding the case or its fragrance, and she probably never contemplated that they would be discovered by a family member several generations after her. However, the smell of perfume in the dressing case has sparked a connection with Eugenia that cannot be experienced through the physicality of the other four senses. I cannot touch Eugenia, only objects that belonged to her. I can only see her by looking at her image in photographs. I cannot hear her voice, only read her written word, and I cannot taste any food she prepared. However, due to the aroma of her perfume that remains in her dressing case, I can smell Eugenia's existence. Within the century that separates the two of us, the perfume and its ability to induce her presence in my space are as close as I can physically get to my step-great-great-grandmother.

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10

Family Archives and the Archive as Family

Katie Barclay

Between 1952 and 1964, Friedrich Boss, a horticultural inspector for the Botanic Gardens at the University of Erlangen, went home each evening and, responding to news and public events, wrote, cut out newspaper clippings and combined them in loose leaf binders. At the end of each month, he took his files, wrapped them up in brown paper, tied them with string and sealed them with red lacquer. When he died in 1977, in a psychiatric facility, his niece found the bundles in his cellar and donated them to the Prinzhorn Collection at Heidelberg University Hospital. There a curator labelled, ordered and displayed the hundred or so packages in piles as an 'archive of loneliness', transforming a personal collection practice into a work of art.[1]

The Prinzhorn Collection is a corpus of art made by Germans with mental illness. It originated in a teaching collection and was significantly expanded by Hans Prinzhorn (1886–1933), an art historian and psychiatrist, while he worked at the Heidelberg psychiatric clinic. Prinzhorn, influenced by psychoanalysis, hoped that the art of the mentally unwell might proffer insights into the unconscious, aiding understanding of their conditions and treatment. Today the collection includes work produced as part of art therapy by patients at psychiatric clinics and hospitals, and works donated by professional artists who identify as having a mental illness. A reoccurring theme within the collection, at least as currently displayed in their exhibition space, is 'the archive', where various materials are collected, collated and ordered, and, by the individuals themselves or others, interpreted as creative expression.

The Zilm Family History Committee was formed in 1980 at Freeling, South Australia, to research and write a family history, which was eventually published in 1982 as *The Zilms at Nain and Beyond: A History of the South Australian Pioneer Families of Johann Christian Zilm, his brother Johann Gottlob Zilm, and sister Anna Dorothea Hoffmann, 1938-1982*, and became part of the University of Adelaide Barr Smith Library Collection. Their collective efforts combined photographs of members of the family, graves and places, maps, drawings, official documents and transcriptions of newspaper articles, with genealogies and written narrative that sought to pull together and make sense of the archival documents reproduced within its covers. The result was a history that told the story of a German family who migrated to and settled in South Australia, exploring their lineage, movements, occupations and faith practices as Lutherans. It is one of many that has been produced across the globe as families

give form to their ancestral research, and, if not always considered as such, a creative engagement with an archive, transforming a selection of documents and images into a narrative and physical memento of family life.

This chapter situates a number of creative responses to the 'archive' found in the Prinzhorn Collection against those of family historians in their family history books. While seemingly distinct engagements with the archive, when considered alongside each other, both speak to its affective power, its capacity to produce identities and the ability of archival records and practices not only to offer histories of the family but to constitute it. Here I use the term 'archive' capaciously to include not only the paperwork, photographs, and documents that we typically associate with the institutions that seek to preserve the history of people, places and things but also materials and objects to which we apply a discipline of collection, collation and ordering.[2] Thus, I see the archive as something produced by archival practices, rather than inherent in the material itself, and seek to consider archival practices as part of personal, family and everyday life, rather than simply the work of trained professionals. In considering the archive in this way, the parallel between the creative archival practices of the Prinzhorn Collection artists and those of family historians emerges.

My motivation in turning to the archive in a volume on inherited objects and emotion arises from the central question that the editors have pursued in the project from which it emerged: Why do we hold on to some family objects and discard others? Most of us are not so fortunate as to inherit objects of significant economic or resale value, but, as we almost intuitively know, that is not the purpose of holding on to our ancestors' things. We might then say that such objects have 'sentimental' value – that they hold value due to their 'personal or emotional associations', as the dictionary suggests. Yet, at least for me as a historian of emotion, to label something 'sentimental' seems more to describe than to explain. In this chapter, then, I wish to consider how an attention to the affective practices of archive-making might also illuminate why inherited objects carry emotional weight for their owners.

To do so, I engage with a now substantial academic literature, which considers how archives come to have affective power.[3] For historians, the promise of the archive is often situated in the 'promise of recovery'.[4] As the oft-quoted Jules Michelet notes, to enter the archive is 'to enter that place where the past lives, where ink on parchment can be made to *speak*'.[5] For some, the 'seductions' of the archive are that it lures us to believe that we encounter the dead, rather than their traces.[6] For others, however, the possibilities of the archive expand beyond an imaginative engagement to deeply rooted human needs, and the capacities of the material world. For Derrida, who brought Freud's psychoanalytical theory to the archive, archival practices reflect the human need for 'conservation', to persist over time, situating it against the destructive 'death drive', as part of the 'pleasure principle'.[7] Archival practices, for Derrida, are one way in which people fulfil their psychological need for pleasure and survival. Extending this principle to the practices of the family historian, we might argue that the conservation of familial inheritances acknowledges a psychological need to preserve not just the self, but the collective of the family.[8] In this, family history practices reflect archival practices in general, where, as Carolyn Steedman puts it, the archive 'confirms the searcher in his or her sense of self, confirms that searcher as he or she wants to be'.[9] The archive is a place where we look for, and find ourselves, or in this case our familial selves.

Other scholars wish to complicate a story of archival emotions that is so human-centric, acknowledging that the archive consists of material objects that have their own affective capacities. Here they draw on work that highlights how objects carry with them histories and meanings that can be activated by new generations – one person's discarded object might be recognized by another as a treasure.[10] Moreover, the archive – the objects of which it consists – enables new feelings and new histories. Arlette Farge talks of the 'surplus of life that floods the archive', enabling a certain 'affective tremor' in those that work with them. Here, like Raymond Williams in his discussion of 'structures of feeling', Farge points to the ways that some forms of knowledge emerge as sensations and feelings, before we take hold of them and give them expression.[11] The archive offers a site of such possibility, pointing not just to a recovery of the past but the formation of new futures. Within families, inheritances might hold such affective resonance, the capacity to produce a tremor, even as the form to express them remains elusive.

In writing this chapter, I have been particularly taken by one contribution to this discussion – Ann Laura Stoler's account of 'ruination'. Stoler provides an account of ruins' as 'enchanted', 'desolate' spaces, where life is 'petrified'.[12] Despite this, they are often sites of significant feeling – of nostalgia, melancholy – and the feelings they invoke reflect a person's position in relation to the past that is being left behind. Ruins, however, are also lived among, constantly repositioned in meaning, function and affective effects. Importantly, for Stoler, this process of ruination is far from petrified, but instead she notes how 'intuitively evocative and elusive such effects are, how easy it is to slip between metaphor and material object, between infrastructure and imagery, between remnants of matter and mind'.[13] The ruin, which we here might consider as one form of inherited object, expands to consist of more than its material existence, but also its associated meanings and possibilities, requiring an expanded vocabulary – of metaphor, allusion, and emotion – for its articulation. Here we might usefully also consider the concept of 'haunting', whereby something of the past persists in the present, with social, political and emotional effects.[14]

The creative work explored herein, produced by artists and family historians, does not describe a process of ruination. However, as with the ruins described by Stoler, through their redeployment in creative forms – through the 'living with' of these objects – the residual past of the archive is used to animate new possibilities, new futures and new identities and families. Importantly, as I explore herein, in the case of both Prinzhorn art and family history books, the archive comes to operate as a proof of life or evidence that a person or family '*was here*' and so to stand in for or become that person or family, that would otherwise be absent. The possibility of the family archive – sometimes only felt by their holders – takes physical form and has creative effects in supporting the continuation of the past in the present.

The Prinzhorn Collection: Archives as family

Today Friedrich Boss's 'archive of loneliness', along with works by Vanda Viera-Schmidt and Nicole Guiraud, forms a display in the entrance hall of the Prinzhorn Collection, titled 'Self-saving projects'.[15] Curated in a glass cabinet, Boss's brown envelopes are piled

at different heights. One is opened to give an indication of content. Only a fraction of Vanda Viera-Schmidt's work is on display. A tall pile of white paper rises towards the ceiling, enclosed in a glass box. A ladder leans next to it with a smaller pile of paper beneath it, allowing the viewer to observe their markings. Viera-Schmidt spent over a decade drawing protective markings on sheets of paper that act as counter-curses to the world's violence. Her goal was world peace. Her full archive consists of over 500,000 sheets of paper, which were originally stored in the cellar of the institution in which she lived. As in the exhibition, they were piled high towards the ceiling. Nicole Guiraud, a prize-winning professional artist, gave her work 'Archives – Growing Part I' to the Prinzhorn Collection in 2013. It consists of 39 jars (from a full collection of 117), which she had filled with pictures, texts, little objects, fragments of material, fluff. 'Part I' of the collection was created in 1980, when Guiraud secluded herself in her apartment while depressed, finding the action of arranging these '*objets trouvés*' calming. These 'self-saving projects', as the curator described them, were simultaneously therapeutic and archival practices.

The 'Self-saving projects', which welcome the visitor to the collection, are described by the interpretation panels as examples of 'obsessive producing and keeping' to 'overcome difficult periods by creating meaning of life'. Boss's work is contextualized by his lonely life. After a childhood accident, he was a 'loner'; his

Figure 10.1 Vanda Viera-Schmidt, 'World Peace Project', sculpture, photographed by Torsten Kappenberg.

fiancé separated from him when he was twenty; he had lost three siblings when young and was 'traumatized' by his mother's early death; he was bullied at work and forced to retire early. Boss was committed to the psychiatric clinic at seventy-eight, when he refused to leave his home, and died shortly afterwards. Boss's archival practice is thus located as a coping mechanism, by a man whose life lacked sociability, perhaps purpose. Viera-Schmidt was an in-patient at a psychiatric unit in the 1990s. She believed that she was cooperating with the Germany authorities, and her artworks – which consist of regular and consistently used patterns and symbols designed to ward off particular harms (such as uranium) – allowed her to contribute to world peace. Guiraud had fled her native Algeria as a child during the Algerian War, having lost her arm in a bomb explosion; as an adult in Paris, 'Growing Part I', became a mechanism for working through trauma, 'a way to sort her emotions'. She repeated the experiment in 1990 and 2000, as part of her artistic practice.

To the historian, these works of art are immediately resonant of archival practices. Creating, sorting and storing – repetitive, ordering of their worlds – offered not just a ritual action or activity but created an archive that persisted beyond the individual, carrying their histories into the present. The desire to produce an archive, and the therapeutic effects that it served for the makers, I would suggest, tells something of the power of our material worlds, and not least the documents and paperwork that are so critical to modern identity. Birth, marriage and death forms now mark our entry into the world, key events and end points; identity paperwork affirms who we are,

Figure 10.2 Nicole Guiraud, 'Growing Part 1' in the Prinzhorn Collection.

narrowing our possibility for reinvention and disappearance. The personal archive becomes a critical marker of our existence and persistence, refusing the possibility that we might fade away or run from ourselves. In this it parallels the institutional archive that sits as evidence of the existence of the state or nation, of collectives, their memories and their narration of who they are. Within a context where the archive is now so central to the marking of human existence, engagements with the archive moved beyond providing a space to 'find oneself', as Steedman suggests, to making oneself.

The archival practices captured in the 'Self-saving projects' exhibit are all suggestive of a need to capture and hold on to the everyday as evidence that the maker *was here*, that they endured.[16] Situated against loneliness, seclusion and institutionalization, archival practices were affirmations of self, perhaps even a form of sociability. The ordering of things was not enough; they were also stored and preserved, piling up around the individual maker. The volume of these collections seems to create a wall to the outside world; for Viera-Schmidt, her piles of paper were literally intended to ward off evil. Thus, it could be suggested that the archive acted as a site of safety for the makers, collections that affirmed existence and kept one secure through their physical presence. In this we might suggest that the archive operated like Stoler's ruins, as materials to be lived with and among, shaping our engagement and memory of our personal past.

The archive here might even be considered as a form of family, in the absence of human families. This can be seen in other works in the collection. Harald Bender left home at fifteen, living in a children's home; in later life, he explored his roots, believing he came from an aristocratic lineage. The trained artist conducted research into the origins of himself and of mankind, filling up his one-room apartment with files and binders of his findings. Today, these are installed as a wall in the Prinzhorn Collection, ordered by the colour of the binder.[17] For others, family and art intersected. Emma Hauck, an in-patient at the Heidelberg clinic, produced letter after letter to her husband, which were never sent but found in her room after death. They contained only the words 'Sweetheart come' and 'come' over and over again.[18] Repetitive gestures, ordering and storing became mechanisms through which absence and separation from family, or a sense of family self and lineage, could be managed and explored.

Derrida would lead us to home in on such archival practices as a form of 'conservation', which when reread through Lacan might suggest a 'pleasure principle' whereby we seek not to be overwhelmed by pleasure but to manage and contain – order – excessive feeling. In doing so, we might move away from a straightforward reading of these archival practices as a response to loneliness or seclusion. Rather like the ruins we live among, the ordering and storing of the personal and the everyday bring ordinary pasts into the future, and, in so doing, change their form and function – making them extraordinary. The past of how they were made lingers as a haunting, but also transforms archive to art. The archive then offers a lineage and future to these individuals, which like the family grows from the routine and ordinariness of the everyday.

Family history: Family archives

The Zilm Family History Committee formed at a family reunion, emerging not from seclusion but from a group's desire to capture their collective history. They are not distinctive in engaging in family history as a group project, but the lone family historian pursuing their research without support is just as common an origin for the family history book. For instance, Peter Murphy, the author of *Together in Exile* (1990), became obsessed with genealogy as a teenager when his family got bored answering his questions and sent him to the library. The production of family history books can be found in many national contexts, and their form is shaped by local and regional patterns and genre rules. This chapter concerns itself with those produced in the Anglophone world, including the works of migrants from non-Anglophone, mostly European, backgrounds. The production of family history books, often printed privately or by family history societies, grew in popularity from the nineteenth century, corresponding with the opening of public archives and records to the general public, and reflecting growing literacy levels and a desire to capture a family heritage in writing.[19] Today, their production is supported by a large family history industry that brings family historians together, supports research and makes available historical sources through large online databases, like Ancestry.[20]

The value of the family history book as a form of historical research has grown in recent years, as historians have sought to widen participation in history-making, to reflect on the multiple forms and genres through which history can be expressed, and as greater recognition has emerged of a culture of family history that shapes research practice.[21] The family history book is now recognized as a 'genre' of writing, whereby their producers share expectations about what such work should include, what demonstrates 'good quality' or 'poor' research, and how their work should be presented. Situated against early accusations of 'amateurism' and of romantic or partial readings of historic evidence, family history books often place considerable weight on demonstrating the veracity of claims, a practice that can be viewed as a generic rule. For family historians, as with their professional counterparts, the 'truth' of their pasts is found within the archive, and so family history books offer an explicit engagement with the archive.

In the Zilm Family History, as with many others, the archive is laid bare for the reader. Photographs, official documents, newspapers articles and maps are reproduced for the reader within its pages. Older works, such as *A History of the Family of Seton* (1896), often contained extensive appendices of original documentation. The interpretation of these sources ranges in depth and sophistication. Some offer complete narratives of the family history with documents as illustrations. Many others, however, allow these texts to 'speak for themselves'; narrative history can be sparse, limited to short accounts designed to locate the reader in time and place. Of the thirty-six pages of the Zilm family history, only eighteen contain any narrative text, and that rarely takes up a complete page. Page 15, for example, contains a map, some text under the heading 'Nain Settlement', which explains the move of the Zilm family to Nain, South Australia, the costs of the land and its distribution, and the naturalization of the Zilm

children. The bottom of the page is an image of the certificate of naturalization. The majority of the work is thus composed of reproductions of primary sources. Instead of narrative, family history emerges through an inter-textual reading of the sources put on display within its pages. In this, the text assumes a certain transparency of the archive – that all readers will come to the same conclusions of the same evidence – and that the relationship between the texts on display will emerge without artifice.

It is likely this transparency of the archive that led family histories to be devalued by professional historians, for whom the production of narrative is the making of history, and where the originating archival material typically remains safely out of sight, interpreted for a trusting audience by an expert. Rather than dismissing family history as poor history-making, however, they can instead be viewed as a form of archival practice, leading to a creative engagement with the archive form. Indeed, some family history books might be read as an archive, collating documents on the subject of a particular family, drawing them together in a single place, giving them a logic and order, and preserving them for future generations.

The production of the family history book continually speaks to efforts in collation, ordering and preservation. Most obviously, the bringing together of documents, photographs and similar records is a form of archival practice, typically underpinned by laborious research and the gathering of disparate facts and details. Within the context of family history, the materials brought together are as likely to be evidence of the routine and everyday of ordinary life as large historic 'events'. The Zilm family history, for example, discusses the '134 acres, leased for seven years at 5/- an acre' at Klemzig, where the family first settled; it discusses the prices of fruit and vegetables; contracts with business partners; and the building of houses and communities. Here the family's account of itself reflects the surviving record, where contracts and land records are more likely to survive than personal papers. But it often produces a list-like effect, of facts gathered and presented. Family history is marked by repetition, perhaps most overtly seen in the construction of genealogies – long lists of ancestors, grouped together as families, repeated for generations. The Zilm history traces their family from 1838 to 1982; the latter part of their book is dedicated to the presentation of names and basic genealogical data.

Within family history books, then, the family is produced for the reader through its documentation, through the production of lists and repetition, and through the collation or harnessing of the traces of the routine and everyday as key to understanding and accessing the family represented in its pages. We could argue that the 'family' of the family history book is its archive – that the documents, objects and other surviving traces of our ancestors' existences not only speak to a past that was, but stand in for that family and operate for family historians as the ancestors' who would otherwise be lost. If the practice of family history is compared with that of the artists displayed in the Prinzhorn Collection discussed earlier, we can suggest that the need to bring the traces of the past – jars of found objects, news clippings and notes, family history documents – forward into the present and future, similarly reflects a desire to demonstrate and display that we were *once here*. The transmission of inherited objects preserves past selves, not only as points in time (a name on a list) but through the everyday practices that gave substance to people's lives. The 'we' that was here is fleshed out, given greater

form and substance. Certainly the correspondence between the scale of the archive for a particular individual and our sense of 'closeness' or knowledge of them is a useful reminder of the ways that the archive comes to form the historic subject.[22]

The archive of the family historian might less obviously provide a sense of safety or security than could be read in the archival practices of the artists above. But as conservation practices, in Derrida's sense, and as locations of identity-making, they nonetheless can be understood as offering a grounding for individuals and groups, tying them into stories of the self and other that enable them to make sense of who they are.[23] Here the practice of group family history-making, like that of the Zilms, and which in that case tellingly emerged from a family reunion, can also be clarified.[24] The family history story produced by the Zilms makes sense of groups tied together by a shared distant ancestor, but now dispersed over time, place and everyday relationality. Stories of past relation, captured by the records and objects that travel over time, orient family identity, affirm the connections it produces and enable familial emotions, including love, trust and obligation. Moreover, family history practices, as archival practices, allow the maintenance of such relationality – if identity is produced in the everyday through routine and symbolic practices, so too does the familial self require similar maintenance to support its continuity over time.

Returning again to Stoler's ruins, a key point here is not simply that the archival practices of family history become a space for the production of family identity, but that the objects that are deployed in their archival practices also contain agency. Like ruins, inherited objects are haunted with the stories of their making, use and transmission and with the affective legacies that ensured their survival across generations. As things that are lived with and which anchor family histories, they become sites around which we orient our accounts of who were in the past and in the present. Further, through continual reuse and redeployment in evolving family histories – stories that evolve not simply through their engagement with new sources of information but new people in our lineage – inherited objects enable alternative futures for the familial self and the world it seeks to build. The sentimental value of the inherited object is that it acts as a node of the familial self, supporting the production of familial connection over time and place, providing an orientation or belonging for the individual or group, and promoting the emotions of family life.

Conclusion

This chapter was inspired by the question of what causes us to hang on to some items that we inherit and discard others. Looking at family history practices as a form of archiving, and considering the family object as a form of 'ruin', this chapter explored how family history provided an opportunity to conserve a familial self and identity, to transmit that identity over time, and so enable a lineage that enabled a sense of belonging and relationality between family members. The inherited object, deployed as part of archival practices, could within this context be understood not just as representation of an ancestor but come to act 'as family', in providing a grounding of self and emotions of security and place. The inherited object, 'haunted' by its historical associations

with past ancestors or events, is not passive in this process – simply a product of our imaginative or emotional attachments to a thing – but its qualities, uses and history enable certain forms of history and identity-making to emerge. In this, the inherited object, through the archival practices of individuals, operates similarly to institutional archives and their role in producing a national past.

It might be objected here that such an account might explain why a particular object is inherited, but less so how others come to be discarded. Here we might again turn to Stoler's concept of the 'ruin' and to the case of Viera-Schmidt. Stoler's account of ruination acknowledges that ruins have differential effects; some things are ignored to rot away, become 'residual', while others are 'tenacious'.[25] In articulating the political project of exploring ruination in the context of imperial history, she suggests that the job of the historian is not to account for the 'long gone' but rather 'to delineate the specific ways in which waste accumulates, where debris falls, and what constitutes "the rot that remains"'.[26] Applied to family history, where the 'long gone' might be experienced as a genuine loss and where the 'rot that remains' might be a valued inheritance, a language of debris and waste might be unduly negative for the 'inherited object'. But her larger point is important. The parts that remain do so because they have social, political, and affective effects for the communities that live among them. The lost object becomes one that has failed to resonate for a particular individual, for a generation. Importantly, this is not just an individual project – the child who selects a few sentimental objects unable to rehouse all of the goods of a beloved parent – but one of a community and its concerns.

Viera-Schmidt produced her 500,000 pages of 'counter-curses' while living in a psychiatric facility. Her works were not stored by her, but by the institution, in their basement. When she was rehomed in the community and the institution closed, the work was moved into the Prinzhorn Collection. It is perhaps less surprising that 500,000 pages of art were identified as 'monumental', as worthy of inheritance and preservation.[27] More interesting is that each page survived; in the everyday, someone cared enough to recognize a single page produced by a vulnerable woman as something to keep, as something to collect, and with which to build. The archive, the ruin, is not just an account of what is recognized as valuable, but of ongoing acts of care in the everyday. The archive is produced as the individual and their communities maintain space for the ordering of life.

Notes

1 Bettina Brand-Claussen, 'Friedrich Boss' Archive of Loneliness', in *Einfürung in die Sammlung Prinzhorn*, ed. Ingrid von Beyme and Thomas Röske (Heidelberg: Sammlung Prinzhorn, 2020), 58–9.

2 For a discussion of archival definitions a good place to begin is Marlene Manoff, 'Theories of the Archive from Across the Disciplines', *Portal* 4, no. 1 (2004): 9–25.

3 For a summary of this literature, see Katie Barclay, 'Falling in Love with the Dead', *Rethinking History* 22 (2018): 459–73; Marika Cifor and Anne J. Gilliland, 'Affect and the Archive, Archives and their Affects: An Introduction to the Special Issue', *Archival Science* 16 (2016): 1–6.

4 Harriet Bradley, 'The Seductions of the Archive: Voices Lost and Found', *History of the Human Sciences* 12, no. 2 (1999): 107–22; Lynette Russell, 'Affect in the

Archive: Trauma, Grief, Delight and Texts. Some Personal Reflections', *Archives and Manuscripts* 46, no. 2 (2018): 200–7.

5 Michelet is quoted in Bradley, 'The Seductions of the Archive', 113 and also in Carolyn Steedman, 'The Space of Memory: In an Archive', *History of the Human Sciences* 11, no. 4 (1998): 33–48.

6 An example of this is Carolyn Steedman, *Dust: The Archive and Cultural History* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2011).

7 Manoff offers a nice summary of his ideas on this: 'Theories of the Archive'.

8 This was argued to be a basic human desire in the eighteenth century: Katie Barclay, 'Emotional Lineages: Blood, Property, Family and Affection in Early Modern Scotland', in *Historicising Heritage and Emotions: The Affective Histories of Blood, Stone and Land*, ed. Alicia Marchant (London: Routledge, 2019), 84–98.

9 Steedman, 'The Space of Memory'.

10 D. Coole and S. Frost, 'Introducing the New Materialisms', in *New Materialisms: Ontology, Agency and Politics*, ed. D. Coole and S. Frost (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010), 1–43.

11 Arlette Farge, *The Allure of the Archives*, trans. T. Scott Railton (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013), 31; 'Structure of Feeling', in *A Dictionary of Critical Theory*, ed. Ian Buchanan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

12 Ann Laura Stoler, 'Imperial Debris: Reflections on Ruins and Ruination', *Cultural Anthropology* 23, no. 2 (2008): 191–219.

13 Ibid., 203.

14 Colin Davis, 'Ét at Présent: Hauntology, Spectres and Phantoms', *French Studies* 59, no. 3 (2005): 373–9.

15 The information given here is taken from the displays that support the exhibition, which I visited in November 2023.

16 For a discussion of endurance through everyday practice see: Lauren Berlant, *On the Inconvenience of Other People* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2022).

17 His work can be viewed here: 'Der Marquis im Copyshop', *Deutschlandfunk Cultur*, https://www.deutschlandfunkkultur.de/irrenkunst-der-sammlung-prinzhorn-der-marquis-im-copyshop-100.html (accessed 3 January 2024).

18 Examples of her work can be seen here: 'Sweetheart Come', Letters of Note, https://lettersofnote.com/2011/08/17/sweetheart-come/ (accessed 3 January 2024).

19 Ashley Barnwell, 'The Genealogy Craze: Authoring an Authentic Identity through Family History Research', *Life Writing* 10, no. 3 (2013): 261–75.

20 Tanya Evans, *Family History, Historical Consciousness and Citizenship* (London: Bloomsbury, 2021).

21 Ashley Barnwell, 'Telling Social Stories: Family History in the Library', *The Australian Library Journal* 64, no. 2 (2015): 105–12.

22 Steedman discusses the problems with this in *Dust*.

23 Barnwell, 'Telling Social Stories'.

24 For discussion of documents in producing familial, local and national identities for family groups see: John Heath and Ashley Barnwell, 'From the Inside: Indigenous-Settler Reflections on the Family Uses of the Thomas Dick "Birrpal" Photographic Collection, 1919-1920', *Life Writing* 20, no. 1 (2023): 163–82.

25 Stoler, 'Imperial Debris', 211.

26 Ibid.

27 John Guillory, 'Monuments and Documents: Panofsky on the Object of Study in the Humanities', *History of the Humanities* 1, no. 1 (2016): 9–30.

11

Feeling Kindred

Sensory Encounters with Immaterial Inheritance

Ashley Barnwell

When we think of family heirlooms or inherited objects, the images that swim to mind are often of material, tangible things – a ring, a photograph, a serving dish, a house. However, the 'passing on' of family can also be immaterial or intangible, phenomena that, like something from a riddle, hold weight yet cannot be seen. Intangible inheritances, sometimes mediated by objects, places or the body, can conjure sensory feelings of being connected with ancestors. Family history is deeply engaged with the dearly departed, yet forms of *felt* inheritances that are (extra) sensory are often overlooked in studies of what gets passed on.[1] Here I share three short fragments where people researching their own family history – Bronwyn, George and Kerin – described the visceral, sensory, embodied feelings that can arise when retracing ancestors' lives. The fragments come from my interviews with Australian family historians about their experiences uncovering family secrets and myths; accounts of spooky or uncanny moments sometimes emerged as side-stories. Attention to these moments opens space to discuss aspects of family history research that might seem esoteric, but are indeed common and often insightful. It also extends the scope of inheritance, beyond the family object, and considers the interaction of the material and immaterial in evoking feelings that link the family's past and present.

Intangible inheritances, those that manifest as feelings, have been less written about perhaps precisely because they are hard to put into words. To frame my analysis, I draw from Jennifer Mason's study of the 'socio-atmospherics of everyday life' and her idea of 'affinities' which offers a useful vocabulary for the sensations that shape our relations to kin. Mason describes affinities as 'connections that feel "kindred" in some way, or make things kindred', sparked by moments of 'ineffable kinship' where we feel a 'potent connection' that we can't quite explain.[2] Take, for example, the person who meets newfound, distant relatives on the otherside of the world for the first time yet immediately feels a deep familiarity, like they are 'of the same stuff'. When describing what affinities do in the context of family history, Mason suggests that they can disrupt our conventional sense of time and distance between the living

and dead.[3] The 'potent connection', often summoned by 'sensation' – the feel of an object, a sound or a smell, seemingly puts us in proximity to forebears.[4] As Mason explains, trying to understand the strangeness of affinities 'requires us to re-envision what feels like a rather plodding and dull notion of linear and sequential time, or kinship as descendant generations, and to come up with something altogether more acrobatic and creative'.[5]

Such experiences are interesting in and of themselves as moments when the extraordinary punctures the ordinary hours of family history research, sifting through microfilm or deciphering handwriting. But affinities are also valuable because they can summon reflection, redirect our inquiry or upturn our assumed ideas about history, time and relation.[6] In ways that involve yet exceed the material, 'affinities' can therefore make us see differently into how feelings of relatedness are passed on across generations. Three brief fragments that touch on these possibilities follow, entitled *Script, Scent,* and *Skin*.

Script

> *Bronwyn: I found a place that George had lived, and I went into that place. It was up above a chemist shop, it was abandoned, bit of a storage area. But it was where he lived, and I could feel his presence there. Yes, that was quite powerful. . . . I didn't write anything down about it, so I'm just now having to feel my way back into it. It felt quite lonely, but the sense of a man in control of his life, like with a sense of his own place in the world, but alone in the world as well. And so, it was a kind of older George. Yes, so everything that I'd read of his that he'd written, like the letter that he wrote . . . the feel of that letter, the actual letter, the words that he'd written, which took me three days to decipher three pages. I had to actually write the shapes down and then it was almost like doing hieroglyphics. . . . So, the feeling of who he was in the writing of that . . . It was as if all of that came together and made sense in my body of oh,* this is George.

In this passage, Bronwyn recalls traveling to a small town to research the life of her grandfather, George, who died one year after she was born. Being in a place where he lived, though it no longer contained his possessions, she felt his presence, and also a sense of his emotional state, lonely yet assured. Bronwyn even discerns George's stage of life. But it is when she goes through the repetitive practice of deciphering and transcribing his letters, studying how to shape each letter and drawing them herself in order to identify his script, that she feels a knowing, a 'making sense' in her body, of who George was. Here the inherited object of the letters, but even more so, the action of writing in George's own script, summons an affinity – an embodied feeling of being connected and familiar. Enlivening the fragments of research materials available, this moment generates an emotional knowing of the forebear that is more than the sum of what can be gleaned from the letters. Bronywn is brought close to George, through the mediation of place, papers and practice, in a way that

makes a deep encounter possible. Here, the role of sensation in directing historical knowledge, and vice versa, is evident.

Scent

> *George: So I didn't have access to any of the objects of my ancestors, sadly. But being in that place was interesting, because I was sleeping in the maids' quarter and apparently one of my ancestors, one of the daughters of Elizabeth, was working as a maid in this homestead. . . . There was this one period when I was there and I could smell something. I don't know what it was, but it was lingering there for days, and I couldn't sleep because it was so strong. And I was like, . . . is this my ancestors coming and, you know, telling me off or something? . . . it was important to be there, even though I didn't get to hold any of my ancestors' objects. Just to be there was, you know, . . . it's again in the body. It's like something that you can't consciously kind of . . . it just sort of happens about you.*

George describes staying at a homestead, now used as a heritage museum, where an ancestor worked as a servant. George read in a family history written by another relative about family objects exhibited at this venue, including a walking stick, but on arrival realized the items had been moved elsewhere. Even without access to family objects, however, for George there was something about sleeping in the same place where an ancestor had once slept that felt potent. It was a scent, lingering hauntingly, that sparked an affinity for George, and a feeling that the ancestor was trying to communicate across the veil. George even senses the tone in this message – a 'telling off'. George's reflection on this encounter again emphasizes an unconscious, bodily perception, a knowing that feels like more than an imagining, something that 'just sort of happens about you'. While George could not hold the inherited walking stick, being sensorily immersed in a place that held traces of an ancestor's life had an impact, leading George to reflect on how forbears might feel about being researched. George's experience shows how absorbing the immaterial, such as an atmosphere or feeling in a room, can be an emotional and intuitive aspect of doing family history. While no actual material object passes from generation to generation, a sense of sharing a material world, even if across centuries, can similarly anchor a line of transmission between ancestor and descendant.

Skin

> *Kerin: But the funny thing is, going back to Dad, he had this . . . pigmentation on his back from his neck and down one side, and my younger son has that. So he's lost skin colour, it's gone white . . . on his back. I don't know whether it was there before my youngest son was born, but my youngest son has the same. . . . He's got the darker pigmentation on the front of his self, it looks like he's come up, cuddled my dad and sucked the pigmentation into him. . . . And I don't remember Dad having it before*

> *my younger son was born, or not as prevalent, not as standoutish as that. And my younger son, Dallas, he took care of my dad when my mum would go away. So he'd actually stay at my dad's place, because dad was so sick he couldn't travel in the last few years. So he'd go to school during the day and then come home and stay with Dad at night. They were really close.*

Kerin tells a slightly different story to Bronwyn and George, yet one she also described as 'spooky' and 'a funny thing', and which challenges our received ideas about what modes of 'passing on' are possible. It accords with Helen Holmes' call to extend our understanding of inheriting practices within families beyond the heirloom or keepsake, to include what is passed on among the living.[7] Kerin's account of a visceral exchange, between grandfather and grandson, shows how a story of uncanny bequeathment can be used to convey the closeness of a relation. The pigmentation is not an existing family resemblance, like a straight nose or a bowed gait; rather, it is a resemblance forged via contact that 'make[s] things kindred'.[8] The transference of the pigment marks a special bond made through care and time. This story both supports and describes something more than can be captured with the knowledge that Dallas sacrificed time to care for his grandfather. In Kerin's account, Dallas and his grandfather grow so close that they, somewhat miraculously, become each other's mirror, a relief of one another, united in an embrace that makes them two parts of a whole in a way that is written on their very skin. Mason explains that 'family resemblance is a theme that begins to demonstrate affinities', many people are intrigued by likenesses because they 'engage our imaginations, our memories and our senses [and] can feel like magical or ghostly presences'.[9] This is illustrated particularly when glimmers of the dead are animated in the living, such as when a laugh or a mannerism is passed down the family line with haunting precision. Kerin's story of resemblance pairs the prosaic and magical, as uncanny likeness is born of everyday care.

In each fragment, the crucial role of the tactile, emplaced, and atmospheric in forging family knowledge is revealed, be it in Bronwyn sensing her grandfather's demeanor in his handwriting; George's feeling that the maid ancestor might be warding them off with a pungent smell; or Kerin's account of the visceral transmission between grandfather and grandson. All three researchers describe their experiences tentatively with words such as – 'as if', 'looks like', 'sort of', knowing that what they describe sounds incredible, or otherworldly. Yet such research experiences are no less tangible for the fact that they are mediated by intangible moments of 'ineffable kinship' rather than only concrete family objects. As with the material, immaterial modes of 'passing on', though they have been less acknowledged, retain a sense of mystery in their encounter with the past, yet can equally become an important part of how families' represent their perseverance and intimacy over generations. In such moments of ethereal transmission, and the stories families tell about them, 'family' is characterized as a force that can transcend the mundane rules of our day-to-day and endure as a substance that seems more than material, a bond that is eerily ever-present.

Notes

1 Mary Ellen Bell and Susan E. Bell, 'What to Do with All This "Stuff"? Memory, Family, and Material Objects', *Storytelling, Self, Society* 8, no. 2 (2012): 63–84; Janet Finch and Jennifer Mason, *Passing On: Kinship and Inheritance in England* (London: Routledge, 2000).
2 Jennifer Mason, *Affinities: Potent Connections in Personal Life* (London: Polity, 2018), 1, 59–60.
3 Ibid., 193.
4 Ibid., 10.
5 Ibid., 194.
6 Justine Grønbæk Pors argues that 'ghostly encounters' summon the living to re-engage with histories, in Pors, 'A Ghostly Encounter and the Questions We Might Learn from It', *Culture and Organization* 27, no. 4 (2021): 289–301.
7 Helen Holmes, 'Material Affinities: "Doing" Family through the Practices of Passing On', *Sociology* 53, no. 1 (2019): 174–91.
8 Mason, *Affinities*, 1.
9 Ibid., 60–1.

12

Oral Histories as Cultural Inheritance

Sarah O'Brien

As an oral historian, I work with ephemeral memories rather than concrete materials. Learning to interpret memories as they emerged organically from the stories of my oral history participants – the majority, elderly Irish emigrants – was for a long time a disorientating task.[1] Unlike the solidity of a photograph or an inherited hair-comb, the oral histories I recorded seemed to alter shape and meaning with each playback. This made me feel that anything and nothing was possible from them. Fortunately, two realizations, explored in these pages, helped me to come to terms with oral history as a practice of cultural inheritance.

The first realization took place, accidently, in my mother's kitchen. It was 2019 and I was visiting for the weekend, taking a break from research that I was carrying out on nineteenth-century Irish women's memoirs. (I had put my oral history work temporarily aside.) The research was arduous and puzzling, and I was failing to find patterns. I sat drinking tea as my mother sprinkled flour across the table and began to make a batch of scones. She was chatting breezily in her usual manner, working the dough, discussing a funeral that she had to go to that night. I asked who had died and in a style that was familiar to me she began to explain the family lineage, the distant cousins that we had shared with the dead man, listing names and townlands and linking them to other acquaintances, other families, other mothers and daughters. Immediately, I saw a connection between what I was hearing and my stack of nineteenth-century memoirs. The architecture of my mother's talk, in this conversation as elsewhere, was provided by family: by her own family members and the families of others. Similarly, I realized, the organizing principles for the emigrant women's memoirs that I was then reading were overwhelmingly familial. Like my mother, the memoirists remembered by using the infrastructure of family members in order to articulate the proximity of their relationships.[2] This memory architecture and its emotional function was almost entirely absent from the men's memoirs that I was reading and, more beguiling still, absent from much of the literature on Irish storytelling practices that I had consulted during my studies.[3] This literature had prioritized the landscape as a vector for story and Place as the most important mnemonic for Irish cultural inheritance.[4] Puzzled by my discovery, I began to revisit an archive of oral history interviews that I had recorded between 2005 and 2009 in Birmingham, England, to see if the same pattern emerged. There, I saw that not only was this pattern of remembrance present but another existed

in parallel with it: the selection of specific family stories as under-represented forms of cultural inheritance.

Previously, I had largely mined my oral history interviews for corroborating facts about the social lives of Irish immigrants in Britain. Re-listening to these recordings in light of my encounter with my mother, I realized that some of my interlocutors were deliberately using the oral history encounter to exhume particular family stories because they felt these to have as much cultural significance as stories relating to the public realm. Of course, this did not always happen: often, the people I interviewed held fast to what I call 'official memory narratives'.[5] They told me what they expected I wanted to hear, and their memories were usually primed by dominant cultural forces such as Irish nationalist sentiment. Occasionally, however, braver interlocutors tired of or rejected storytelling convention and used the interview to speak of what really mattered to them. This was the case for Mary Vaughan.[6]

I met Mary on 21 December 2005 in Ballybunion, a seaside town in Co. Kerry. She was to be my first interviewee in a doctoral oral history project on Irish migration to Birmingham.[7] I contacted Mary through *Safe Home Ireland*, a scheme which allowed older migrants living precariously in England to be rehomed in Ireland. From her council flat in Birmingham, Mary Vaughan sat at a table and filled up the form. Her sister Eileen followed suit. Nine months later, they received a letter stating that they had each been allocated a bungalow in Ballybunion. It was far from where they had grown up in Galway and they didn't know many people in the area. Still, they agreed to the relocation.

Mary greeted me warmly. She made tea and we sat in an open plan room, modern kitchen units at one side and a burgundy upholstered sofa set on the other. Mary didn't flinch when I produced the recorder and didn't seem to mind filling out the ethical consent forms that I found so clinical. She was dressed beautifully in a blue cardigan and pressed skirt, a string of pearls around her neck. Her hair was freshly set in a perm. Throughout the visit, her husband Johnny, sat in a corner of the room, watching television. A walking frame waited at his side. Apart from an occasional phlegmy cough, he was silent.

I started by commenting on her neat home, adding that it must be wonderful to be so near the beach. Pouring out the tea, Mary replied, 'The beach is lovely if you're younger'. Frowning, she continued, 'We found a bit of a stigma when we came in here as well. We were called "blow in's"'. We had a meeting here, and one man, a Kerry man from the convent said, 'Ye blow ins can't come in here voicing your opinion'. 'But he does have a drink', she added, conciliatory, searching for balance.

Unsure of what to say about this I pressed on, asking questions primed for the kind of social history that I'd read in other books: how had she decided on Birmingham as a destination? How did she find work? Where did she live? Mary set to thinking, generously offering me as much as she could recall about her days as a bus conductress in Birmingham's inner city. She tried hard to remember the name of the street where she had first rented a room, working up and down a mental timeline to locate these long-forgotten details. Mid way through the recording the front door opened. It was Eileen, Mary's sister. She eyed me warily as I explained, in torturous detail, the reason for my presence, and she sat at the very edge of her chair, as though any minute she

might need to escape. Mary fussed around, making more tea, trying to smooth over her sister's obvious discomfort. But, after a while, Eileen relaxed, joining in with Mary's stories, laughing occasionally at memories of her days as a nurse. 'I was always getting punished no matter where I was,' she said, recalling her nurse's training, swinging her legs under the table as she settled in. And then, abruptly, the atmosphere changed. Mary was speaking, trying to retrace her steps in Birmingham:

> Let me see. I married in '55. I was expecting a baby when I got married and then I had the baby the following year when we were six months married. . .

As soon as these words were spoken, Eileen froze. She shot a murderous look at her sister. 'You don't have to say that,' she hissed. Mary, knowing the moment's danger, hurried to redirect her story. 'I went cleaning then, before the buses, just some bits and pieces. . .' Nervously, I kept my attention on Mary, nodding my head to encourage her to continue. But Eileen's anger was all-consuming. The room fell silent, a dark weight bearing down on the memories that had until now flowed free. Eileen pulled her chair away from the table, stood and announced, 'I'm going away home now because there's nothing more to say, in my mind. I worked in High Croft for fifteen or sixteen years and I came back to Ireland and then my husband died. There's nothing more.'

The door slammed. Mary and I were left together at the kitchen table. The television hummed in the background. Mary got up and, distracted, circled the room, folded a tea towel, commented on the paling light outside. 'It barely gets bright at all these days,' she remarked. Then, a carer knocked at the window, breaking the tension. He had come to check on Johnny. 'He's not been well,' Mary explained to me, after the carer departed, promising to come back later.

> It's very difficult minding him. You'd be tending constantly to their needs. Johnny used to go to the pubs; he did his own socializing. I was the housewife and going to work and coming home and looking after the children. And that's why Eileen doesn't want to discuss anything. Because she hasn't had a very good life. She doesn't think that anyone should tell anything. But anyway, she should have told her own life story.

The interruption had given her time to recover. Newly determined, Mary returned to the table and sat near the recorder. She began again, speaking louder now. 'But anyway, I had five children and I had to look after them':

> I had seven altogether. And two died. They both went full time. One had a cancerous growth in her food passage. She only lived sixteen days. And the other one, a little boy, he lived nine hours.

She didn't pause or check for my understanding now, as she had done before. I listened wordlessly, privately aghast at the direction the interview had taken:

> They couldn't find out the reason. But I think what it was. . . I had a haemorrhage

> And I had to be rushed into the Queen Elizabeth hospital in Birmingham. And the baby had swallowed a lot of the afterbirth. And he only lived nine hours. And that was a lesson in itself. It was dreadful, the feeling.

It was dreadful, the feeling. Mary was explicit in signalling the emotional import of these maternal experiences. The determination in her voice told me that these were the stories that research like mine needed to prioritize. To my shame, I failed her. Primed for stories of national loss and landscape, I did not understand the domain of memory that she had invited me to enter because it was embodied rather than emplaced, thus falling outside of the conventions of almost everything that I had read about Irish migrant memory. Clumsily, then, I tried to steer the conversation away from these haunting tales of maternal loss back to more direct memories of her migration to England. 'Was it a shock, going over?' I asked. I expected, I realize now, a description of a dock-side departure or an arrival at an English bus station, a story set in public space. Patiently, with characteristic generosity, she replied:

> Oh yes, it was an awful shock coming over, an awful culture shock
> Because coming from a very rural country
> – You can imagine, Galway –
> My parents were just peasant people
>
> We didn't know anything about even buses or trains or motorcars
> You were put on the train in Roscommon
> And arrived in Dublin, with tears in our eyes
> But what can you do when you're nineteen and you need money and clothes?
>
> I didn't even own a bicycle
> Previous to that I was reared with my granny
> And when I was sixteen I came back to live with my parents.
> Which was a shock as well.
>
> Because I used to have to run the house for my two uncles
> They were farmers as well
> And I was young and had to do a lot of work
> I knew lots about how to make bread and do the ironing
> because I . . .
>
> One of my uncles was very, very fussy
> In those days you had to put the iron into the fire and wipe it off
> And if there was one little speck he would go mad
> He was quite effeminate, really
>
> You'd have to have the bread
> nicely rounded and put the cross on it

And then I had to come to live at home after doing
all that, when I was 16
– You can imagine how young I was –
I knew how to milk and look after people

Of course, when I came to live at home there was
a big house of children
And because I used to have to be so fussy with my uncle
And the house wasn't as tidy

And my mother used to go mad because I was always smelling things
Because we had no running water
And she had to boil all the water on the fire
And boil for the pigs and the hens on the fire
And then the food
So it was hard
And lots of beds
And in those days you got fleas and lice and you picked them up from one to another

With this story, Mary transported me again to the world of the familial, drawing me backwards from the immigrant's iconic position at the harbour to a pre-immigrant scene, set deep in the shadows of her uncles' house.[8] Memories formed for Mary around the personalities of her family members, around her overbearing uncle and her overworked mother, as they had earlier coalesced around the little lifeless babies that she'd brought into the world, nudging me always towards the realm of the domestic. Like the skilled storytellers that Henry Glassie found in the hills of Ballymenone, Mary knew how to craft a story, using strings of repetition that pulled together each memory in deliberate order.[9]

'And she had to boil all the water/ And boil for the pigs/ And then the food/ And lots of beds' reinforces the litany of demands placed on herself and her mother in the houses of husbands and uncles, while at the same time painting in fine detail the circumstances of pre-migration. Beating out the drudgerous rhythm of the domestic, she showed me, through repetitive cycles, that the location of her immigrant memory was domestic rather than national, and that it was there that my scholarly attention should be directed.

Through the prism of her family, Mary summoned the past into the present, correcting its injustices in light of the norms of today. When Mary Vaughan revealed her pre-marriage pregnancy, she possibly did so as to contest the shame forced upon such outcomes. I was lucky that her sister Eileen was present, because her fierce reaction demonstrated the great risk Mary took in revealing this part of herself, the censorship with which Mary reckoned in order to draw fully from this memory. In turn, when she described her role as a servant in her uncle's house, she spoke to shatter the injustices of having to serve the petty demands of an unsympathetic uncle. As an institution, the Irish family has been denoted as sacred and untouchable. Mary

Vaughan navigated this taboo, symbolically demonstrating the primacy of family as a mnemonic device while actively challenging the rules by which family roles were determined in 1950s Ireland.

Only after sitting in my mother's kitchen, in the depths of her family-centred talk, could I begin to fully comprehend what Mary was explaining to me that morning in Ballybunion. By remembering in real time through the vectors of her family, Mary Vaughan taught me an alternative matrix for female remembrance. In the same way that my mother had meandered through the lines of our second and third cousins while making scones, everything in Mary Vaughan's words worked to establish connections and reveal interdependences, to prove the closeness of familial relationships. Further, by responding to my questions about emigration with answers about her pregnancies and her children, their births and deaths, she helped me to understand that migration was just one element within a much more complex hierarchy of suffering. Contextualized as it was in culturally comprehensible poverty, Irish emigration in the mid-twentieth century was compatible with the broader social narratives that defined this era and thus reconcilable within the remit of collective memory. Conversely, the death of her small boy festered. 'That was a lesson in itself,' she said, when talking about it. Mary had assumed culpability of his death, and so the memory returns in broken fragments, preceded by another unresolved and half-hidden truth, the fact of her out of marriage pregnancy in 1955.

In a memoir entitled *A Girl's Story,* Annie Ernaux writes of her first sexual encounter. The year is 1958. She is a naïve teenager at a summer camp and the encounter leads to a disastrous downward psychological spiral. Having discovered her liaison, the other female camp guides humiliate and taunt Ernaux, forcing upon her a sense of personal bodily shame that she carries with her for the remainder of her life. Sixty years afterwards, Ernaux writes of her return to the camp and to what should be a moment of closure. And yet the place does not speak to her. 'It seems', Ernaux writes, 'less familiar than I thought'. Ernaux comes to recognize her return as 'a kind of propitiatory gesture' that does little to reconstitute her memories of 1958. It is after this visit that she begins to write – 'that she begins, step by step to move toward an elusive whole'.[10]

Transcending place, I see that at the heart of Mary Vaughan's narrative, like Annie Ernaux's, is the discovery that a young woman's memories of her most intimate experiences never really belonged to her. Mary's first pregnancy in 1955 had to be hidden away, underscored by humiliation even up to the day of my arrival on her doorstep, fifty years after its discovery. Likewise, Ernaux's 1958 memories of her first sexual experience was entirely governed by the historical circumstances in which they had occurred: circumstances in which female 'promiscuity' was subject to violence and public shaming. When we listen to these women's stories, we are listening to the social structures that forced them to be remembered in a particular light.[11] The gift of oral history is its habit of revealing the inconsistencies between a memory and its reception: its ability to render momentarily visible a personal experience before the disapproval of family or states once again shrouds it in mist.

Notes

1 This disorientation persisted in spite of the guidance of brilliant oral historians, particularly Alessandro Portelli, Maura Cronin and Robert Perks. My interpretation of family memories was strongly guided by James Fentress concept of social memory and Astrid Erll's work on the importance of family memory as a sub-genre of collective memory. James Fentress, *Social Memory* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992); Astrid Erll, 'Locating Family in Cultural Memory Studies', *Journal of Comparative Family Studies* 42, no. 3 (2011): 303–18.

2 This is also documented in Fentress, *Social Memory*.

3 Folkloric and oral history scholarship in Ireland has focused attention on the storytelling practices of Irish speaking communities in rural island locations such as The Blasket islands, off the coast of Co. Kerry. Other important work in this field was carried out by Henry Glassie in Ballymenone, Co. Fermanagh. Henry Glassie, *Passing the Time in Ballymenone: Culture and History of an Ulster Community* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1982). Peig Sayers, Kenneth Hurlstone Jackson and Folklore of Ireland Society, *Scéalta ón mBlascaod* (Baile Átha Cliath: Cumann le Béaloideas Éireann, 1968); Eoin Flannery, *Versions of Ireland: Empire, Modernity and Resistance in Irish Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Press, 2006).

4 Patrick Sheeran, 'Genius Fabulae: The Irish Sense of Place', *Irish University Review* 18, no. 2 (1988), www.jstor.org/stable/25484245; Hastings Donnan, 'Material Identities: Fixing Ethnicity in the Irish Borderlands', *Identities: Global Studies in Culture and Power* 12, no. 1 (2005): 69–106; Henry Glassie, *The Stars of Ballymenone* (United States of America: Indiana University Press, 2006).

5 See Sarah O'Brien, *Of Memory and the Misplaced: Irish Immigrant Life Writing in the United States* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2024).

6 During the same oral history project on Irish migration to Birmingham, a female interviewee in Birmingham revealed that she was a survivor of a notorious Magdalene laundry. See Sarah O'Brien, 'Remembering Nora: Interpreting the Oral Testimony of a Magdalene Laundry Survivor through the Lens of Collective Memory', *Oral History Journal* 50, no. 2 (2022): 41–51.

7 Birmingham hosted one of the most intense influxes of Irish immigrants into twentieth-century Britain. Between 1931 and 1961, over 50,000 Irish settled in the city, responding to recruitment drives in nursing, public transportation and construction. From the 1930s on, three-quarters of Irish emigrants departed to Great Britain, and Garvey estimates that one in every three males and females under the age of thirty years in 1946 had left Independent Ireland by 1971. Sarah O'Brien, *Irish Associationalism in Post War Birmingham* (PhD, Mary Immaculate College, 2009). See also Enda Delaney, *Irish Emigration since 1921* (Dublin: Studies in Irish Economic and Social History, 2001).

8 For further discussion of family memory and its interpretations see: Marianne Hirsch, *Family Frames: Photography, Narrative and Postmemory* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 1997); Erll, 'Locating Family'; Fentress, *Social Memory*.

9 Glassie, *The Stars of Ballymenone*.

10 Annie Ernaux, *A Girl's Story* (London: Fitzcarraldo, 2020). For a review of the book see Madeline Schwartz, 'A Memoirist Who Mistrusts her Own Memories', *The New Yorker,* 20 April 2020.

11 Another way of thinking about this is referred to in Guy Beiner's review of *Remembering the Troubles: Contesting the Recent Past in Northern Ireland*. In his essay, Beiner calls attention to F.C. Bartlett's 1932 description of memory as 'effort after meaning': 'Bartlett demonstrated how recollections of events are constructed with the help of familiar schemata so as to relate a story about the past that has significance in the present.' Despite Beiner's admonishment of collective memory, I see implicit agreement between Bartlett's understanding of memory and that of Maurice Halbwachs, who insisted when coining the term 'collective memory' that personal memories could only be narrativized within a social world that had a pre-existing framework for the memory's content and meaning. Guy Beiner, 'Troubles with Remembering: or the Seven Sins of Memory Studies', *Dublin Review of Books,* Dublin, November 2017.

13

‘Nothing More Precious’

The Changing Emotional Registers of an Inherited Hair Locket

Joanne Begiato

The generational gift of a hair locket

In 1873, Lady Marion Bell (1787–1876), the widow of the renowned surgeon Sir Charles Bell (1774–1842), wrote to her youngest nephew on the occasion of his birthday, enclosing a hair locket.[1] The letter, while loving, included a firm instruction:

> My dear double nephew John David Bell, this is not an ornament, but a memorial of your uncle Charles and me – as you see – and as I have nothing more precious for a birthday offering, you will take it in the spirit of love & best wishes, from your Loving Aunt, Marion Bell aged, 86.

Having written this, Marion turned the page and wrote down its left side: ‘Can you place hair of your Father & Mother, there?’

The locket is simple and unassuming, round, with a gold frame and silk backing, topped with a ring through which a blue ribbon is tied in a bow. Its glass front covers two pieces of hair. The darker hair is more substantial, furled on itself along the lower circumference of the circle, and fanned out across its upper section. A few strands of light-coloured hair, perhaps white, are arranged at the top of the locket. A note is inserted on paper cut in a circular shape to give visibility to the hair on which is written ‘1842 Charles Bell. Marion Bell 1811’. The dates were deeply significant. Marion wed Charles in 1811, when she was twenty-three and he was thirty-seven; 1842 marks his death at the age of sixty-eight.[2]

We tend to think of hair jewellery as intimate. The loved one’s hair could symbolize romantic entwinement or, transformed into a relic by death, become a physical artefact that helped those left behind to remember their beloved.[3] Yet, as we see from Aunt Marion’s command and question in her gift to her nephew, hair jewellery, like most embodied inheritances, can serve multiple purposes, most notably when those who bequeath and receive them construct its significance and meaning. As Christiane

Figure 13.1 Lady Marian and Sir Charles Bell Hair Locket. Courtesy of the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh.

Holm points out, 'these jewels functioned not as the material media of memory, but also within various acts of memory.[4] Marion performed such acts of memory with her hair locket. Whether the locket began as mnemonic of romantic love, and then a symbol of mourning, it acquired two additional meanings. For Marion and the Bell family, it came to embody the extremely close familial bonds between two brothers who married two sisters. By the 1870s, it was also an artefact that memorialized Sir Charles Bell, the eminent surgeon, an act of memory to which Marion had devoted her widowhood.

Hair as a repository of love and grief

It is unclear whether the locket was assembled when the couple were first in love or later in grief. The style of locket was fashionable from the 1820s to midcentury, rather less elaborate than those that followed. Dating the hair in the locket to early or late in their relationship is difficult since portraits indicate that Charles' hair was fine and blonde in youth, and, later, white.[5] Certainly, the couple were famously uxorious. Their devotedness was celebrated in biographies of Charles, as well as in the obituaries of Marion on her death. In 1860, Amédée Pichot published a 'Life' of Sir Bell, which noted when he escaped to the country to go fishing, 'that he might leave no affectionate member of his family to regret his absence, he was accompanied by his wife and dog'.[6] The *Record* rapturized in 1876 that the Bells 'married life was so complete a union of

heart, mind, and sentiment, that it might be doubted whether even a family, which they never had, would have rendered their happiness more complete'.[7] In the boxes containing the letter and locket is an extract copied from a private letter of Lady Bell's friend that reported that Marion died peacefully '"among her pictures" (Sir Charles Bell's original sketches, which she dearly prized, and hung all round her room)'.[8] It is possible that the hair locket originally embodied the couple's romantic involvement, the slip of paper inserted after Charles' death, thereby transforming it into a piece of mourning jewellery. What is clear is that the entwined hair was intended to bind the spouses together beyond their lifetimes.

A 'double nephew' and a double family

Marion's inquisitive addendum to the letter, 'Can you place hair of your Father & Mother, there?' was a further act of memory, encapsulating her desire for the hair locket to represent the longstanding bond of the Bell and Shaw siblings. Her description of John as her 'dear double nephew' conveyed a very special meaning. He was literally a double nephew, since his mother, Barbara Shaw (1786–1827), was Marion's sister, and his father, George Joseph Bell (1770–1843), was Charles' brother. Adding his mother and father's hair to the locket, which presumed he had access to their hair several decades after their deaths, would reproduce in death what they had enjoyed in life.[9] The lawyer George married Barbara Shaw in 1806, and her younger sister Marion lived with them on several occasions in both Edinburgh and Ayr. She fell in love with Charles when he visited his brother from London, and they married in 1811. This bound the two brothers even more closely. In his memoranda notes, written up later by his daughter Barbara, George repeatedly recollected that he and Charles were united together against the rest of their siblings who he described variously as feckless, selfish, cruel, and cold. Touchingly, George described one of Charles's visits in 1809: 'and now I have in the house with us the things whom of all the world I like the best. My wife & my two little girls Charles & Marion and aunty'.[10]

Marion and Charles had no children, while George and Barbara had ten children between 1807 and 1825. The last was John, born in 1825. It is not immediately clear why John was the beneficiary of the locket. There were other possible recipients in the Shaw family, whose younger siblings had close relationships with Charles Bell. Marion's brother John (1792–1827) was Charles' pupil from age 15 and much-loved assistant who lived with his sister and her husband until his sudden death.[11] After that Marion's younger brother Alexander (1804–1890) took over John's teaching duties. Marion lived with him in London after Charles' death. Alexander married in 1856, but his only son died as infant, which might mean that by 1873, Marion knew that it was unlikely he would be able to bequeath it to the next generation.[12]

Perhaps double nephew John was selected because he was only two (1825–80) when his mother died, and thus had a particularly close relationship with his aunt. Marion returned to Edinburgh in 1836 when Charles was appointed Professor of Surgery at the University and was, perhaps, able to spend time with him as a youth.[13] He followed his father George into the law, practicing in Calcutta for most of the 1850s, and then as a Professor of Indian Jurisprudence, 1864–5, at King's College, London, and as Lecturer

at University College London, 1869–72.[14] As such, he resided in London when Marion returned following her husband's death.[15] John married in 1852 and had several children who survived him, perhaps in Marion's eyes a safer bet for the continuing legacy of her gift.

Memorializing Sir Charles Bell

When Marion instructed John that the locket 'is not an ornament, but a memorial of your uncle Charles and me', it is likely that she was positioning it in the public domain as much as the familial and personal. Sir Charles Bell was perhaps the most celebrated British physiologist of the early nineteenth century and the author of numerous well-received works. Was Marion even situating herself as fundamental to this memorialization when she referred to 'and me'? After her death, the *Lancet* noted that she had 'devoted herself as her husband's amanuensis on the "Anatomy of Expression," "Animal Mechanics", and "The Hand". These subjects being suited to her taste'.[16] In her 'Recollection' of her husband, appended to a publication of his letters in 1870, she explained that it was following the 'great loss' of his pupil John, Marion's brother, that he gave her the 'occupation' of writing for him.[17] Another obituary of Marion in *The Clinic* declared that she had lightened the professional burdens on Charles in this way.[18] As noted in the *Lancet* obituary, following Charles's death in 1842, Marion worked with her brother Alexander to bring out 'successive editions' of each of these works with the ninth edition of *The Hand* published in 1874.[19] She clearly was not subordinate in this activity. *The Record* noted, for example, in 1876 that 'Alexander Shaw, since the death of his distinguished brother-in-law, Sir Charles Bell, has aided his widow in her cherished employment of promoting his posthumous usefulness and fame by publishing improved editions of his work'.[20] *The Clinic*'s obituary commented that unlike other women who have been 'helpmates of men distinguished in science or art' who then fall into obscurity as widows, she returned to London following Charles's death and continued in the society of scientific men.[21] It concluded: 'She regarded women's proper mission as that of a reasoning helpmeet to man; as no inferior to him, but as no supplanter of him. She was essentially feminine in her feelings and tastes; every hour of her life, her devotion to her husband while he lived, and her devotion to the perpetuation of his memory, demonstrated it.'[22] Marion, therefore, also sought to secure the hair locket as a relic of and testament to the public reputation of her eminent husband.

Intimate and public hair-stories

The Inheriting the Family project activities brought to the fore how difficult hair is as an embodied inheritance, especially when it is inherited without the structure of jewellery to contain it, since inherited objects need a coherent family story to convey meaning through the generations.[23] Indeed, a hair inheritance needs to be narrativized in order to ensure its survival and secure its role in passing on familial memory across generations. When Marion gifted her hair locket to her nephew in 1876, she did just this. She imposed a family story that ensured its value as an inherited object:

not only a love token, or a vessel of grief, it also told the story of two Bell brothers who saw themselves as siblings united in adversity and joined in marriage to the Shaw sisters. The fourth layer of significance was attached at Marion's insistence. Having spent the decades following her husband's death editing three of Charles' major works, and a collection of his letters, she wanted the locket to embody his national public reputation; perhaps assuming, even, the mantle of the celebrity relic.[24] The locket only realized its journey from the intimate to the public in the twenty-first century, when the Bell descendants deposited it permanently with the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh. Even now, accessioned to the Royal College of Surgeon's of Edinburgh's archive collection, which is made available to the public, it retains multiple intimate and public meanings. Indeed, the College Archivist has indicated that in recent years the family have visited to view the collection.[25]

Notes

1 Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh [RCSEd], GD 82/2/4, Bell Family Archive. For more on Charles Bell, see Carin Berkowitz, *Charles Bell and the Anatomy of Reform* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015); Michael Brown, *Emotions and Surgery in Britain 1793-1912* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2023).
2 'Charles Bell', National Records of Scotland, https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/research/learning/hall-of-fame/hall-of-fame-a-z/bell-charles (accessed 12 November 2023). L. S. Jacyna, 'Bell, Sir Charles (1774–1842)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography [ODNB],* Oxford, 2004.
3 Deborah Lutz, 'The Dead Still Among Us: Victorian Secular Relics, Hair Jewelry, and Death Culture', *Victorian Literature and Culture* 39, no. 1 (2011): 128.
4 Christiane Holm, 'Sentimental Cuts: Eighteenth-Century Mourning Jewelry with Hair', *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 38, no. 1 (2004): 140.
5 *Letters of Sir Charles Bell: Selected from his Correspondence with his Brother George Joseph Bell* (1870), Frontispiece, by Anthony Stewart, 1804; National Portrait Gallery, Sir Charles Bell, by John Stevens, oil on canvas, circa 1821. In her 'Recollections', Marion described the 'white hair' of her 'radiant' husband in 1841, *Letters of Sir Charles Bell*, 422.
6 Amédée Pichot, *The Life and Labours of Sir Charles Bell* (London, 1860), 154.
7 RCSEd, clipping from GD82/3, collected testimonials to Lady Marion Bell.
8 Ibid.
9 There appears to be only two types of hair in the locket, not four, suggesting that John was unable to answer his aunt's question.
10 RCSEd, GD82/1/2 Handwritten notes and memoranda by George Bell, 18 front.
11 For an insight into Charles and John's relationship, see Michael Brown, 'Wounds and Wonder: Emotion, Imagination and War in the Cultures of Romantic Surgery', *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies* 43 (2020): 239–59.
12 M. H. Kaufman, 'Genealogy of John and Charles Bell: Their Relationship with the Children of Charles Shaw of Ayr', *Journal of Medical Biography* 13 (2005): 220. See also J. B. Bailey, revised by B. A. Bryan, 'Shaw, Alexander (1804–1890)', *ODNB,* Oxford, 2004.
13 Jacyna, 'Bell'.

14 'John David Bell', Kings Collections, https://kingscollections.org/victorianlives/a-c/bell-john-david (accessed 12 November 2023).
15 Kaufman, 'Genealogy', 220.
16 RCSEd, GD82/3, collected testimonials to Lady Marion Bell.
17 Bell, 'Recollections', 406.
18 *The Clinic: A Weekly Journal of Practical Medicine*, 13 January 1877; Extracted from *Medical Times and Gazette*, 1 November 1876, 21 in RCSEd, clipping from GD82/3, collected testimonials to Lady Marion Bell.
19 RCSEd, clipping from GD82/3, collected testimonials to Lady Marion Bell.
20 Ibid.
21 *The Clinic*, 21.
22 Ibid., 22.
23 Nancy K. Miller, 'Family Hair Looms', *Women's Studies Quarterly* 36, no. 1/2 (2008): 167.
24 Lutz, 'Dead Still', 129.
25 Email communication.

Temporal Connections

14

Finding Kalimpong

Curiosity, Cognitive Dissonance and Collectivity in a 'Three-World' Family History

Jane McCabe

Thirty-one girls, dressed in white, standing outside a white building.

I look hard at the small rectangular photograph my father has just presented to me.

My grandmother, Lorna, is on the right, one hand on her hip, the other on a smaller girl's shoulder. Her body is turned side on, but her gaze is direct, and her body pose strong. Her face is set. There is no hint of a smile. The centre of her forehead carries her seriousness, the outer arch of her eyebrows her sadness. She looks *unconvinced.* She is mid-teens, older than most of the others. In the front row kneel a clutch of girls who look four, five years old. Lorna wears a white pinafore, as they all do, but she alone has long black sleeves underneath. Her hair is parted at the side, and I think I can see a plait sitting on her left shoulder. On close inspection, the girls' appearance is far from uniform. Many wear headbands, several have their hair tied back, others let it hang loose. Some have dark skin, some not so dark. Some noticeably white. The wall behind them is roughcast, with recessed windows in the shape of an arch. One is wide open, one is partly open, one is shut. It must be a warm day.

Curiosity

For the first thirty-five years of my life I had only one way of engaging with my family history on my father's maternal line: it was unknown and unknowable; strange and mysterious. My dad grew up in a humble semi-rural setting on the outskirts of the city of Dunedin, in the south of New Zealand. His mother, Lorna, was born in India, that much we knew. She had dark skin, and we were told that this was because her mother was Indian. Her father was a British tea planter – we knew this by objects from his life in Assam in her cottage: polo trophies, antlers on the wall, volunteer service medals and a framed portrait of him. But we had no idea how or why it was that she and her two siblings had ended up in Dunedin in the 1920s. There was a story that the children's mother had died young, and that they had spent time in an orphanage.

This was unconfirmed, and it only raised more questions. Was the orphanage in New Zealand? If not, how did they end up here?

Lorna died in 1978, when I was five years old, having never spoken about her Indian background. My father's attitude was that something very bad must have happened, and he respected his mother's unwillingness to talk about it. When he married in 1969, my mum was curious, and asked Lorna directly about it. Lorna motioned her away with a wave of her hands and said something like 'you wouldn't want to know'. As I was growing up, I was curious too, but there seemed no way of ever getting beyond dad's curt responses. After Lorna died, her cottage in Pine Hill became rundown. Her husband and son (both named Bill) lived there for another twenty years. Then grandad moved to a rest home, and soon after that, Uncle Bill (who never married) died suddenly. My parents unexpectedly faced a decision about what to do with the property, which by that time had been in the family for seventy-five years. They made the decision to keep it, and renovate the old cottage into a state fit for them to live in. Lorna's clothes were still in her wardrobe when they moved in.

Not only Lorna's clothes but all of her things were still in the house. I resumed my questions about her past and whether there was anything in the house that would help us find out about it. There were some documents – her marriage certificate, her father's passport – but nothing that gave us any clues about her heritage. It was only when I was in the final stages of planning a trip to India some years later, in 2007, that I asked my dad again if there was anything among her things that might give me something to follow up in India. On this occasion, he tottered off down the hallway to his bedroom and returned with a packet of photographs I'd never seen before (he had). Inside were photographs of Lorna's British father – in Assam, and in London as a child. There was also an envelope labelled 'Kalimpong school'. Inside the envelope were two tiny images of groups of girls dressed in white, with the names written on the back. Lorna and her sister Alice were both there.

The word 'Kalimpong' was enough to quickly open up what had been a closed family history. My *Lonely Planet* (in my bag that day) had an entry for Kalimpong, and the list of tourist activities included visiting Dr Graham's Homes, a residential home for mixed-race children of tea planters. The Homes had an informative website, and I added five days in Kalimpong to my Indian itinerary.[1] Several months later I walked up the driveway to the Homes, which is still open today as a school, clutching a copy of the photograph. The headmaster immediately assured me that I was in the right place, recognizing the building – Woodburn cottage – behind the girls in the photograph. After two days learning about Lorna and the Homes' connection to New Zealand, I was taken to the cottage, where I now knew she lived for fifteen years. I had my photograph taken in the same spot. After a generation of silence and swirling stories about this aspect of our family history, I was desperate to send a photograph – proof – to my dad that this place was real. I was in the right place. It was one of three distinct settings, three 'worlds', in which mine and many others' family histories were produced: tea plantations in Assam, Dr Graham's Homes in Kalimpong and New Zealand.

The Kalimpong scheme

Equally astonishing as finding out about Lorna's long residence at the Homes was the discovery that she had been part of a migration scheme. A short history of the Homes outlined John Graham's vision for sending his graduates to the settler colonies – a permanent solution to the 'problem' that their mixed-ancestry posed.[2] While that vision was never completely realized, the book made it clear that many had been sent to New Zealand. I was immediately taken by the prospect of studying the scheme at large, and perhaps finding other descendants of those sent to New Zealand. In 2011, I commenced a PhD, and through the compilation of many sources, established the scale of the scheme: between 1908 and 1938, 130 adolescent Anglo-Indians were resettled in New Zealand. Most were born to British tea planters and South Asian women workers.[3] They were sent in groups to New Zealand as teenagers to work on farms and in households for Presbyterian families connected to the scheme's founder. Lorna arrived with a group in Dunedin in 1921.

As I began to scour the records, I quickly discovered that two of Lorna's close friends in Dunedin – people very well known to my dad – were connected to the Kalimpong scheme. Lorna's story and that of many other Kalimpong migrants is a lesson in the strange capacity of history to be hidden while the evidence is all around us. Over the course of my PhD research and beyond, I have connected with hundreds of descendants of the Kalimpong migrants.[4] Two striking commonalities exist across these families' experiences: the silence that prevented us from knowing about our Indian heritage, and the role that photographs have played in recovering it. Photographs passed down by the emigrants have engaged our curiosity, provided clues to the past and revealed connections to other Kalimpong families. Yet those photographs have not been simply 'inherited'. They have been left, but often concealed. It was 2007 when my father showed me the photograph that led me to Kalimpong. I had been asking about Lorna's background for decades.

In this chapter, I reflect on the place of inherited photographs in the context of a family history that was characterized by *disinheritance*: the migrants' silences in later life; the erasure of their Indian mothers from the documentary and photograph record; and the wiping of maternal culture at Kalimpong. The emotions in these family histories are difficult. We have such fondness and respect for our Kalimpong forebears, but we are perplexed by their silences – their willingness to withhold so much information about their heritage from the next generations. But then we wonder, why did they keep the photograph, tucked away, presumably knowing that someone would find it sometime? What was their relationship to us in the future, trying to make sense of their past? Did they want us to do the emotional work that was simply too difficult in their own lifetime?

These dynamics were all part of the making of my book *Kalimpong Kids: The New Zealand story, in Pictures* (Otago University Press, 2020) a collaborative publication with the descendant community.[5] The photographs were all inherited by descendants of the Kalimpong emigrants. Some were from large albums, but many were the one and only precious photograph in their possession that provided a clue (or a conundrum)

to the family history. The challenge for me in compiling these numerous photographs was to ensure all contributing families were represented while also arranging them into a coherent narrative. But in doing so, I also risked smoothing over the profound differences between the three worlds – three distinct family settings – in which they were produced.

Cognitive dissonance

In public talks, I often say that 'it all began' with the 'Kalimpong school' photograph. But actually, my childhood curiosity began with the portrait of Lorna's father, Egerton Peters, the tea planter, that hung on the wall of her Pine Hill cottage. We used to visit every Sunday afternoon for tea and scones. It was a 40-minute drive, and we made the trip worthwhile by spending the whole afternoon there, exploring the dark corners of the cottage, and ranging widely around the steep and exposed 15 acres of land with its ramshackle collection of sheds and rusting farm machinery and craggy trees. It was often bitterly cold outside, and we would huddle around the fireplace in the small sitting room of the 1890s cottage. The wallpaper was black with soot, and the carpet worn through to the floorboards.

Yet symbols of prior wealth and a worldly existence were all around. In pride of place on the mantelpiece was a silver polo trophy from Assam. Imposing antlers hung on the walls. There was a crumbling old book written by Egerton's sister, 'Lady Warren', *Through Algeria and Tunisia on a Motorbicycle*, and stories of his siblings' adventures around the British Empire. The cottage was furnished with grand English furniture, and there was a collection of fine china. I couldn't make sense of it; the disconnect between the British Indian heritage and this modest life at Pine Hill was perplexing. As a child I would stare up at the portrait of Egerton – with his gentlemanly demeanor – and wonder what he would have made of all of this. Only much later did I discover that he lived in this cottage for twenty years, having joined his daughter in Dunedin several years after she arrived.

It was a powerful combination – Lorna's silence, evidence of past wealth, an interracial relationship – that fueled a profound curiosity about what had happened. One descendant I met early in my doctoral research, Yvonne Gale, had a story that resonated strongly with my own. Her grandmother, Jean Mackay, arrived in Owaka, a tiny settlement in southern New Zealand, in 1911 with her brother John. Like Lorna, Jean never spoke of how or why it was that she came to New Zealand. She refused to admit that she had any Indian ancestry, despite her darker colouring making this fact obvious to her family. The only occasion Yvonne remembered her grandmother 'letting something out' about her early life, was when she once spoke of plantation life, mentioning peacocks and servants.

While this accorded with the great 'romantic visions' Yvonne had entertained about her tea planter ancestor, she didn't know whether to believe her grandmother, given Jean's very modest existence and gruff demeanour. In Yvonne's words, 'that [life], and the grandmother I knew, didn't go together'.[6] Yvonne also struggled to make sense of the geographical trajectory: to move from India to Owaka 'just seemed like a huge

Figure 14.1 Jeannie and John Mackay on a stopover in Singapore, en route from Kalimpong to New Zealand, 1911. Yvonne Gale collection.

jump', and it all added to the sense of mystery about what had happened. For Yvonne, the one solid clue was a photograph of her grandmother and great uncle en route to Owaka from Kalimpong in 1911 (Figure 14.1) that was a permanent fixture on her grandmother's mantlepiece. Beautifully dressed and posed, the photograph indicated a privileged life before New Zealand. For a long time, the only conclusion Yvonne could draw was that the tea planter had brought his children to New Zealand for a holiday, and for some reason abandoned them there.

Yvonne credited this photograph with 'spiking her interest' and for her persistent research for several years, which involved multiple trips to the British Library (from New Zealand) before the 'Kalimpong moment': locating her grandmother's name in a list of baptisms conducted at Kalimpong. From there she contacted the Homes and requested a copy of Jean's file. Like other descendants, she has called on a variety of sources – academic and literary – to build a nuanced understanding of her grandmother's trajectory and the reasons for her silence. Being contacted by me, and being part of my study, was another node in that journey. Like other descendants, Yvonne has willingly shared sensitive documents and photographs, in the hope that co-constructing the collective story will assist in our quest to understand our individual stories. Each of our fragments is a useful piece in the larger puzzle that in turn helps us to make something full, something coherent, of our forebear's life, as well as a story that rings true with their character.

Yet photographs can continue to perplex and confound understandings of the scheme at large and of our personal family histories. When Yvonne found out about the Kalimpong scheme, the photograph of Jean and John in Singapore did not easily fit with the notion of transporting groups from an institution to be workers in New Zealand. The Mackay siblings travelled 'first class', in the time before the scheme

assumed a regular, organized character. It was only the year after they arrived, in 1912, that the first large 'batch' (thirteen young people) was sent to Dunedin, and reports in the *Homes Magazine* and New Zealand newspapers emphasized the organized nature of the scheme: each group had a housemother as chaperone; there was a committee in Dunedin to organize placements; and employers waited at the port to collect their new employee.[7] Yvonne still thinks of her granny and great uncle as being somewhat different from the later Kalimpong arrivals. Without that photograph she would have no basis for assuming this. The photograph is thus a compelling example of the power of a single image to provoke curiosity and cognitive dissonance; and to act as a pivot around which a narrative has been built and rebuilt.

Collectivity: Photographs from India

The idea to publish a visual history of this scheme emerged very early in the project, as I was privy to an array of extraordinary images held in the private collections of descendants on a road trip around New Zealand in 2011. Taken collectively, families have inherited photographs from each of the three distinct phases of their forebear's lifeway: early childhood on the tea plantations, growing up at the Homes, and New Zealand, where they transitioned through the stages of adulthood. Each of these shifts involved silence, trauma and familial separations, yet the photographs have survived long journeys across time and space. The act of selecting and arranging a small proportion of these photographs for the *Kalimpong Kids* book itself perhaps draws attention away from the ruptures and the uncertainties of this life trajectory, and the highly disordered way in which descendants have obtained and understood the photographs. I do address this problem in the book, but am keenly aware that many readers may peruse the photographs without closely reading the text. I always feel that it is a large responsibility – and risk – when using images in history books. Particularly careful consideration is needed if one wants to use an image to work *against* the grain of accepted tropes. Images are so much quicker than words.

This problem of visual stereotypes is highly relevant to Kalimpong descendants, owing to the silence around the heritage and consequent overreliance on popular understandings (e.g. Raj nostalgia) to make sense of inherited fragments. The unevenness of the record is most apparent in the sites of their birth – tea plantations – where planters' interracial families were commonplace, but socially unacceptable. As a result, they were an 'open secret' on the plantation and in the surrounding townships, but concealed from the main centres of British India, and from family at home in Britain and elsewhere. The regularity of planters engaging in relationships with local women is widely attributed to the tea agency policy of not allowing British men to bring a British wife to the plantation until they became manager of a plantation – a position which usually required an apprenticeship of ten years. This policy persisted across the entire century (roughly 1870 to 1970) that British men ran plantations in northeast India, despite the tea agencies' awareness that the policy made interracial relationships inevitable.

The tea agencies' control over planters' social lives immediately challenges the primary stereotype here, and one that is strongly reinforced by the photographic record. 'Planter' is a term that conjures expectations of wealth, exploitation and aloofness. Descendants have assumed (as I did) that their tea planting forebear owned a plantation, and this has led to the questions about what happened to that wealth, and an assumption that planters did not make provision for their offspring in their wills. In fact, while they enjoyed comfortable lifestyles, very few planters owned or had a financial stake in the tea plantations.[8] They were employed as assistant managers, often as teenagers, by an agency in London. Dispatched to large estates, they, along with one manager and perhaps another assistant, were tasked with managing up to several thousand South Asian workers.

Moving through a defined labour hierarchy, planters were transferred to different locations as agencies required. Fluency in languages and familiarity with the cultures of local and migrant workers was essential. While these issues were sometimes addressed in letters home, more commonly the record of tea planters' lives in India comprised photographs that reinforced and fueled romantic notions of a life in tea: polo games, picnics and hunting expeditions. Many Kalimpong families (my own included) have wonderful collections of such photographs and memorabilia. Yet no photographs depict planters with the women with whom they cohabited, in some cases for decades, nor with the children. The plantation photographic record centres almost entirely on the planter.

In all of my research only one photograph has surfaced of a tea plantation mother of children sent to Kalimpong. Her name was Norah, she was Khasi (an Indigenous people in Shillong, Assam), and she had a daughter, Isabella, who came to New Zealand via the Kalimpong Homes in 1947. The photograph is tiny, about 2cm square, and has obviously been cut out of a larger image. Her descendants know nothing about the original photograph nor how Isabella came to have this section of it. In a testament to the yearning for connection to these women who have been almost completely erased from the documentary record, Isabella's daughter has had the image enlarged greatly, and it resides in an ornate frame in her living room. A compelling and provocative image, Norah's photograph has also become an emotive touchpoint for Kalimpong descendants, who have been blocked at every turn in their efforts to find out anything about their maternal South Asian ancestry.[9] Looking at Norah, whose intense and knowing gaze befits her role in recovering this family story, we are afforded an opportunity to engage in an internal process so vital to making a story: to imagine our grandmothers (or great-grandmothers). Who she was, what she looked like, what she was like. Norah was *strong*.

Between these two extremes in the visual record (prolific record of British planters, erasure of Indian mothers) are the offspring of the relationships. Photographs of the children on the plantation are almost as rare as those of their mothers. One collection that does include such photographs comes from the Nicholls family. Ruth Nicholls was the youngest of five children born to Frank Nicholls, all of whom were sent to Kalimpong. Frank had a long career in Assam before retiring to New Zealand to join his children and complete a memoir of his life in tea.[10] Ruth was still alive when I conducted my research and had vivid memories of plantation life, and numerous

photographs of herself and her siblings engaging in a hybrid existence – from riding elephants barefoot to posing at the family car.[11] Like the photograph of Norah, these images have incredible value because they enable other descendants to conjure our Kalimpong forebears' early life.

Far more common among photographs of the tea plantation children are those taken by (or for) the Scottish missionary who founded the Homes, John Graham. Most are group photographs, such as the one of Lorna's cottage group that led me to Kalimpong. A convenient way for Graham to respond to planters' requests for photographs of their children, the group images were also published in the *Homes Magazine* – a polished quarterly publication circulated widely around the British Empire. Contrary to what one might expect of a school magazine, this was primarily a fundraising tool for Graham. It contained many articles about the 'Anglo-Indian problem'; news of erecting cottages and school buildings; enthusiastic reports of groups being sent to New Zealand and letters and photographs received from emigrants. Many of these photographs published in the *Homes Magazine* are duplicated in family collections. The publication of these images, which normalized the grouping together of children who sprung from a variety of circumstances – their mothers' varied ethnicities reflected the diversity of northeast India as well as the use of indentured labour from impoverished parts of India – was integral to reinforcing and repopulating the problematic identity of 'Anglo-Indians'.

Graham's creation and careful curation of the public image of Homes' children is highly apparent in the visual record. Photographs of the children at Kalimpong published in the *Homes Magazine* have a serene quality to them – in content, composition and tone. My attention was drawn to this when I viewed an image of the Homes from a private collection that looked markedly different: the tone and contrast were sharper, and local people were visible in the background. This image was not published in the *Homes Magazine* (to my knowledge). It belonged to Mary Greig, an emigrant who didn't have children and passed her collection of photographs from Kalimpong, and elsewhere in India, to her niece, Judi Cassidy. Judi doesn't have children either, and was keen for me to use the photographs in the book, as she is unsure what will become of them. She has little or no knowledge of most of the people depicted – few have captions – and there is a strong sense of dislocation. Judi's story invites reflection about the nature of inheritance and the normative family lines that we expect precious items to traverse. In fact, several of the Kalimpong photographic collections were compiled by women who didn't have children, and were intentionally passed to loved ones who they hoped would preserve them.

New Zealand

The third 'world' that the Kalimpong migrants arrived at was New Zealand of the 1910s, 1920s and 1930s. While only a small proportion of Homes graduates emigrated there (most were placed in India), when groups did successfully cross the border, Graham seized the opportunity for publicity.[12] Studio portraits were taken of groups prior to departure and published in the *Homes Magazine*. News of the first large group

to depart (in 1912) was reported in Calcutta, and subsequently in several Australian and New Zealand newspapers.[13] Colonial concerns about the darker skin of some of the emigrants were mitigated by impeccable grooming and deportment, and maid's uniforms for the women. Anglo-Indian appearance had always been subject to high levels of scrutiny by the British (both positive, with women regarded as highly attractive, and negative, in anxiety about racial passing) and was of particular concern to John Graham and to his graduates, given the routine requirements in this era to affix photographs to immigration documentation.[14]

Appearance has the additional weight of being a source of questions – and answers – about ancestry. Many of the tea planters' offspring were sent to Kalimpong as infants or toddlers, and grew up with no knowledge of their ancestry. Because of the ethnic diversity of the region, certain physical traits (for example 'Mongolian' features) were a source of teasing and speculation about ancestry, both at the Homes and among the community in New Zealand.[15] For descendants, photographs are often closely scrutinized for evidence of Indian ancestry, given that their parents or grandparents often flatly denied that they were anything other than British. Once in New Zealand, many emigrants were eager to have their photograph taken, especially with others from Kalimpong, in photographs that were sent back to the Homes as evidence of their successful forging of a life for themselves, with the support of each other. For many descendants, these 'community' photographs can be as much of a surprise as the rest of it, in light of their later silences.

The flipside of all this scrutiny and intrigue is the ordinariness that the photographic record took on as the Kalimpong migrants were settled into life in New Zealand. Family albums depicting their lives as they moved into middle- and old-age accords with descendant testimony: that the experience of a settled family life was their primary joy in life. Few ever went back to India, nor did they go far within New Zealand. Given the jolting separations they had experienced, first from their families on the plantation and then from Kalimpong (and India), it is understandable that they reveled in domestic contentment in later life and took pride in images where they looked like their friends and neighbours: playing bowls, relaxing at the beach, and at family gatherings in backyards for birthdays and weddings and other significant life events.

Afterlife

The photographs and albums described earlier are all in the care of descendants, but many also reside in public archives. Bound volumes of the *Homes Magazine* are available at Kalimpong, and at the National Library of Scotland – part of its 'Kalimpong papers' collection, which includes an array of material produced by John Graham and his secretary, James Purdie. Among these papers is a photograph of a gathering of several Kalimpong families in Wellington for the christening of one of their children. It was presumably sent with a letter to James Purdie – secretary at the Homes for fifty years and a prolific correspondent with graduates all over the world. The photograph's presence in a public archive is at once an expression of the affective bonds formed at Kalimpong (i.e. the ongoing communication with Purdie), and the problematization of

this community. The photograph is a favourite among descendants of those depicted – I have seen it in many family collections – and they have found it remarkable that I had seen it previously in a public archive in Scotland. An ordinary family photograph has become part of a collection available for research: evidence of success perhaps, or an object of curiosity.

There is a poignant excerpt in Simon Mainwaring's short history of Dr Graham's Homes, taken from a letter written to Graham in 1937 by a middle-aged graduate living in Australia. Despite her gratitude for the 'help given to us in Kalimpong in a time of great need', she complained bitterly of the persistent use of their 'past poverty and difficult circumstance' as a 'cheap advertisement' for the Homes, sharply commenting on the 'air of condescension' and asking if this '"charity" is to be hung like a millstone around our necks for the rest of our lives?'[16] This objectification is a constant concern when writing about the migrants: the tendency to connect everything that happens in their adult lives back to their early experiences, to over-scrutinize, and perhaps to Orientalize.

The aesthetic quality and the perceived exoticism of this visual record have undeniably played a role in the survival of the photographs. This applies particularly to photographs of unnamed friends or relations of the Kalimpong people in India. We have no way of ever knowing who they were. The photographs are 'amazing' because they speak to a submerged history and an unlikely connection between people in private spaces in New Zealand and India; but also because of their perceived exotic beauty. While this aesthetic appreciation may seem relatively benign alongside Orientalism at a political and intellectual level, it is perhaps more impactful *because* of its ordinariness.[17] How do beauty, race and culture collide in the creation, curation and survival of photographs?

Not all of the Kalimpong people were beautiful. My grandmother, Lorna, was noticeably plain, in contrast to her younger sister Alice. While Alice's wedding day was captured in a formal studio portrait, with bride and bridal party elegantly dressed, Lorna's was taken outside her humble cottage in Pine Hill. Wearing an ordinary day dress, and no jewellery or other adornment, she is standing on an old wooden crate, to correct the significant height difference between her and Bill. What is most noticeable now, when I look at this and other familiar photographs of Lorna at Pine Hill, is how different she looks to me. It is as if I can see behind her, to a background not previously visible. Knowing what preceded her Pine Hill life somehow populates the image in a way that is difficult to articulate, but rather profound. It makes her look extraordinary. It prompts thoughts about how much subtext we unwittingly apply when we look at photographs.

I wonder what Lorna would make of all of this – our interest in her background and the Kalimpong story. She may not have put this part of her history on display, but like others from Kalimpong, she left it for us to find. In addition to the photo, there was a bible from Kalimpong with a note from Dr Graham, and another note from him christening her eldest son when he visited New Zealand. Little scraps and tiny photos. It would have been so easy to destroy it all. Perhaps the point was for us to find things after she was gone. She didn't want to talk about it, but nor did she want it to disappear. Hidden away in an envelope, inside a packet, in a drawer, in a room, down the hallway,

inside the cottage. A precious piece of childhood carefully tucked away in the recesses of a tender psyche.

Notes

1 Originally named St Andrew's Colonial Homes, it was renamed Dr Graham's Homes when India achieved Independence in 1947. It has been colloquially referred to as 'the Homes' since it opened.
2 Simon Mainwaring, *A Century of Children* (Kalimpong: Dr Graham's Homes, 2000).
3 'The Lives and Labours of 130 Anglo- Indian Adolescents Resettled in New Zealand, 1908 to 1938' (PhD diss., University of Otago, 2014), https://ourarchive.otago.ac.nz/handle/10523/5072.
4 See my website www.kalimpongkids.org.nz; and monograph *Race, Tea and Colonial Resettlement: Imperial Families, Interrupted* (New York, London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2017).
5 *Kalimpong Kids: The New Zealand Story, in Pictures* (Dunedin: Otago University Press, 2020).
6 Interview with Yvonne Gale, Wanaka, February 2013.
7 'Farewell to our New Zealanders', *St Andrews Colonial Homes Magazine* 12, no. 3/4 (1912): 38; 'Orphan Immigrants on the Way to New Zealand', *Ashburton Guardian*, 17 December 1912.
8 See Roy Moxham, *Tea: Addiction, Exploitation and Empire* (New York: Carroll and Graf Publishers, 2003).
9 Applications forms at Dr Graham's Homes originally only had space for recording the mother's ethnicity, not her name. From 1912 this was corrected, but few planters listed her name on the form.
10 Frank Nicholls, *Assam Shikari: A Tea Planter's Story of Hunting and High Adventure in the Jungles of North East India* (New Zealand: Tonson Publishing House, 1970). The book is an excellent example of the planters' obfuscation of their families from their detailed memoirs.
11 Interview with Ruth den Boogert (nee Nicholls), Auckland, November 2012.
12 Graham's scheme coincided with an era of heightened concerns in settler colonies about non-British immigration. While there were considerable difficulties with New Zealand, in the end it was the only settler colony to ever allow groups from Kalimpong to enter. A number of individuals did migrate to Australia and Britain, usually by discretely accompanying a Homes staff member on a trip home. For more on immigration restrictions, see my article 'Working the Permit System: Anglo-Indian Immigration to New Zealand in the 1920s', *New Zealand Journal of History* 48, no. 2 (2014): 27–49.
13 A story in the *Calcutta Statesman* was picked up by New Zealand and Australian newspapers.
14 For two excellent studies of Anglo-Indian identity see Lionel Caplan, *Children of Colonialism: Anglo-Indians in a Post-colonial World (*Oxford: Berg, 2001) and Laura Bear, *Lines of the Nation: Indian Railway Workers, Bureaucracy, and the Intimate Historical Self* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007). Dorothy McMenanim's work also includes testimony from Anglo-Indians about the negative moral connotations of the general claim that they were 'good-looking'.

15 This is directly addressed by an interviewee in *We Homes Chaps*, a film by 1970s Homes graduate Kesang Tseten comprising interviews with his former classmates at the Homes centenary in 2000.
16 Mainwaring, *A Century of Children*, 46.
17 For a discussion of such dynamics in contemporary American society, see Vivek Bald, 'American Orientalism', *Dissent*, Spring 2015.

15

Developing Us

Photography, Family and Feeling

Louise Taylor

Figure 15.1 Photo Booth, Tokyo Bound – In Pursuit of a Passport Photo, 1972, Black-and-White Passport Photo, Abingdon. My father adjusts his head away from the frame and I am captured facing forward for a passport photograph. The events that lay ahead of us seemed inconceivable in the moment that the shutter clicked.

When you're young and a parent dies, you are left to piece together a picture of who they were. You may not have clear memories and therefore depend on those of friends and relatives if you have access and they are willing to speak about them. These recollections are often rooted in their encounters with the deceased and reflect their roles and responsibilities over yours.

It is impossible to go back in time and feel the very particular chemistry that existed between you and your parent. That parent–child relationship, that insider perspective, is lost. So without your own memories, you rely on stories from friends and relatives to understand who your parent was and how it may have felt to be around them.

You seize upon anything else you can: documents, objects, clothes, photographs, their diaries or a handwritten note on the back of a page.

You go to significant places: countries, cultures, landscapes or buildings where they were born, lived, studied or worked.

You expose yourself to books, music, food, hobbies, and anything they might have enjoyed.

You test your DNA, study family trees and consider the broader historical context of their life and death.

You want to understand their identity to better understand your own, to make sense of your struggles in the present day.

You want to get a sense of your parent, separate from the sadness of their loss.

My mother became the 'custodian' of our 'family history'[1] through what she kept from our early lives.[1] She was never very good at throwing things away, and all our stuff from school was packed away in boxes. Recently she told me, 'Louise, it's like, every time I turn away, these boxes,' she jabs her finger at a large pile of cardboard boxes, 'These boxes,' and chuckles, 'they multiply! With each other!' Her shoulders shudder as she laughs in her own particular way, without making a sound.

She also kept many of my father's belongings. He died almost fifty years ago, in 1975. I recall discovering a bag of his shirts, the labels on each in a different language, geographical clues to the countries in which he had spent time. 'Why keep so much of dad's stuff?' I ask. 'Well,' she replies thoughtfully, 'they were a part of him. I was never particularly interested in going to the cemetery, but his things are almost like sacred objects to me.' She points to her collection of Japanese earthenware and sake cups above her TV set, 'These things, these things we chose together; these are the things that remind me of him.' She still finds herself connected to my father, despite everything that happened.

Among my mother's collection of things was a file of documents relating to my father's death. The coroner's report from his inquest was dated 2 October 1975. I recently re-encountered it after reading it for the first time in my mother's bedroom as a teenager. Constable Ravenhall's statement describes the scene. 'There is a pair of slippers in front of the window and a photograph on the chair in front of the window of Mr Taylor, and his glasses and watch were on the table. The inference is he had climbed out of the window and dropped onto the street.'

In 2018, I began a photography master's at the London College of Communication. I had always been interested in collecting family photographs but began asking deeper questions about them. Over forty-eight years ago, my father left a photo on a chair. I had missed this detail in my teens, but as my interest in photography grew, I became curious about this image. It contained information about him that had not passed through the 'body and consciousness of another',[2] as so much previous information about him had.

It was not a photo of the family that he looked at as if to say goodbye in his last moments. The picture on the chair was of himself. By putting it on the chair, he was addressing us. It was a message, a farewell, an 'in memory of'. It was his suicide note.

Marnie Sather observed that women often find meaning in the details of the partner's suicide. My mother focused on his glasses. She was confused by them. Why did he take them off? He couldn't see without them. It wasn't until a friend suggested that it was easier that way, less frightening for him, not to see where he was going, that she could understand his actions in the last moments of his life. Almost fifty years later, I searched for meaning in the photograph he left on the chair.

Does it matter which picture he chose? Every aspect of him was rewritten in the moments after he placed that photograph on the chair. What he wanted to say about himself matters to me. Like the spirit medium in the film *Rashomon*,[3] his photograph allows me to consider his sentiment towards us. Was it an idealized image of himself? How he wanted his family to picture and remember him, in contrast to how we did. 'Do you know which photo he left of himself on the chair?' I enquire casually to my mother. We can talk about him casually now whenever he comes to mind. It took over forty years. 'What photo?' She replies, 'I don't know anything about a photo.'

There were never any images on display of my father or any other relative in our family home, nor had there ever been, despite my mother always collecting photographs from elderly relatives for me. 'He almost made me not to like photography,' she explains about my father in her Slovakian way of phrasing English. He was single-minded, and this caused numerous clashes in the last years of his life in Japan. My mother was constantly smoothing over and rectifying professional and personal conflicts on his behalf. She was often tired and fed up with him. 'Oh God, I was always bloody waiting for him! He would be in a rapture, going on the floor in a trance to photograph an ornate ceiling.' As a specialist in Baroque music, my father was highly interested in the architectural styles of temples and shrines in Japan. 'And then he would photograph you two' (referring to my brother and me) 'and I would be waiting for all three of you'. She laughs, 'Oh god, I hated it!'

From 1972 to 1974, we lived as a family in Japan. In 1975, a year after returning to the UK, my father ended his life. His colour slides and black-and-white negatives, and the cine film he took in the years preceding his death were packed away and stored in boxes by my mother for over forty-five years, with much of his music, writing and clothes. My brother inherited his photographic equipment and continued documenting the small family after he died. However, this didn't extend to family evenings sitting around a projector in a darkened room, sharing tales about Japan; bonding over memories and reflecting on the lives we had. After my father died, there were no family screenings. We became estranged from the life we spent together in Japan, how we interacted with each other and who we had once been.

My father's images from Japan between 1972 and 1974 are a dizzying array of vivid colours and sharp detail. I follow him around the streets of Tokyo through the photographs he took on his Yashica Electro 35. He snaps a shot of a twisted white serpent, silver car wing mirrors, soaring birds, static wisps of baby hair, a misty mountain scene, cheaply manufactured toy monkeys, plastic-wrapped fruit, ladies' curlers, and dark-rimmed glasses. A shell trinket in a tourist shop captured his attention as much as a

Figure 15.2 Alan Taylor, Clashes in the Stills, 1973, Slide Film, Japan. My mother is captured here 'waiting' while my brother and I pose in front of (we think) 'Mitsumine Shrine' for this photograph taken by my father.

golden stucco ceiling from a previous century. My father, with an indiscriminate eye for beautiful things, was animated and excited by Japan.

Among his street photography were family photos. They were primarily taken in leisure time, out and about in the city, visiting temples, zoos, festivals, theatres, gardens, streets, markets, restaurants, schools, on trains and on trips across Japan. He was not the dutiful father who regularly documented rites of passage, birthdays or other annual events. Instead, we were captured out and about in the city or countryside, engaging with the world around us. When he came across something interesting, he would stand us in front of it and take our photo. Our portraits were often named according to places rather than events: 'Meiji Garden', 'paddy fields', 'nr Shibuya' or 'Sakurajima'.

My father was born in 1934, in Bedford, England, as an only child. His father was a piano tuner who played the organ for the local church, and his mother was a housewife. We know little about his childhood; he never spoke about it, preferring instead to listen to my mother's stories about hers in Czechoslovakia. He was from a lower-middle-class family, and his parents were musically ambitious for him. He got into a good school on a music scholarship. His mother made him feel that he was at least middle-middle class. So, it was a real shock when he got to Oxford and realized his humble origins relative to the other students. He won an organ scholarship to study there, but he struggled in the new environment and had his first serious breakdown. His interest in music remained throughout this difficult period. My brother told me he would dig up music from the Bodleian Library, which had not been played for hundreds of years, and perform it. He

studied harpsichord in Paris, Amsterdam, Italy and then Czechoslovakia. In Prague, he met my mother, a student at Charles University.

'We were in a restaurant, and he just came to our table and started talking to us,' she recalls. 'He was staying in the hostel for music and art students in Prague.'

'What, he didn't know any of you and just came up and started talking?'

'Yes. I had been learning English since childhood, so I spoke to him in my little bits and pieces, and then we started seeing each other.'

My mother was born in Bratislava in 1943, the middle of three sisters. Her parents were doctors; her mother was a paediatric cardiologist, and her father a radiologist. Her father loved cooking, gardening, nature and hunting for wild mushrooms with her and her two sisters. He was much more involved as a parent than her mother. As a four-year-old, she recalls standing at the back of the bathroom, watching her mother getting ready for work in the mirror, thinking, 'If only she would stay.' Her grandmother often came to care for the three girls, and sometimes there were maids. She was a forgetful and clumsy child and would often wear different colour socks and talk to herself on the way to school, nodding, smiling and hopping. She would usually be thinking about something she had read in a book. Her two sisters, embarrassed, would pretend they didn't know her.

There was a lot of laughter in her family. She saw the funny side of life. Her father told her, 'God, I don't know what would happen to you if you couldn't see how funny you are'. At university, she was given the nickname 'Pigeon.' It was as if, at any moment, she would fly off into her thoughts.

My mother met my father as a student in 1967. She reflects that subconsciously she thinks she was drawn to him because he reminded her of the deeply unhappy music teacher she had as a child. The teacher would recount tales from her tragic life while feeding my mother cream cakes. The minute she introduced my father to her family, her own father appeared alarmed. He could see immediately that my father was an unstable prospect and told my mother words to that effect. She was baffled. 'Father must be going senile,' she naively thought to herself.

In 1968 before the Russian tanks rolled into Czechoslovakia, my mother, father, and brother (a baby) left to live in England. I was born the following year. My mother explains that the marriage was one of unfulfilled expectations on both sides. She had been raised with less traditional expectations than my father. When he came home from work, there would be food but no dishes, laundry or housework done, and my mother would be playing with my brother on the floor. When my father struggled to earn a living, they switched roles. My mother would return home late from work in London and my father would appear with my brother much later, around one am, having spent the evening with friends.

After my father died, my mum tried to explain his suicide to me, but it was hard to understand as a six-year-old. It was 1975, and grief theory was in its infancy. Elisabeth Kübler-Ross had not long ago written her 1969 book, *On Death and Dying*,[4] drawing from her work with the terminally ill. The attitudes in society were a long way off the age-appropriate and honest explanations for children that exist today. My mother heard me tell a friend he had died in a car crash (unknown to me that was a reference to a prior failed suicide attempt in which he had jumped in front of a car). 'Well, if Louise

wants to believe what she believes, maybe it's better that way.' But it wasn't clarified. I wasn't sure; we didn't talk it through. All I remember is the resounding quiet. My mother's instinct to protect me from the truth sent me a disquieting message about my father. A silence seeped into our lives and swelled under the surface like water blisters. If my mother tried to mention him, I felt an electric shock, a sudden jolt as if stung by a bee. 'My father died of cancer,' I confided to a friend, speculatively, after being caught smoking at school. 'No, he didn't; he killed himself!' she replied. No more words than that. A short, sharp jab that left its barbed stinger.

I was sent to family guidance therapy with my mother a short while afterwards for getting into trouble at school. The counsellor immediately identified that we didn't speak about my father and that I didn't know how he died. My mother explained that he ended his life by jumping from the third floor of our home and landing on the pavement by the step. The step that I walked over each morning to go to school! Outside the counsellor's office, I slam the door shut. 'I smoke!' I announced, glaring at my mother, daring her to react.

My father's suicide became the magnet to which all my questions pulled. I read the post-mortem, the inquest report, his writing (streams of consciousness in the days before his death) and the newspaper clippings. I imagined his death. I focused in on his suicide. For a period I felt proud about his musical accomplishments, but the mystery of his suicide always pulled me back. It was the late 1980s, and mental health issues were stigmatized. I was struggling with depression after moving away from my childhood home. Without guidance or contextualization, I was haunted by a word used in my father's psychiatric report. He had an 'untreatable personality disorder'. 'Untreatable'. It articulated my childhood fears and dreams. I remember visiting him in the psychiatric hospital and seeing him treated badly by a nurse. He didn't react; his vulnerability laid bare. The injustice pierced my six-year-old consciousness and gave me my only memory of him.

I was frightened by the image I had created. 'Families create their own realities, resulting in what's known as 'the family world'.[5] Hope Edelman explains, 'After a member dies, a shared account of the loss typically develops. The degree to which conversation about the story occurs depends on a family's culture and also, very often, the opinion of the most powerful or dominant family member.'[6] My mother became the most dominant family member in creating the narrative about my father. My brother received funding to attend a boarding school from a young age, so he was rarely at home. My paternal grandparents visited us but did not speak about my father. All of my mother's family lived in Slovakia (then Czechoslovakia). With limited access to people who knew my father, my mother authored him in my mind's eye.

My mother's memories of my father were dominated by his mental health struggles, the psychiatric system, suicidal ideations, and the violence he inflicted upon himself. 'The identity of a woman widowed by suicide can be narrowed, and stories about the death itself can eclipse the stories of the life of the deceased.'[7] Marnie Sather discusses how violence has often shaped the lives of women whose partners have ended their lives. She explains that 'this brings about profoundly complex and contradictory experiences that require multi-storied, nuanced responses.'[8] After many years of silence around my father, all my questions gravitated towards his suicide and why his life took that path.

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie talks about 'The Danger of a Single Story'.[9] The danger of our 'single story' was that we memorialized my father's suicide rather than his life.

It was hard to consolidate my father's colour-saturated images taken in Japan with the man who, a year later, could no longer see a future for himself. 'He only picked up the camera when happy,' my mother explained, trying to rationalize the disparity between the vibrant images and a man struggling to survive. I continue to search for signs of his complex inner world in his photography.

Away from the city for the day, my father pans his Super 8 camera across the mountain to a village. He cuts to a lake of fresh still water with sheets of ice around the edges. A duck skids as it lands, gliding across the water's surface. The footage has a sense of clarity. My father looks through the viewfinder and is absorbed by the beauty of the landscape. I can almost sense him behind the camera. His eye follows the small stream that weaves through banks of snow that have melted and refrozen into eerie forms overnight. He takes in a breath of the frosty mountain air, and I want to exhale. This grainy, black-and-white sequence is emotive. The images are beautiful and achingly sad. In the remnants of this moment, I find my father and his thoughts. His thoughts that I can only ever imagine.

Is this then my father's landscape or my own? Yesim Saatci describes the experience of parental suicide as 'analogous to the experience of falling from the sky suddenly and unsafely into a field. In this field, the participants did not have any direction, no one with whom to talk, no support from the family, and no counselling. They were in a void with a sense of emptiness. Suddenly, life lost its meaning. They were on their own and in pain, feeling hopeless, helpless, anxious, sleepless, and desperate'.[10]

And then, I noticed something in his footage that completely changed what I looked for in the archive. I was isolating still frames from the Super 8 footage previously discussed, looking closely at the details, when I noticed my father's hand. My father and I (as a five-year-old) have our backs to the camera and are in a tea house by a waterfall. His fingertips rest on my thick white jumper, barely touching its surface. He smiles shyly when he catches sight of the camera behind him, moving his hand away. It is the only moving image I have of him, and it captures us together. It is not a performance but a candid moment; we are initially unaware we are being filmed. It is convincing evidence of something positive between us. When I thought about 'Us' previously, about our relationship, it had always been as a by-product, focusing on his suicide. Could there be a story in the archive about 'Us'?

Robert Akeret argues, 'Your attitude towards analysing a photo is important, too, because if your expectation is narrow or limited, then little beyond the surface will be perceived, and nothing new will be learned. But if you are curious and open to the possibility of learning, then photographs become rich resources of new insights.'[11] I hadn't, up until now, valued my father's optimistic imagery because it did not help me understand his pain and, therefore, my own. I pathologized his photographs, sweeping away everything meaningful that sustained him; a butterfly on a leaf, two young lovers on a park bench, and the ornamental architecture he loved so deeply.

Although there was no more footage of him, there were numerous clips in which he filmed me. He had captured my expression, looking directly at him, only the camera between us, less than a meter apart. I edited these clips together so I could observe my

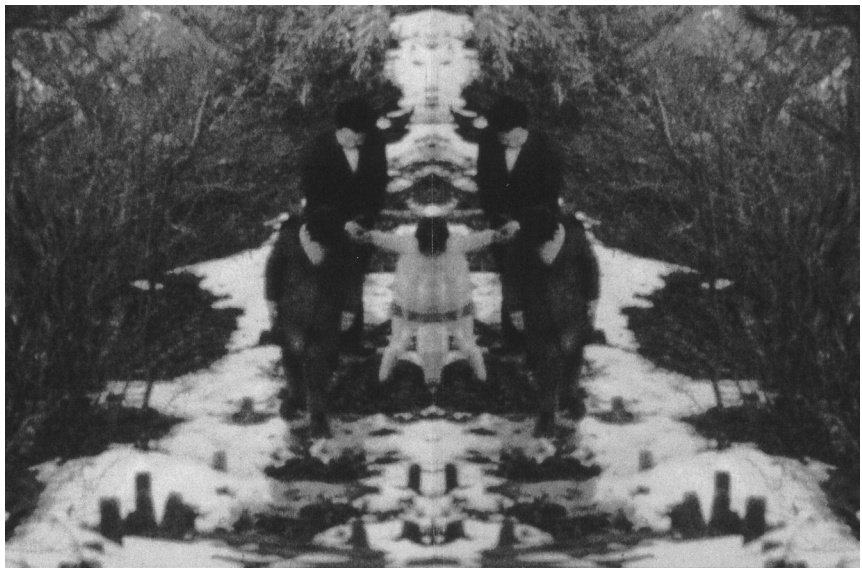

Figure 15.3 Louise Taylor, Untitled, 2022, Collage, Oxford. Like Rorschach's inkblots, each family member had their own interpretation of my father's suicide. Too young to have my own recollections, I drew from the silence and then later, my mother's accounts. I subvert stills from my father's Super 8 film to convey the frightening landscape evoked.

expressions and movements. What could they tell me about 'Us'? Did I feel comfortable around him? Was I shy, nervous or apprehensive when he pointed the camera at me? I knew he had a temper and could fly into a rage.

In one colour Super 8 clip, I (as my five-year-old self) break into a big smile as I come into view. A Japanese lady with glossy permed hair drives a go-kart, and I sit next to her, happily swaying my head from side to side. Then, after passing by, I turn behind me to continue smiling at my father, prioritizing his gaze over my activity.

Singing directly to the camera in the following clip, I flap my arms by my sides and turn my head to briefly smile at my older brother, who stands outside of the frame. When he tries to enter it, I simultaneously raise one arm into an assertive stop sign and shake my head vigorously while continuing to sing. The way I handle the interruption is comical. This clip, again, shows my strong desire to stay connected to my father's gaze. It reflects my easy-going nature as a child and how assertively I interacted with my older brother. Through how my father captured me on film, I gained information about our dynamics and a new perspective on my younger self.[12]

It brings to mind filming my own daughter at the same age. I was captivated by her. At any moment, her actions translated into an amusing and endearing act that we would return to and view repeatedly for many years. However, I know these funny, sweet moments, captured on film, began long before I pressed record. They were predated by a bond developed over many years in a loving, secure environment.

Figure 15.4 Alan Taylor, Developing Us, Super 8 Still, 1974. My father passed away before I developed the ability to remember what it felt like to be around him. Analysing old Super 8 footage of myself as a child, I discover information new to me about 'Us' in our interaction as cameraman and subject.

As a self-conscious thirteen-year-old, my daughter no longer wants to be the subject of my gaze. In the Super 8 clips recorded by my father, I was pre-self-conscious, expressing myself freely. My brother was a little older, shyer, less at ease being filmed and more aware of the thoughts of others.

We are back in England after living in Japan for two years. I (as a six-year-old) am wearing a kimono and dance earnestly with slow and precise movements on the street outside our house. It is the last clip my father filmed of my brother and me. As I dip down, the camera pans across to my brother, blowing a bird whistle beside me. I am visible in the bottom right of the frame, holding still in an awkwardly-dipped position, waiting for the camera to pan back. Oblivious to the conventions of film and video, I instinctively freeze when the camera pans away to another subject. My father's gaze shapes my response; without it, I am frozen in time.

When I tell my mother about the connection to my father that I found in the Super 8, she responds, 'Yes . . . you loved showing off in front of the camera.' I hold her hand; it is soft and warm. Her skin is translucent and shiny, the colour of crinkled parchment paper. 'But mum, he loved me, right?' I imagine she will reply soothingly, 'Of course', without hesitation, but instead, she replies, 'Yes . . . He loved you in his own way.'

'What do you mean, his own way?' I am frustrated that she doesn't let me have a pleasant thought about my father and our relationship. 'What does it mean to you to love a child?'

'To be there for you, to be supportive and consistent. To provide for you. Your father just couldn't do any of that.'[13]

My mother speaks of love as a 'verb', an action, as roles and responsibilities. What I see in the film talks about love as a feeling, an 'adjective', an emotion, a connection.

But I also see a contradiction in the family photographs taken in Japan. We were out and about with him, feeding Koi carp, climbing mountains, and visiting temples. 'No, you know, he did stuff with us, mum. I've got all this evidence; look, he did stuff with us.'

'Of course, yes, he did stuff with you,' she agrees immediately. I am surprised.

'But why didn't you ever tell me this?'

'Louise,' she replies, looking at me sternly, possibly frustrated that I can never understand the full horror of what she lived through. Of looking after a suicidal man and two small children, waiting for admittance back into full-time care that didn't come. That she didn't feel believed as to how grave the situation had become. 'Louise . . . It's taken me until now to remember anything good!' And after a moment of reflection, she continues, almost to herself, 'I'm just glad we have both lived long enough to come to terms with it together.'

Marianne Hirsch's term '"postmemory" describes the relationship that the "generation after" bears to the personal, collective, and cultural trauma of those who came before – to experiences they "remember" only by means of the stories, images, and behaviours among which they grew up.'[14] My mother was not a survivor of a collective historical trauma that Hirsch references in her work. But my 'memory' of my father, how I 'remembered' him, was based on her experiences, roles, and responsibilities as a wife, partner, and adult. The story of 'Us', a child's relationship with her father, slipped away from me, replaced with images of a desperate man.

Observing his material and searching for his psychological state, I found something I didn't expect to see: everyday moments in our family life. Julia Hirsch states, 'Family photographs, which take us beyond merit or notoriety into human ordinariness, are often the means by which this illusion of closeness can be brought about.'[15] This 'illusion of closeness' between 'Us' that I found in his Super 8 films caused a shift of focus from his death to our relationship.

When my father captured aspects of the family's character for posterity, he, in fact, memorialized himself in our return gaze. His photographs and films fell dormant for many years, swept aside by a more compelling narrative, his suicide. His photographic archive allowed me to reach back in time to develop a story about 'Us'. When I look at his Super 8 films today, I see a little girl delighted to be the subject of her father's gaze. It corresponds to my memory of visiting my father in hospital as a six-year-old. I had always focused my attention on the encounter with the angry nurse rather than the moments before, when I was outside the hospital grounds rolling down a hill. It was a sunny day. I remember this intense feeling of happiness. The joy of seeing him again, perhaps?[16]

Why do some of our family stories stay with us and others don't? Does it need to be something funny, sweet, tragic or compelling? Or is it a mystery that keeps a story alive? What was the impact of the early silence about my father's suicide? What even is a suicide note? Who was the most dominant storyteller within my family? Why did I have a historical lack of understanding of mental health? And why, when my understanding evolved, did my attitude to my father remain the same? How did society's attitudes impact us? What are and were the roles of fathers? What story do I want to tell my daughter about my father's suicide?[17] These are some of the questions that I have been grappling with while writing this essay.

Patricia Holland states, 'much has been made of the destabilising recognition that there can be no final, "true" history to be discovered. However, there are other histories to be written, embedded in the old, interpreting, reconstructing, making sense of events in less dominant ways'.[18] Werner Herzog argues, '[There's confusion] about the distinction between fact and truth. There's an accountant's truth, and there's something much deeper, and you will find that in great poetry. When you listen to or read a great poem, it will occur to you very abruptly that there's a deep, enormous truth in this poem. You feel illuminated'.[19]

I have many photographs of my father, often press photos, taken at various stages of his life, almost always sitting next to a harpsichord. He focused so much time and energy on music. I think he would have chosen one of those portraits to put on the chair beside the window.

In a photograph that I love, my father stands in the garden of his first home. He wears casual trousers, a relaxed jumper and a white shirt with his collar undone. He has a short beard and wears a pair of 1950s brow-line spectacles. He holds the stalk of a dandelion between his thumb and ring finger. The globe of white seeds is ready to blow. He smiles. I showed this photograph to my mum, and she pointed out the land behind him. 'He was planning a Christmas tree farm there, but it didn't happen. The cottage behind him, he got swindled out of it. . .'

Figure 15.5 Unknown. It's a Good Day, 1960s, Black-and-White Film, Bracknell. Over many years, I pieced together the puzzle of my father's troubled life. But in so doing, I detached myself from everything that sustained him and brought him joy. I let these small and unassuming moments slip away. However, these were the parts of his life that I most needed to grasp.

When I look at the photograph, I see a man, happy and relaxed with the company he is in. It doesn't matter to me who he is with; maybe it's my mother or maybe it is somebody else. What matters to me is – it's a good day.

Notes

1 Margaret Gibson, *Objects of the Dead: Mourning and Memory in Everyday Life* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Publishing, 2008), 30.
2 Ibid., 96.
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4 Elisabeth Kübler-Ross, *On Death and Dying* (London: Routledge, 1989).
5 Hope Edelman, *The Aftergrief: Finding Your Way Along the Long Arc of Loss* (Middlesex: Penguin, 2021), 187.
6 Ibid.
7 Lorraine Hedtke and John Winslade, *The Crafting of Grief: Constructing Aesthetic Responses to Loss* (New York: Routledge, 2017).
8 Marnie Sather, 'Illuminating Skills and Knowledges of Women Who Have Lost a Male Partner to Suicide: A Feminist Insider Narrative Practice Research Project' (PhD thesis, University of Melbourne, 2021).
9 Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, 'The Danger of a Single Story', *Ted Talk*, 2009, https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_ngozi_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story?language=en (accessed 20 July 2023).
10 Yesim Saatci, 'Effects of Parental Suicide on the Adolescent Survivors' Lives When They Are Adults' (PhD diss., Texas A&M University, 2013).
11 Robert U. Akeret, *Photoanalysis: How to Interpret the Hidden Psychological Meaning of Personal and Public Photographs* (New York: Pocket Books, 1975), 34.
12 Michael White, 'Saying Hullo Again: The Incorporation of the Lost Relationship in the Resolution of Grief', *Dulwich Centre Newsletter* (Spring 1988).
13 Laura King, 'Hidden Fathers? The Significance of Fatherhood in Mid-Twentieth-Century Britain', *Contemporary British History* 26, no. 1 (2012): 25–46.
14 Marianne Hirsch, 'The Generation of Postmemory', *Poetics Today* 29, no. 1 (2008): 103–28.
15 Julia Hirsch, *Family Photographs: Content, Meaning, and Effect* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981), 122.
16 Annette Kuhn, *Family Secrets: Acts of Memory and Imagination* (London: Verso, 2002), 1–24.
17 John Byng-Hall (interviewed by Paul Thomson), 'The Power of Family Myths', in *The Myths We Live By*, ed. Raphael Samuel and Paul Thomson (London: Routledge, 1990), 216–24.
18 Ibid.
19 American Film Institute, 'Werner Herzog on Deeper Truth', YouTube, 2009, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1KQSgcAcNpo (accessed 20 July 2023).

16

Intergenerational Disruption of Memory, Identity and Patrimony

Michael Heim

Objects, Identities, Emotions

Michel Foucault famously begins *The Order of Things* with a description of the disruptive effect on his cognition of Jorge Louis Borges description of 'a certain Chinese encyclopedia' in which 'animals are divided into: a) belonging to the Emperor, b) embalmed, c) tame, d) sucking pigs, e) sirens, f) fabulous, g) stray dogs, h) included in the resent classification, i) frenzied, j) innumerable, k) drawn with a very fine camel-hair brush, l) *et cetera,* m) having just broken the water pitcher, n) that from a long way off look like flies'.[1] This list made Foucault laugh so hard that he stopped thinking, and when he started thinking again, he found he could never think in the same way again. Jean Paul Sartre had a similar experience, staring at a tram seat that disassembled itself before his eyes into something completely unrecognizable, something outside of human experience.[2] Borges's list reminds me of the collection of objects that have arrived in my house as inheritances of the past activities of my family. These objects are in some ways a typically disordered remnant of a family inheritance decimated by chance and random attempts to erase pain and re-establish control over the tumult of poor decisions, inadequate risk assessment and blind misfortune.

Objects (identities and emotions)

The objects can be divided into two groups. There was a single thing, and then there was a multitude of things. The single thing was this. It was a rifle. It was a beautiful walnut stocked *Brno .22* slide action repeating rabbit gun. Brno were made in Czechoslovakia. They were famous. The rifle belonged to my stepfather. He seemed to have nothing else, when he arrived, other than his clothes and a strange car that looked like a 1950s spaceship, only pink.

My stepfather's father was an English railway engineer who decided in the late 1920s to go into business for himself as builder, just in time to go broke in the Depression. The rifle was his. This was the story. After the Depression did its work on his fortunes, he

could afford just two bullets for this gun in any week. Each Friday, he would take those two bullets and that rifle on his bicycle, and ride 50 miles to the South of Adelaide, into an area of rolling bare green hills and the gulf waters. Each Sunday he would return, with no bullets but with two rabbits, to be cooked into stew. He was a quiet, inward-looking, hard-working, humourless man who died while buying a pint of milk one day.

There were other objects in our house that spoke of something else. There was a dark red rosewood writing desk, with ornate brass handles and a pale wooden inlay of a large cursive capital "L" carved into the lid. There was a crimson Persian rug, with black figuring; a large magnifying glass with a bronze frame and steel handle; a seal, for sealing wax on letters, with a turned wooden handle and a perfectly formed ornate insignia carved in steel, in reverse lettering; a perfume box covered in soft fawn leather inlaid with faded gold lettering and faintly fragrant still; an ornate embroidered Chinese coat, purple and orange and trimmed in gold and silver thread; a small painting constructed of heavy cream and purple impasto, filled with a strange, intense, disturbing energy; a collection of photographs, in albums and boxes, of all different sizes and qualities from large formal studio portraits to tiny incomprehensible contact prints of unnamed houses and landscapes and unrecognizable figures. These things all belonged to my mother.

Identities (objects and emotions)

My stepfather was a short, stocky man, with a barrel chest and thin springy muscular legs. He had sandstone-coloured hair, curly, cropped short and sky-blue eyes which changed constantly between serene pleasure and annihilating self-doubt. He would not spend money on shoes. He worked hard at everything he did, long into the night, unhappily. He would have liked to be a lazy man, but that would have made him ashamed.

My mother was middle class. She had inherited high cheekbones from her beautiful grandmother, a straight nose, blue-grey eyes and a slightly clouded cast to her expression, as if she was expecting to hear something disturbing. She was small and powerful, with an uncontrollable sweep of grey-blonde hair brushed back from her forehead. She spoke in a melodious, anglicized drawl and an air of world-weariness. She was an excellent cook. She taught herself to cook by reading the books of the English writer Elizabeth David. She would stand longingly in the windows of David Jones department store, gazing at French cooking pots, in their red and blue and white enamels.

My mother came from a family that was originally very large and very highly networked and full of political discourse and cultural bravura. This was a dense and fruitful family tree, filled with wealthy connoisseurs and philanthropists, religious savants, utopian impresarios, writers, artists, merchants, printers, technological innovators. For 200 years, they lay right at the centre of the energized, morally athletic English middle-class intelligentsia. Then quite suddenly, in the 1930s, all of those network relationships suddenly disappeared, the family tree became uninhabited or denuded of its foliage. My mother seemed to have no cousins, uncles and aunts or

grandparents. We as a family didn't seem to be anywhere, and we had little knowledge of where we might have come from. My grandmother herself was a silent malevolent presence. I'd as soon ask her about her family as I'd try and bludge a smoke from Comrade Stalin. Such a discourse was unthinkable.

Emotions (objects and identities)

My mother had a ritual. Every so often, maybe once or twice a year, she would gather all of her children, me and my twin older brothers, and kneel down on the Persian rug in front of the rosewood writing desk and rummage through the photographs. She would draw them out one after the other and begin to recount the family fable. In a low melodious, mesmerizing voice that was almost a song, she sifted and incanted the separate pieces of mythology that would explain how and why we had come to be as we were.

This family myth was the story of my grandmother' Edith's disobedience, her divorce from my grandfather Basil and her confrontation with her father, the patriarch Napier Birks, which resulted in her disinheritance and expulsion from the family network. It was passed down as a fragment of a scripted piece of dramatic dialogue. My mother was a good actor, and it was always a compelling moment. This myth was offered as an explanation of our ambiguous social status.

Edith was her father's favourite child, his wilful, talented, intelligent, headstrong, cunning, emotional and belligerent daughter. As a child of thirteen, she fell in love with her cousin Tom Cutlack, a bush larrikin from Renmark (actually her uncle by marriage, her mother's brother's wife's brother, though they were the same age). The liaison was forbidden, obviously, and they were parted. Another man was chosen for her, a good man whom she liked well enough, chosen by her mother from among her circle of artists and intellectual friends. She acquiesced and married him; my grandfather, Basil Burdett. But it transpired that he was not as he appeared. He had a hidden life and hidden emotions. Everyone had miscalculated. Tom reappeared, dashing and handsome and intelligent and magnetic in his charming, wild eccentricity. Edith decided she would divorce Basil and marry Tom. It was quite straightforward. They were beyond all of that nonsense.

Not so straightforward. Basil reneged on their unspoken contract of rational dissociation. The father Napier, stepped in, the Old Bastard as he was known to the family. He took her aside and forbade her, on pain of disinheritance and expulsion from the family. They confronted each other, the father and the daughter. My mother re-enacted the scene.

Napier: I forbid it
Edith: I'll do as I see fit
Napier: I'll cut you off without a penny
Edith: You can stick your money.
Napier: Then sign here, here and here

. . . and she did, and in doing so transported herself in an instant from one life, with all of its objects and relationships and values and ideals and unquestioned assumptions – and wealth – into another entirely different life.

The calculation my grandmother made, I believe, was that love was better than money. And there was much in her family background to reinforce this highly ethical equation. Her grandmother, Rose Birks, was a steadfast and severe Christian feminist of the social purity cast. Her great-aunts and uncles were radical utopian Christian socialists, some of whom went to South America, to Billy Lane's ill-starred New Australia settlement in Paraguay, and died there. Her grandfather Charles Birks was a deacon of the Baptist Church, sworn to be 'sound in faith and life . . . unwavering in his commitment to the true gospel . . . in a clear conscience' , not 'double tongued', not 'greedy for gain', 'blameless', with a 'godly wife', a 'spiritual leader of his wife and children'.[3] This was a family dedicated to stalwart courage in the face of temptation. To cross that boundary once, in getting a divorce, was a martyrdom to be born; to cross it twice, by refusing to bear the financial and social exile that was her due in her disobedience, was unthinkable.

But what happened next? What happened next was that he died. Tommy died. The lover from childhood, dear Tommy. The bridges were burnt, the Island was uninhabited. Nothing to be done. Her love, for which she had exchanged everything, was a fragile, chimerical thing, which had evaporated with the morning dew. But the stringent ethical codes of her family and friends were of sterner material. Did they enfold the bereaved, desperate and sick young woman, and her four children, in the arms of family, forgiveness and Caritas? No, they did not. The rulings stood. She was expelled from the garden. The green boughs of the family tree withered and died, leaving my grandmother bereft and alone.

In my mother's house, there was a strange array of disconnected objects that spoke of that abandoned life. These were the remnants of a culture to which my grandmother had belonged and to which my mother was heir in an emotional and psychological and behavioural sense, but which had disappeared so completely that there was no longer any sense to be made of any of it, not the story, nor the objects, nor my mother's odd behaviours and deep anxieties about herself and her world. When she connected up with my stepfather he brought his own objects of estrangement, carrying their own tale of incomprehension and the treachery of fortune. I lived among these objects without understanding them. My mother understood them and tried to reconstruct, as in a hologram the colours and textures of that life, those relationships. And the objects did their work as a repository of memory. They were like an unknown language but one whose fundamental structure was familiar to us, to me. The semiotic relationships could, when interrogated, and placed in context, begin to untangle themselves, and the emotions, the loves and betrayals and delights and misconceptions, could begin to reinvigorate almost as lives, as living memories.

Notes

1 Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (London: Routledge, 2002), xvi.
2 Jean Paul Sartre, *Nausea* (London: Penguin Books, 2000).
3 Benjamin Merkle, 'The Authority of Deacons in Pauline Churches', *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 64, no. 2 (2021): 309–25.

17

Reading Nana's Bible

Faith, Family and the Female Line

Catherine Feely

This Bible was given to my maternal grandmother, Marjorie Rose Platt (Nana), by her headmistress on the occasion of her leaving school in 1933. A small, cheap, soft leather-bound book, it was printed in bulk the previous year by the British and Foreign Bible Society and is, at first glance, entirely unremarkable. However, Miss E. Shepherd elevated its meaning by placing a (lightly) coded message at the front: 'Numbers VI 24-26'. The Bible's thin ribbon bookmark keeps place to reveal the passage: 'The Lord bless thee and keep thee;/ The Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee;/ The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.'

Marjorie kept the Bible close to her until her death in 1999, when it passed into the possession of my mother, her eldest child. It is, itself, not a Catholic object, the gift predating Nana's conversion to the Roman Catholic Church in 1940. But it was made so over a period of nearly sixty years, becoming a repository hinting at the tumultuous changes to – but also the continuities of – Catholic religious lay practice over the course of the second half of the twentieth century. To me, her granddaughter, this book represents the maternal line made material: a record of three generations of women negotiating life through their faith, or lack of it, forever seeking peace.

* * *

Until I was sixteen, my entire social world was Catholic. Having been saved from the fate of Limbo by baptism at a mere ten days old, it was strange when I realized that the most devout person in my entirely Catholic world had not always been Catholic. Marjorie Rose Platt was born into a relatively comfortable middle-class home in Burnage, Manchester, in October 1919. Her father, George Platt, was a furniture dealer who died young and left a shop on Rochdale Road that remained in the family until the 1990s. Her mother, Doris Platt, remarried a man – 'Uncle Tom' (Tom O'Hara) – whom both Marjorie and her brother Wilf adored. On leaving the Acacias School in Burnage, Marjorie became a telephonist at a Steel Works in Irlam, which was where she met John Drummond, an insurance clerk. They were married at St Mary's Mulberry

Street (known as the 'Hidden Gem'), Manchester, in 1940 and Marjorie converted to Catholicism for marriage, as many women did in that period because 'mixed marriages' were frowned upon. Before this, she had apparently been a devout member of the Church of England, going to multiple services each week. My mother reports it was a big step to start taking the classes to convert to the rites of the Roman Catholic Church, and that Marjorie's mother, Doris, 'was not particularly happy' about it.

Despite this act of rebellion, however, one survivor of her pre-conversion life remained with her for the rest of her life: Miss Shepherd's gift. A local history website reveals her full name as Edith Shepherd, the Acacias School's second headmistress, appointed in 1920 with 'aspirational values' and remembered as 'strict but fair'. It is striking that I could not come up with better descriptors for Nana herself, even if I tried. My mother remembers her talking about Miss Shepherd often, and it seems to me that, though this Bible was at odds with her new religious identity, the influence of her teacher as a role model of a caring woman with high standards was powerful enough to transcend any confessional divide. Though Marjorie did not annotate it herself further, the Bible contains five interleaved objects that mark her own passage from young convert to mature matriarch, and her dual investment in both her own family and her parish family of St. Bernard's, which became deeply intertwined with one another over the next half-century. The Bible had been in my possession for years before, through teary eyes, one wet afternoon I realized the significance of these 'scraps' not only to illuminating Nana's understanding of the fundamental purpose of her life, but of the emotional inheritance – a potent mix of love, intelligence, pride, guilt and the desperate need to feel needed – that she bequeathed to my mother and, by, extension, me.

The first object is a leaflet, a 'Remembrance of the Mission Preached by a Redemptorist Father, St Bernard's, Manchester Feb. 9th to 23rd, 1947'. St Bernard's was a new church, founded in 1941 on the ground floor of an old merchant's house for a growing Catholic population. In 1943, my paternal grandparents claimed to be the first marriage celebrated there, my Grandad having immigrated from the West Coast of Ireland for work and my grandma becoming yet another Catholic convert after being wooed at a dance hall. In 1945, the bishop visited and declared that St Bernard's was 'the worst parish in the diocese for mixed marriages' and more needed to be done to make sure that the children of these marriages were properly indoctrinated in the faith. In February 1947, after having been separated from her husband for six long years of war, Marjorie was heavily pregnant with her first child, a child who she was determined would be brought up properly as a Catholic. This sermon, alongside a handy reminder that 'DEATH WILL COME SOON,/ JUDGEMENT WILL FOLLOW/ AND THEN – HEAVEN – OR HELL – FOR EVER', gave her instructions on how to do this effectively: 'Parents should gather their children together, and say the Rosary with them each evening, in order to secure a special blessing upon the family and home.' Three days after the Redemptorist Priest had presumably taken his redemption elsewhere, my mother was born.

The second object is a small bookmark bearing an inspirational quotation supposedly from St Teresa of Avila, the Spanish nun and theologian, and first female to be made Doctor of the Church: 'All it takes is a little bit of determination.' This seems

somewhat of an oversimplification of Teresa's writings about the power of personal prayer and the concept of continual conversion – which, if Nana delved deeper, may have appealed – but I appreciate such nuance is hard to fit on a bookmark. The phrase, authentic or not, certainly echoes one of Nana's own favourites, repeated often to children and grandchildren: 'There is no such word as can't'. Saying 'I can't', however difficult or unpleasant the task, was tantamount to saying you were unwilling to try, which was absolutely unacceptable. This marker is placed in Genesis, a fact that may be relevant or simply a sign that I have read too much Margaret Atwood, where Laban pursues Jacob, who had married his daughters (both of them), Leah and Rachel, and fled. Laban eventually catches up with them at Gilead, and pleads to Jacob: 'what can I do today unto these my daughters, or unto the offspring that they have born?' The two men ultimately reconcile to make a covenant over, certainly not *with*, the women. I am reminded of Nana, a formidable and strong-minded woman – a woman who, even twenty-five years after death, I am still afraid of disappointing – dropping everything to rush home and make Grandpa his daily round of beef sandwiches.

Recognition and respect, however, came in other ways. The next piece of paper is a newsletter addressed to 'ALL THE WOMEN OF ST. BERNARD'S PARISH' in December 1965. In it, the priest pleads for women to join the Women's Confraternity and the Union of Catholic Mothers and 'to the young women and girls we make a special appeal'. Her childbearing done, announced as newly elected to the post of Parish President of the Union of Catholic Mother is one Mrs J. Drummond, convention of the time dictating that she could not be addressed by her own initial. The newsletter closes with the statement that the women of the parish were responsible for the funding of the main altar and were now raising the money for a monstrance as a memorial to the former parish priest. The women of my grandmother's generation bought and built this church.

The women of the next generation, however, were more of a worry. Nana's next insertion is a small piece of paper typed on to which is the 'School Hymn' of the Hollies Convent Grammar School, that my mother attended. It reads:

> Make of our youth, O God a holy thing
> Let it not languish, die and nought avail,
> Tend it we pray Thee in its blossoming;
> Give it the beauty that can never fail.
> Thou who didst give our life its dignity,
> Set our young hearts with ardour all aflame,
> Make us true soldiers of Thy chivalry
> Loving Thy hallowed standard and Thy name.
> Let us not waste Thy splendid gift, O King,
> Barter or change it for all the world's poor price,
> Make of our youth, O God, a holy thing;
> Make of our hearts, Oh Lord, Thy sacrifice.

On the back of the paper, in pencil, are sums in my mother's handwriting, hastily scribbled while working out her Maths homework. Holding it in my hand, I think of

how anxious Nana must have been about the coming of age of her eldest daughter and the path she would take. I think of my mother telling me that the only sex education that she received was a pamphlet titled *My Dear Daughter* put under her closed bedroom door when menstruation had become a clear risk. Of her account of the first time she heard about sex, in Biology O'level, and how horrified she was; disgusted, she exclaimed to her mother 'I can't believe you did that five times!' I think of my Nana's resigned reply: 'Jacqueline, I wish I had only had to do it five times.' When my mother left home to study in Liverpool in 1965, the Second Vatican Council was reaching its close. She embraced its changes, but Nana need not have worried too much about waste of her 'splendid gift'.

Reader, she became a Catholic head teacher.

On Nana's death, the gift went full circle: from one headmistress to another. The final trace of her in the Bible is a memorial card for a dearly loved priest, Fr Hogan, the priest who had been at the helm of the Parish when she had been Parish President of the Union of Catholic Mothers. This was placed at John 15, the speech to his disciples where Jesus tells them that 'this is my commandment, that ye love one another as I have loved you'.

My mother tells me that those words from John 15 – 'love one another as I have loved you' – were Nana's final words to her children as they surrounded her hospital bedside.

* * *

As a historian, I can contextualize the objects in Nana's Bible within a wider narrative of female devotion in a rapidly changing world. Reading Alana Harris's *Faith in the Family*, a study of modern lay English Catholicism mainly based on evidence from the Diocese of Salford – *our* diocese – I came the closest I have ever come to seeing my background reflected in modern British historiography. I can only imagine it being like a working-class scholarship boy reading Richard Hoggart in the 1950s: the feeling that someone, finally, sort of gets it. But no number of footnotes could capture the meaning of this book, either to my grandmother or to me. Holding it, I am not just a historian. I am, first, a daughter: the daughter of Marjorie's daughter, and the receiver of first Holy Communion at the very altar she had fundraised to buy. As such, I choose to believe that Marjorie, as she did everything, placed these markers in her Bible deliberately *for me*, each one conversing with the passages next to them to tell a story of continuity amidst change: of female determination alongside subjugation; of joy and sorrow, comfort, ageing and the necessity of death; a story, above all, of mothers and daughters.

18

Telling Stories through My Granny's Cookery Books

Lucinda Matthews-Jones

Patricia Matthews-Jones (1921–2019), née Baker, would be surprised to be the subject of this short chapter. The life-stories she recounted to me, her granddaughter, centred on her much-loved father, William, and her husband, Bobby. In 2003, when I was an undergraduate student, I tried to interview her for a women's history assignment but was left frustrated by her inability to express much about herself outside of the confines of the men in her life. In hindsight, I should have been more thoughtful about how to encourage my tweed-skirted, cardigan-wearing granny to open up about her life. I should have chatted to her in the kitchen as she cooked. I should, as it turns out, have asked about her cookery book collection, but by then these books had been placed under the stairs or stuffed in kitchen drawers. It was only a chance discussion with her about my own enjoyment of cooking, almost fifteen years later, that led her to show me some of her eclectic collection of cookery books and for me to claim them as my own, much to her amusement. When she died in 2019, I inherited more of these books, and they became – for me – treasured mementos. A chance to reconnect with my granny in my grief. I returned to them again for the comfort and homeliness they offered me when we entered the first COVID lockdown in 2020.

Like countless other women of her generation, my granny lived an ordinary life. She did not leave a diary, letters, or memoir. Still, through her cookery books, she created a messy personal archive. My family did not think to look here for clues about her life, being neither interested in cooking nor in storing these strange, dirty, dusty objects. My granny assumed that no one else would want them when she gave them to me. Nevertheless, it was my granny's use of them as a personal living space that has helped me to turn them into a treasured memento of her life. It does not matter to me that she rarely used some of the recipes in the collection. My granny was a caring woman, but she was not emotionally vocal about her feelings. She therefore wrapped herself up in expressing her love in finding recipes to feed her family. I find her cookbooks to be familial-centred love tokens. This is certainly a love language that I have inherited. They also invite me to have a connection to someone I greatly loved and admired. They allow me to evoke memories and to tell stories of how my granny physically used her cookery books: the way that, when she was unsure of a measurement or needed to check something, she would head to one of her kitchen drawers, open the cookbook,

and perch it on the edge of the worksurface. I remember how her finger would move over the page, her head moving, and then slam the book and the kitchen draw shut in swift movement.

I can even tell her life-story through them. My granny was born in the Norfolk seaside town of Cromer in 1921 and lived in a seafront house built and partially designed by her father. A childhood accident left her bedbound for a year and unable to walk unaided for the rest of her life. This did not stop her from becoming the family cook as a young teenager. Her mother, my great-grandmother Dorothea, who had been a nurse in the First World War, decided that she was no good at household management and, unusually for a middle-class married woman, worked as a night nurse. In doing so, my granny became the daughter-housewife. The largest number of the published books in her collection come from the 1930s and 1940s, when cookery books must have been a teaching aid for her. I'm left intrigued by how these cookery books tell a story of her self-training to become a proficient cook. Their hole-punched left corners invite me to imagine her, as a young woman, reaching out to use them to guide her. I enjoy the sensation of knowing that she once looked over the recipe like I do.

There are three early cookery books from this period that stand out for me. First, my granny put together and crafted her own recipe book when a teenager. She collected recipes in a little *"Holway" Private Recipe Book No. 9*.[1] This recipe book was published in Scarborough. This connects her to her mother's family who originated from this Yorkshire seaside town. The embossed stamp at the front places the recipe book firmly at her parents' Cromer house. As someone who lives some distance away from my family, I smile to see how this cookery book knits places and families together. Similarly, this self-made recipe book provides clues to what my granny regularly cooked, with it falling open on a brownish, splattered page showing beef chops under the section 'Meat, Games, and Poultry'. My granny's sweet tooth is shown here, too. It is the 'cake and pastry' and 'Jellies, Creams and Ices' sections that brim with the most recipes. Second, the thirty-second edition of *The Main Cookery Book*, published in March 1937, stands out.[2] The book's inscription at the front shows that my granny's own 'Grannie / Agnes Wilkinson' gave it to her on 22 August 1937, when she was sixteen years old. Covered in what looks like grease proof paper, the spine is broken. Pages are starting to fall out. This book is well-used. A PDSA bookmark dating from the 2000s suggests that it was an object returned to by my granny well into her later life. It suggests that, like me, my granny returned to a cookery book provided by her grandmother. It helps me to imagine that I am connected to a wider female line.

The third book that draws my attention is the 1 shilling *Daily Express War Time Cookery Book*.[3] When I first saw this book, I thought it might be a 'heritage'-style cookbook that joined many others in her collection, rather than a book purchased in 1939 and used during the wartime period. It was only when I checked the date that I realized that she in fact used this cookbook during the Second World War. I should have known that it was unlikely to be a reprint or homage. My granny rarely, if ever, discussed the war as it was understood to be a negative emotional register for my grandad. But, even if they chose not to talk about the war, it seems that my granny carried over some of the wartime dishes that she cooked in the 1940s into her post-war life. The page to which this cookery book falls open is 163, where at the bottom is

a recipe for 'milk jelly'.[4] This was a pudding that she made my dad and siblings when we visited her for more formal summer teas. Personally, it seems incredible to think that this 1939 wartime recipe was still gracing her dining table in the 1990s. The black-and-white recipe can evoke such childlike wonder even today, because, while I cannot remember the taste, I adored, as a young child, that it was pink and made in her rabbit-shaped jelly mould.

After the war, my granny left Cromer and became a beautician at Selfridges department store in London. My grandparents met at a residential hotel where she stayed during this time. At twenty-nine, she married my grandfather in Paddington, London. Thereafter she became a full-time housewife. Subsequently her cookbook collection grew to include a 1950 edition of the *Good Housekeeping's Picture Cookery*.[5] I am drawn to this cookery book not for the recipes, but for how she turned it into a treasure chest protecting paper fragments that can be so easily lost and discarded. The cover page holds fragments of papers that include a recipe for hot cross buns, a del Monte peach slices label, a leaflet on Danish ham, a recipe for fish pie topped with bubble and squeak, and an old double newspaper spread about cakes and sweets. I often smile at these fragments because they remind me that my granny was a hoarder. On other occasions, however, I stop and linger longer. It is when I stumble on her distinctive handwriting, and her preference for blue ink, that a heightened emotional response emerges. Handwritten fragments invite me to reach out, to gently touch the paper. My attachment to my granny's handwriting goes some way to explaining why my favourite cookery book is homemade. Towards the end of her life, it was her handwritten cookery books that I remember her using the most. She never wasted anything. She repurposed an old exercise book that she used when she was fifteen years old by tearing out some front pages. She would stick in printed and handwritten recipes.

Even though this cookery book collection speaks of who my granny was, there are also objects of discomfort and areas of absence for me in it. No matter how hard I look, I cannot find the many dishes that I remember my granny cooking for me as a child. I feel that I may have failed in my duty as her granddaughter to know our family's food, even if it was she who invented our family food traditions. When I was eighteen, I asked for the recipe of a fish dish my granny would make with sweetcorn and savoury scones in a white sauce. She wrote it down for me in blue pen on lined paper. I do not remember when I lost or misplaced this slip of paper, but I still feel a quiet shame that I did so. This incident not only reminds me of the fragility of paper fragments inherited, but also the limits of cookery books when the cook is no longer there to navigate their pages. Similarly, my granny's role as food care giver was never a point of discussion between us. If she resented her domestic role, she did not show it to me as her granddaughter, but maybe there are times when her cookery books speak a story that no matter how much I try to hear, I simply cannot. I often wonder when I look at these books; am I the right custodian of this collection? Are they important or relevant enough to be saved by future generations when I am gone? At other times, I wonder, if I am over romanticizing these cookery books and their potentials. I cannot help but wonder what happens when my memoires no longer animate them and what that means for my granny.

Instead, I will continue to tell a story to myself of her commitment to nourish her family. Even if I cannot cook the dishes that were laid on the dining table during my childhood, my granny's cookbooks are the physical anchors of the food stories and rituals my paternal family regularly share. It does not matter that she rarely used some of the recipes in the collection. She wrapped herself up in expressing her love in finding them and storing them. I express my love for my granny in inheriting them. My granny was amused by my decision to take the books, but they were emotional objects enough for her to not throw away. I get to sit with my memories and stories in joy and awe by becoming their custodian. My granny's cookbooks vibrate with meaning for me. Like her, I turn to an array of cookery books to do this, and I am truly grateful for this food legacy.

Notes

1 *The "Holway" Private Recipe Book No. 9* (Scarborough: Albert Holloway, np).
2 Maguerite K. Gompertz, *The Main Cookery Book* (London: R & A Main, Ltd., 1937).
3 *Daily Express War Time Cookery Book* (London: A Daily Express Publication, 1940).
4 Ibid., 163.
5 *Good Housekeeping Picture Cookery* (London: The National Magazine Company Ltd., 1950).

Re-producing National Stories

19

Family, Community and Nation

Understanding Identity through the History and Heritage of the Blue Mountains of Australia

Tanya Evans

This chapter reveals how Blue Mountains' communities have memorialized the history of their area since the late nineteenth century and what affective relationships have been forged in this process.[1] It will show how local women's passions for history and heritage cemented their families' legacies and longstanding contributions to their local communities and how locals built on their passions by sharing and preserving these histories. Using Laurajane Smith's work I define heritage as 'a process of engagement, an act of communication and an act of making meaning in and for the present'. This is both a social and a cultural process that crystallizes the significance of the uses of the past in the present.[2] This chapter focuses on the process of making history in the Blue Mountains drawing on interviews, survey responses and focus groups with family, local and community historians, and on two material culture collections and homes inherited and preserved by the Blue Mountains Historical Society and the National Trust. I will show how acts of making meaning in the home, the transfer of stories and objects between different generations of families and their eventual preservation in public spaces, continue to produce passionate encounters between the past and present.

How was an Authorized Heritage Discourse produced in the Mountains?

As cultural heritage scholar Laurajane Smith suggests, our knowledge of heritage has long been dominated, mostly unreflexively, by a very specific Western discourse. This is the 'Authorized Heritage Discourse' (AHD) that normalizes our understandings of what is heritage and privileges particular voices and approaches to the past in public, with a focus on the lives and the objects associated with the privileged elite not the poor, men rather than women, and white people rather than people of colour. These voices

and approaches have profoundly shaped cultural heritage in diverse national contexts and remain powerful today.[3] The 'discourse takes its cue from the grand narratives of nation and class on the one hand, and technical expertise and aesthetic judgement on the other'. National museums were established as sites for the creation of national identity alongside the rise of the nation-state in the nineteenth century. Museums also became tools of the nation-state both defining and regulating national identity and appropriate classed behaviour through governmentality.[4] These 'nationalizing discourses' also came to 'underlie the discipline of archaeology and history' as they were forged within academic contexts in the late nineteenth century.[5] This process marginalized women in the production of historical knowledge and professionalized the discipline within the tertiary sector. As a result, consumers of heritage the world over have been inculcated to concentrate their cultural gaze on grand houses and monuments rather than more modest dwellings, denying the value and significance of intangible cultural heritage in the process.[6] But what other kinds of history and heritage work play out in regional, rather than metropolitan, contexts?

Many locals and visitors to the UNESCO World Heritage Area of the Blue Mountains in New South Wales, ninety minutes' drive west of Sydney, Australia, are unaware of the diverse histories that impact on present-day communities, including the area's industrial past. While many Australian people accept the AHD that privileges national narratives of colonial settlement and white exploration without question or reflection on its impact on First Nations peoples or working-class populations, research has shown that most Australian citizens enjoy engaging with history on a personal level – enjoying an intimate connection to the past, learning about the social history of the marginalized.[7] This leads some to use these intimate, more vernacular and emotionally present histories to challenge the AHD produced by nation states and wealthy elites. This chapter will reveal how some Blue Mountains locals have used family history and heritage as 'a tool of opposition and subversion' since the mid-twentieth century.[8] It shows the potential of family and local history to challenge AHD more radically in the present and future, and the productive outcomes of passionate encounters with the past on a local and regional level. It takes its cue from a number of cultural heritage scholars and public history practitioners, including Dolores Hayden who has played with the politically subversive possibilities of heritage in her work in urban communities in Los Angeles.[9] Smith reminds us, using Wertsch's work on memory, that remembering, like the creation of heritage, is an active process, not static. The past is continuously recreated in the present, with new things, new spaces and new people.[10] I want to encourage historians and heritage practitioners to work with regional communities to make people better aware of the historical and social construction of spaces and places and the emotional and political uses and meanings attached to them.

In a recent photo essay, Vanessa Whittingdon used Smith's work to identify the AHD produced by white male colonial settlers and explorers in the lower Blue Mountains. She argues that this discourse works to exclude Aboriginal inhabitants and women of all cultural backgrounds in the present-day mountains. In her article, she identifies the different ways statues and memorials in the lower Blue Mountains revere white male settlers and explorers such as Blaxland, ignoring the impact of white settlement on the local Dharug and Gundungarra population. As an anti-colonial woman and critic of

nationalist discourse, she hopes that a focus on her personal heritage and engagement with her garden as a cultural space enables her to critique masculine heritage and privilege her woman-centred perspective, encouraging others to do the same.[11] This chapter expands on forgotten women's histories of the mountains and highlights the value and significance of local family stories and objects displayed at Tarella Cottage and Woodford Academy for national histories.

Tourism

A focus on tourism – the Blue Mountains' most important industry, following the expansion of the railway in the late nineteenth century – has depoliticized the mountains. As public historians involved with an Australian Research Council Linkage project examining the history and heritage of abandoned shale mining sites in the Megalong and Jamison Valleys, our team of historians, archaeologists and heritage consultants are committed to inserting the history of working-class people, including Aboriginal people, women and children, back into the mountains.

As the literature suggests, settler colonial nations have tended to focus on the natural environment rather than built colonial heritage when representing their national histories, obscuring the racial conflict and theft of land that resulted in their settlement. The Blue Mountains Cultural Centre in Katoomba certainly foregrounds the spectacular scenery of the mountains, rather than its local history. The valorization of white male settlers by the local tourist industry began in the late nineteenth century when tourists were first attracted to the Mountains, and this memory of settlement and discovery remains powerful today. Survey responses and focus group interviews with locals on the representation of the history of the Blue Mountains suggest the same emphasis is in evidence everywhere today. Robyne Ridge, former high school history teacher, is vice president of the Blue Mountains Historical Society in Wentworth Falls, and she writes a monthly historical article for the *Blue Mountains Gazette*. She remains surprised with 'what little people (who read the *Gazette*) seem to know about the mountains' history'.[12] I led a focus group at the Blue Mountains Historical Society in March 2023, which included Robyne Ridge, Ross Ingram, treasurer of the Society, and Brian Fox, former cartographer, local bush walker, researcher and author. All have enjoyed active membership of this vibrant local historical society for over a decade.[13] They suggest that non-locals have mainly understood the Blue Mountains as a route to richer pastures or as a short-term holiday destination. Most locals, without an explicit interest in history, are not interested in the area's past at all.

When settler history has been the focus of local history exhibitions this has, until recently, been celebratory, male, 'explorer' and 'pioneer' and focused on the 'first' Blue Mountains crossing in 1813 and the 'Explorers Tree'. The 'explorers' Blaxland, Wentworth and Lawson supposedly carved their initials in the tree before completing their crossing.[14] If locals know anything about the history of the mountains today, it is usually a brief history of the journey which was marked by the tree.[15] The 1880s were a key decade in the creation of nationalist settler narratives across Australia and the Crossing of the Blue Mountains played a major part in this myth-making.[16] The

Explorers Blaxland, Lawson and Wentworth have been memorialized not just in this controversial tree, but in the names of towns, settlements, streets, houses and landscape markers across the Blue Mountains.[17]

In February 2023, I interviewed John Low who was the Local Studies Librarian for the Blue Mountains from 1982 until his retirement in 2007. John also sat on the Heritage Advisory Committee of the Blue Mountains Council until 2022 (having joined from 2013/2014). There are few locals as knowledgeable about the Blue Mountains past as John, who was responsible for establishing and growing the excellent Local Studies section at Springwood Library from 1982. He surfed a wave of growing enthusiasm for public and local libraries as library associations became very active across Sydney and the NSW regions in the 1970s and 1980s. John suggests that funding for the Bicentenary celebrations in 1988 increased interest in and knowledge of the value of local history in the mountains.[18] Despite this enthusiastic growth of family and local history, locals like John remain concerned that it is hard to find histories of Blue Mountains' women and they hope new research might reveal it.[19] Using the two case studies of Tarella Cottage and Woodford Academy I will show how local women from the mid-twentieth century worked hard to share their passion for the past using family and local history. Through their work with local historical societies these women conserved and celebrated history to challenge the historical invisibility of women and the regions. This is one way in which women have used the inheritance of family history and material culture to make their mark on the local environs of the Blue Mountains. Passionate advocates working for local museums and historical organizations are continuing their work and ensuring their memories and the political impact of that memory work is not lost for present and future generations.

Tarella Cottage and the Blue Mountains Historical Society

The Blue Mountains Historical Society has encouraged diverse historical engagement with the mountains' past since its establishment in 1946.[20] A historic house museum, Tarella Cottage, sits adjacent to the Blue Mountains Historical Society's headquarters, library and archives. Open on the last Sunday of each month, it attracts around 30–40 visitors per month. Volunteers suggest that most visitors do not know the Cottage's history but are broadly interested in regional and local history.[21] Displays within the Cottage focus on the lives of its owners, including John McLaughlin, a Sydney solicitor and local politician who constructed the home as a holiday retreat for his family escaping Sydney's hot summers. He was granted the land for service in the NSW Volunteer Force in 1879. Construction on the house began in 1886 and concluded after the First World War.[22] The reason the cottage survives today is due to the efforts of his daughter Beryl who grew up in Waverley.

After schooling at Claremont College, Beryl studied science at the University of Sydney, graduating in 1910. She worked as a teacher in several North Shore private schools before the war and afterwards returned to Sydney University to study architecture in the first year the degree was offered to women, graduating in 1922 to earn a living. She never married, which some suggest was due to the death of a sweetheart

and close friend of her brother Geoffrey. Having survived Gallipoli, Geoffrey perished as the result of a gas attack at Passchendaele on 4 November 1917. He was awarded the Military Cross. Ross Ingram told me, while touring the Cottage, that contemporary members of the Society suspect that both siblings might have been 'gay'. Their father suffered from heart disease, dying intestate in February 1918. His entire estate, valued at 4,191 pounds was granted to his eldest son, John. Beryl's dastardly elder brother remained a cause celebre for much of his professional life. He was convicted of both fraud and larceny and declared bankrupt several times.[23] John took over his deceased father's estate, selling all the family's Sydney-based homes to cover his debts and forcing his mother and sisters, Beryl and Ida, to live in the family's tiny weatherboard holiday home in the mountains. A later neighbour of Beryl's recollected that her resentment towards her elder brother never waned.[24] She commuted from Wentworth Falls by train, while working as a junior architect for Henry White until the Depression hit in 1933, when she left her job and moved to the mountains permanently.[25] Following her mother's death, Ida had married (the much older) Harold Kane in 1927. Beryl designed their new marital home in Leura. After Ida was widowed, she moved back in to live with Beryl at Tarella which Beryl had bought from her brother in 1937. The sisters moved to and from other local properties that Beryl designed and built, until Ida died, and Beryl moved reluctantly into a nursing home.

Active members of their local communities, Beryl and her elder sister became early patrons of the Blue Mountains Historical Society. Beryl cemented her association with the organization in 1955 when the Society was ousted from the Council chambers for its meetings, and the sisters offered the back room of their home as a potential meeting space. In 1968, they established a museum from the Society on the land. Beryl, unmarried and childless, bequeathed the cottage and its attached land to the Society on her death.[26] As Ingram suggests, the continued survival of the house means that Beryl 'will live on forever'.[27] It might be safe to assume that Beryl was well aware of the history she was making when passing on her stories and possessions to the Society. The Society undertook an oral history interview with Beryl when she was resident in a Leura nursing home in 1987 at the age of ninety-nine, recording parts of her life-story and her association with the Society.[28] Beryl died just before she turned 100 at the Martin Claver Nursing Home and was buried with her family in Waverly Cemetery.[29] In her will she bequeathed the property to the Blue Mountains Historical Society 'with power to the said Trustees to maintain the same as the Museum or repository for the historical records of the said Society or otherwise use the same for the general purposes of the Society'. To her niece Elizabeth McLaughlin, daughter of her late nephew, John McLaughlin, Beryl bequeathed all her jewellery. Other beneficiaries included the Wentworth Falls Country Club, the RSPCA, the Anti-TB Association of NSW, the Sydney Rescue Work Society, the Royal Blind Society, the Council on the Ageing for the Blue Mountains Meals on Wheels, eleven named female friends and Stan her gardener, the Trustee of her will, with additional cash for her niece.[30]

Tarella is a small wooden cottage, with little rooms, containing a tiny second storey with two small bedrooms. The downstairs living rooms are filled with Beryl's and bits of the family's belongings. A separate kitchen has a working fire where scones are cooked for Sunday visitors.[31] Beryl studied pottery after graduating with her first

degree and there are examples of her intricate work on display. Current vice president of the society, Robyne Ridge suggests that the house has focused a little too much on the life-story of Beryl's brother Geoffrey, the war hero, largely neglecting Beryl's legacy in the process. It is only in the last two years or so that Beryl's life-story has been emphasized and highlighted.[32] In a detailed, excellent website recounting the history of Tarella and its residents, Beryl is placed at the bottom of a long list of McLaughlin family members, which is unfortunate considering that the sole reason the cottage survives today is due to her efforts and bequest.[33] Robyne Ridge is a passionate advocate for Beryl and has worked hard nominating Beryl and Tarella for a Blue Plaque, but with no success so far.[34] The NSW's government's 'Blue Plaques Program aims to bring to life the extraordinary people and events that shaped the history of NSW. It is designed for our citizens to learn about the history of their local region'. Thirty-five have been granted since June 2021 when the scheme began.[35] Robyne's nomination details Beryl's assiduous work on behalf of the Wentworth Falls local community, especially during the Second World War, and her passion for local history and its place in the history of the Australian nation. As Robyne states, 'We remember Beryl (and her sister Ida) because of this magnificent Mclaughlin donation that supports our history.'[36]

In the cottage, there are cupboards filled with Beryl's personal belongings, including her pottery, and the various accoutrement of mid-twentieth-century domestic life. Such objects that survive in personal collections and move to displays in local and regional museums are used to tell stories about the Blue Mountains past. Most of the objects at Tarella, like most objects in local museums in the region, focus on the spectacular scenery of the mountains. The ceramic displays that fill the shelves at Tarella represent Blue Mountains' scenery. Anne Coote has counted them all: out of the 158 souvenir ceramics on display in the cottage all but seven display images of natural scenes such as waterfalls, the Three Sisters, valley views. Exceptions included the Lithgow Small Arms Factory, Echo Point Lookout, Leura Mall, Leura from the railway station, a snow scene, Blackheath Swimming Pool and Insignia of the Palais Royale.

Museums across the world were transformed in the 1960s and 1970s as the tertiary sector expanded, social history became more popular, and the GLAM sector expanded their audiences. This was especially the case in metropolitan areas but less so in rural and regional parts of Australia. Nonetheless, a renewed interest in Australian history and increased passion for the past among 'ordinary' Australians allowed lots of smaller museums to flourish, as people, working outside the structures of the state, became enthused by projects of memorialization.[37] New museology sometimes confronted 'traditional' curatorial emphases and the regulatory functions of the museums set up in the service of the nation-state, as discussed briefly at the beginning of this chapter. Local museums came to thrive as sites of community meaning-making but were, and are, often managed by independent volunteers on shoestring budgets. Museums across NSW have predominantly been established by historical society members and are housed in heritage buildings like Tarella and Woodford Academy as discussed in this chapter. They rely on enthusiastic and supportive local volunteers and benefactors to survive and thrive.[38] Regional museums in NSW are guided by the umbrella organization Museums and Galleries NSW but resources are severely limited.[39] More

resources targeted at cultural heritage from the state and federal government might make a significant impact on local tourism and the Blue Mountains' economy.

Regional museums thrive best when managed in partnership with community members. Laurajane Smith has suggested that museums and sites memorializing the global industrial past are more likely to appeal to working-class visitors and those with an emotional and political investment in these sites. Family histories are often significant in the production and consumption of these sites and visitors' readings and experiences of engagement with heritage and history can be emotionally impactful and transformative. This means that the political work of local and regional museum management of cultural heritage has the potential to be much more radical than that of naturally conservative national museums.[40] After engaging with local museums across the Blue Mountains I want to suggest that there is much potential to build on the radical, innovative creative work in the Blue Mountains Museum sector.

Most of my survey respondents and focus group participants want more people, locals and tourists, to know about the valuable labour and legacies of local women. When working as the Council's Local Studies librarian, John Low was well aware of women's important contributions to local and family history societies. While most local societies were headed by men, he was certain that much of the 'real' work was undertaken by women as secretaries. He wants people to understand that better knowledge of local history gives people a richer sense of place; it 'anchors them' in their present lives.[41] Low is not alone among locals passionate about history, heritage, and environment in the Mountains.

As I have suggested in previous publications, women within families, especially if they were childless, have long used family history, material culture and their passion for local history to make their mark on the historical record. Women's roles within their family cultural economies were rarely passive.[42] I have also written about the meanings of the material culture that families brought with them from Britain to colonial Australia. The preservation of family stories and objects across the generations often lay in the hands of women, mothers, daughters and often those daughters who did not marry and have children of their own.[43] I continue that work here, drawing attention to how the labour and legacies of local mountains' women have made a quiet and significant mark on local history in the mountains. Despite their passion, efforts and enthusiasm, however, much of this history remains invisible to most. These Blue Mountains women are key to this process of meaning-making, revealing the value of their often-invisible labour within their families and communities. Their work as powerhouses of their local communities is revealed in the transfer of their domestic stories and belongings to public spaces and display and disseminated by locals who share similar passions for the past.

Woodford Academy and the National Trust

Another historic property, the earliest built house in the mountains, situated on the main road through the mountains and well known to most locals, but barely known to others, is Woodford Academy.[44] One of my survey respondents Kate O'Neill has

lived in the Blue Mountains since the mid-1990s and is currently employed at the City Recital Hall in Sydney while undertaking her qualifications in museum and heritage studies. She has a deep passion for local and public history and is keen to share this with others. She particularly loves the National Trust property Woodford Academy that most motorists barely glance at as they speed through the mountains. I travelled to and from the mountains many times before my research for this chapter, and Kate's survey response encouraged me to visit this charming property.

This site has been a school, pub, guesthouse and private residence since it was established in 1832, and it holds a variety of objects dating from the 1890s.[45] The property was bequeathed to the National Trust in 1979 by John McManamey's sole surviving daughter Gertrude. Here we see another woman committed to using history and heritage to reveal the hidden labour of women through the preservation of family stories and objects. A Classics scholar, her father had leased the building in 1907 to open a school for boys. When it shut in 1936, it became the family home.[46] John McManamey encouraged his students to make their mark on the world and to think carefully about their legacies. John's wife, Henrietta, and their two daughters, Jessie and Gertrude, helped care for the schoolboys. Henrietta had worked as a schoolteacher and governess before she married. The McManamey girls, who were educated alongside the schoolboys, also went on to teach at the school before it closed. Henrietta died in 1913 at the age of forty-three. Tragically killed as he crossed the road outside the house in 1946, John left the property to his unmarried daughters. Jessie died in 1972. Gertrude's bequest of her home to the National Trust in 1979 was on condition she could live there until her death. She resided in the five stone rooms of the original 1834 inn until she moved to hospital in 1986. She died in 1988.

Woodford Academy had been close to closure, due to low visitor numbers, but user engagement and visitation to the site has increased dramatically in recent years. Recent shifts in display and curation have focused on integrating the community with considerable success. The Academy's unique dedicated Aboriginal Interpretative Room explores the region'sindigenous art, culture and history through the work of Darug Elder Chris Tobin. The property also houses an excellent volunteer-run café selling delicious cakes, along with a book and gift stall. It is now understood to encompass 'non-traditional' approaches to display, including local, contemporary art site-specific work, initiated by Elizabeth Burgess and Jacqueline Spedding and continued through an Artist in Residence program managed by Beata Geyer. Their painstaking efforts have clearly helped forge a strong sense of community among artists and local community members in the mountains, especially as artists and other creative workers fled Sydney with the rise in property prices and increased rent costs. Community effort has been mostly voluntary, and the property, like many others, is crying out for financial resources.[47] Kate suggests this site has the potential to teach us much about the history of women in the mountains. A short video on display in the house includes a late-in-life interview with Gertrude.[48] The women's history of the site has been a recent focus of Kate's research, especially the role of women running the guesthouse at Woodford house.[49] She suggests that while we now understand the upper mountains to be the major site of the mountain's tourism industry, Kate thinks more people should be made aware of the fascinating history and heritage of the lower mountains. The collaboration

between the National Trust, its hard-working volunteers, local artists and creatives at Woodford Academy has clearly been productive.

Local museums and libraries remain important sites of civic purpose in the mountains, and elsewhere. They are the 'beating heart of their communities'.[50] John Low understood his role to be collaborative and communicative throughout his career and continues this work in retirement. He believed that it was important to network with local historical societies and organizations to do his job successfully. As is the case with many local and community historical societies, however, rivalries rather than collaboration, can complicate local relationships leading to poorer outcomes for members, locals and visitors. Brian Fox spoke of the insularity of Blue Mountains towns until the 1920s. However, the same holds true today with a clear distinction between communities that live in the upper versus the lower mountains. Ingram suggested that the cultural heritage organizations and historical societies in the region are 'not an integrated group'. The Blue Mountains Association of Cultural Heritage Organisations (BMACHO) was constructed as an umbrella group in April 2006 trying to bring all these organizations together. Members think that in theory it is a great organization but feel that it does not work particularly well in practice. The National Trust and the Blue Mountains Historical Society do not share members and volunteers for example.[51] Although, collectively, those interviewed for this project believe that things are getting better – there are town planners now very interested in history and heritage for example – John Low remains concerned by the same dreary stories being repeated by local tourist businesses and the Council.

The Council and related history organizations might be better served by highlighting more diverse histories of the area's past. Local and community historians find the process of the historical resurrection of ordinary people and local history empowering both for their ancestors and themselves. Histories produced within families and later valued by local museums have the potential to become part of the rich multicultural history of their nations. The memory-making undertaken by family and local historians allows these researchers to use their personal histories to insert themselves and their families into wider historical narratives from which they have been excluded up to now.

Beryl McLaughlin and Gertrude McMannamey are fine examples of the gendered practice of constructing and sharing family stories.[52] Gloyn and her co-authors have shown us that, 'contemporary gendered practices of family archiving and memory processes have long historical roots'. They suggest 'that this strong gendered nature of different archival practices is part of the reason why informal and family archives tend to remain undervalued within the historical discipline'.[53] It is important that organizations and institutions that survive today due to the contributions of such archives, value their creators' efforts appropriately. Tarella and Woodford have energetic and enthusiastic volunteers working hard on their preservation and displays but Tarella could emphasize the history of Beryl a little more and Woodford could display Gertrude's role in the house's legacy more emphatically. The Blue Mountains Historical Society and local National Trust volunteers are doing excellent work, but they need support, and if they worked collaboratively, the history of women in the mountains might come through more coherently.

While they are all keen to better represent the history of women and Aboriginal people in the area, the history of the area's working class remains undocumented and not represented. Both Beryl and Gertrude were relatively affluent women compared with the miners' wives and related service-workers our research project is mostly focused on. Our team of researchers hope to integrate the history of the working class as a group, including working-class women and children and Aboriginal people, and to share the history we produce in a local historical walking tour. Most of the ARC team, driven by their work in public history, are motivated by their politics and intent on examining class, race and gender in history. Museums need to matter to local communities, to represent their diversity and to help build healthy, inclusive communities. The Blue Mountains community knows very little about the area's industrial past. Even people who visit Scenic World, one of NSW's most popular tourist destinations, remain blissfully unaware of the area's mining history despite it being marked and represented on the valley floor.[54] The forgotten labour history of the mountains has much potential for drawing thousands more visitors to the mountains to stay, shop and spend which would have enormous economic, cultural and social benefits for the area.

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‘I Won’t Forget You, Love, When Your Time Is Up’

Re(dis)covering Emotion and Forging Family at Adelaide’s Destitute Asylum

Corinne Ball

A paper world

If, as noted by Lynette Finch, an idealized family was the lynchpin of social order in nineteenth-century Australia, what were the experiences of families and family members who fled, failed, or fell apart?[1] In colonial South Australia many people were forced by accident, circumstance or sheer bad luck to seek protection in the government-funded Destitute Asylum. The ideal migrant and citizen was ‘young, sober, and industrious’,[2] and so those who could not, or would not, meet these standards of morality, health or productivity were treated as burdens.

A residential care institution for nearly seventy years, the asylum housed the elderly, infirm, and destitute poor, as well as ‘unfortunate’ pregnant women: people who could not be cared for by their families, or who had no family at all. More ink flowed in the management of destitution among South Australia’s often unruly lower classes than some of those misfits might have used in a lifetime, leaving as evidence a wide-ranging collection that documents the colonial (later state) government-funded welfare system from the late 1830s to the early 1920s. There are volumes of registers charting the comings and goings at numerous institutions, one recording births at the central Asylum, and others that follows those (and other) babies through the Reformatories and Industrial Schools. These registers are supported by minute books, official correspondence, supplementary files, miscellaneous papers and annual reports. In this paper world, complex personal events were compressed into a few lines of handwriting, as the colony’s most vulnerable were judged, and often found wanting.

Today, all that remains of the Destitute Asylum are this voluminous collection of records, and half a dozen buildings, which now house the History Trust of South Australia’s Migration Museum. Since 2018, the museum has been a member of the International Coalition of Sites of Conscience, a network of historic sites, museums

and memorials that provide safe spaces to remember and preserve difficult memories.[3] The volumes and other records are cared for offsite by State Records of South Australia, while the museum has come to function as a different kind of archive, one dedicated to ending racism and promoting social justice.[4]

In this chapter I will explore how and why these complex, problematic records are interpreted at Adelaide's Migration Museum, how this interpretation transmits, and facilitates the transmission of, family inheritance, and how the Museum's work to tell the Destitute Asylum story moves the marginalized inheritances of the asylum to the forefront of our discourse, and from invisible to important. These inheritances include not just those of individual families but of the South Australian colonial family, and of an interconnected network of Destitute Asylum descendants.

Inheriting the Destitute Asylum

South Australia's Migration Museum, housed in the last surviving buildings of the Destitute Asylum, has been dedicated to telling the stories of South Australians since it opened in 1986. It has always had a permanent gallery that interprets the museum's buildings through their history as a school for Aboriginal children (1840s), as part of the Destitute Asylum (1850s–1918), and as home to the South Australian Government Chemist until 1978. However, the interpretation in this gallery has changed and evolved over the decades, as societal, academic, and individual understanding of this history have changed. As acknowledged by Viv Szekeres, the museum's second director, the arrival of the discipline of social history in museums democratized the industry in terms of the way curators engage with the public, ensuring the history of the poor, the dispossessed and the marginalized would be included.[5] Taking a 'history from the bottom' social history approach, the museum interprets the lives of ordinary people. As asserted by Sally Pharaon, senior director of Methodology and Practice of the International Coalition of Sites of Conscience, 'there is immense power in historic spaces, power that drives visitors to connect not only intellectually, but also emotionally and spiritually with stories of the past'.[6]

Embarking on a re-development of the gallery that addresses the history of the site, the three-person curatorial team (myself, then-director Mandy Paul and Dr Nikki Sullivan) wanted visitors to get 'under the skin' of Destitute Asylum life and enable them to forge meaningful connections with place and with people. We wanted to problematize the wider cultural narrative about the 'indigent poor', women, the working classes, those who have often been excluded from larger narratives of Australian colonial history. In this we recall the maxim that 'museums are not neutral', or, as Richard Harvey Brown and Beth Davis-Brown frame this, the collective memory in the archive and museum is a social political construction which signals our ability to criticize ourselves, unmask mechanisms of oppression, and ultimately strengthen our struggle to build a reflexive, democratic society.[7]

The colonial family – acceptance and abjection

The previous gallery iteration had very much been focused on the Lying-in Home aspect of the Destitute Asylum, which is understandable in that the Museum complex is all that has survived of that once vast collection of buildings. Our new interpretation, called *In This Place,* sought instead to explore the broader social welfare system, typified from the earliest days of South Australia as a colonial family.

The lieutenant-governor was head of this family, with his authority stemming from God and the Crown, and through him to fathers and husbands. The working classes looked up to their social 'betters', and down onto those at the very lowest point of this hierarchy: the 'indigent poor', those rejected for their immorality, and criminals.[8] Held in place by institutions and mechanisms of government that implicitly *and* explicitly classified them as 'others', these unwelcome, abjected groups formed the underside of the colonial ideal. Abjection, according to philosopher and cultural theorist Judith Butler, is a repudiation of a person or group, a rejection of them as valid social actors, which instead frames them as a threat, a cuckoo in the nest to be pushed out. The abjected reside metaphorically (and often physically) at the edges of society, and if the mainstream gets its way are completely excluded, being marked as unfit to inhabit its environs. As a result, they become less than, or in Butlerian terms, 'lives not worth saving'.[9]

As we undertook detailed archival research at State Records, it became apparent that the path to abjection in South Australia could be long or short, depending on one's luck as the European population surged to over 50,000 by 1850.[10] The Destitute Asylum records we examined are deeply ambivalent objects: while they reveal much about the lives of ordinary people, they are problematic as vital tools of the bureaucratic mechanism through which the colonial government's officers managed the nascent welfare system. The survival of these records is also thanks to their place in that rigidly structured system. The evidence we were able to glean from these documents allowed us to illuminate the often highly charged zone where lived experience clashed with the ideals of the settler life. A straightforward way to communicate this clash of ideas versus experience in-gallery was through The Game of Life, a snakes and ladders–type game delivered as a large decal on the floor, which uses examples of gains and losses from primary sources, to assist players to experience a version of precarity first-hand.

Using families as our focal point and narrative steppingstones, we selected four stories to examine the experiences of precarity and social injustice over time. These family units were the McNair children (representing the 1850s), the Hargreaves (two parents and four children representing the 1870s), Mabel Worley (an 'uncontrollable' child in the 1880s) and the Williamses (a single woman and her illegitimate sons in the 1900s). Members of these families were born at the asylum; died there; were sent out into service or to an industrial school, reformatory, or hulk from there; gave birth there. Many had their future decided in asylum buildings whether they were resident or not, embedding the buildings, and the welfare system, deep within their future family narrative.

Telling stories – archival, personal

A selection of Destitute Asylum records were reproduced digitally in-gallery to create visceral connections with visitors: put simply, we understood that it is more effective, and affective, to 'show not tell'. One letter is that from teenager Mabel Worley to the State Children's Department's Secretary in 1891, pleading for the return of her daughter. Mabel was a former State Child herself, who had been surrendered as 'uncontrollable' at fourteen. She was sent into service but returned to the asylum at sixteen, pregnant by her employer's son, and gave birth at the Destitute Asylum's Lying-in Home in 1888. In 1891 Mabel's daughter was removed from her due to Mabel's alleged immorality, so she penned a heartfelt letter begging for the child's return. Mabel wrote of her 'sincere regret at my past conduct towards you concerning my child (now in the State School) and I have no-one to blame but myself. The loss of her has well-nigh broken my heart'.[11]

The letter is rare documentary evidence of the human cost of these interventions on families deemed as less valid by the authorities: the price paid by the abjected. Mabel's desperation and guile leapt off the page to us, and we felt that seeing her handwriting, being able to enlarge it using the touchscreen, would increase the sense of intimacy, placing the visitor just over her shoulder. In this way we wanted to give 'insider' archival access to Mabel as the emotional subject.[12]

A parallel, low-tech method that harnessed the power of paper to create and sustain connections was re-producing Asylum documents as 'takeaways' that visitors can keep and reflect upon. One of these was the formal agreement that women like Mabel signed when entering the Lying-in Home. This placed them under the legal control of the Destitute Board, and under the practical control of the Home's matron, and included six months' compulsory residence, to enable the strict supervision thought necessary to support breastfeeding, promote infant survival, reduce infanticide and prevent baby-farming.[13] This document is also a popular handout at family history talks, giving visitors a direct link to their ancestors' experiences. Other 'takeaways' in the gallery include a postcard from unhappy foster child Ethel Bean to her mother, and a love letter between two girls, which was confiscated at the Girl's Reformatory at Magill.[14]

Presenting Elizabeth Fuchs's letter to her 'dearest love' Harriet Malthouse was important to us, inspired by curator Nikki Sullivan's ongoing work to 'queer the museum' and tell previously unseen, or entirely erased, LGBTIQ stories.[15] The letter hints at intimate relationships, types of family and kinds of community entirely at odds with the wider world at the time it was composed. Documenting one side of a passionate connection between two teenage girls, the letter described how 'Lizzie' was leaving the Reformatory while Harriet was to stay on. Distraught at being parted, Lizzie vowed, 'I won't forget you love when your time is up [*sic*] I will have a home ready for you dear' and imagined that they would be able to live together. But the dream was short-lived: both girls were sent out into service, Harriet close to the city, Elizabeth further away to the Adelaide Hills. Within a few years both were married, and their paths unlikely to cross again. The only token left of their love was the letter.

The archival memories of the Worleys, Fuchs and Malthouse stories were gleaned through curatorial research, but personal and family archives were also vital to the

gallery's genesis and final content. In the case of the McNairs and the Williamses, descendants brought their ancestors to our attention initially, as well as providing access to photos and documents kept within the family archive for generations. Other stories used in-gallery, including those of William Smith (the Armless Artist), destitute baby Ada Deare, and Annie Schar, Irish migrant girl, were supplemented by invaluable information, assistance and input from family members. In most cases staff and family shaped these stories together.

This willingness of families to share stories of the Asylum is relatively recent and reflects changes in private as well as public understanding of difficult histories, marginalized communities, and contested identities. Ronald D. Lambert interviewed numerous Australian convict descendants in 1999 and noted (citing Dulong) the rapidly changing role of genealogy 'from a means for validating lineage status claims into a heritage activity for restoring individual ancestors to living memory, without regard to rank'.[16] As Lambert infers, restoring ancestors to living memory means grappling with shameful pasts. Like the 'convict stain' of colonial Australia, residence, birth or connection to the Destitute Asylum was considered deeply shameful by South Australians.

We used oral history testimonies of this shame to reveal the stigma of abjection. Recorded in 1985, when South Australia was examining and redefining its history and ideas of citizenship due to the upcoming sesquicentenary of settlement, the words and voices of elderly citizens reclaim agency that their family did not have when they interacted with the Destitute Asylum system. Even receiving rations from there was a detested experience, as recalled by James Porter, who described how his mother 'hated' being on Destitute Board rations, and by Mary Waterman, who remembered how the Asylum staff made her feel inferior when she was a child claiming support: 'they sort of looked on the people, the poor people, and you were down below them'.[17]

As the interviews with Porter and Waterman show, the brush of the Asylum could be deeply felt decades after the interaction. However, in the intervening generations, something has shifted, and while descendant families have strong emotional connections to the Destitute Asylum, this is mediated through their interest in their relatives who were resident. A powerful representation of these connections is our babies' memorial.

A moving memorial

As part of our archival research for *In This Place* the curatorial team transcribed the names from the Asylum's *Register of Infants Born at the Lying-in Home*.[18] After compiling this list, we reflected that the final total of 1678 children seemed like a much larger and more significant number than we had expected, so we determined to find a way to visually represent this archival revelation. This search resulted in one of the most innovative and commented-upon aspects of the exhibition, a memorial installation bearing the name and birthdate of every child born in the Asylum (including stillborn) between 1880 and 1909. This piece, consisting of 1678 luggage tags that hang from a mesh structure mounted on the ceiling in the hallway between

Figure 20.1 Memorial to the 1678 Lying-in Home babies at the Migration Museum. Courtesy History Trust of South Australia, photographer Andre Castellucci.

the former matron's living and consulting rooms, conveys the sheer number of births, sparks curiosity and encourages learning. One visitor in 2017 compared the installation favourably to the memorials for children at Chernobyl and Yad Vashem museums.[19]

The tags also move when the door nearby opens, or when people walk under the piece. An unanticipated, but delightful, aspect of this design is being able to 'interact' with the babies by blowing gently upwards and making the cards move in response, an act described by one visitor on the Mothers' Day 2023 curator's tour as bringing the 'breath of life' to the children. This is particularly important in the case of the stillborn babies represented in the memorial, who were given a black edge to the bottom of their card, akin to a mourning notice. They are only known by their mother's surname, not being given forenames, birth certificates, or other official markers of personhood, for, as noted by Elizabeth Hallam and Jenny Hockey, Western practices relating to the prenatal deaths of infants are recent cultural innovations.[20] In South Australia, stillbirths were not required to be registered until the 1930s, meaning that the babies stillborn at the Destitute Asylum are recorded only in the *Register of Infants Born*, and in a memorial placed at West Terrace Cemetery in the late 2010s.[21] With these changes in cultural practice in mind, our representation of pre- and perinatal death has become more important than had been anticipated, as we do more and more research on the Asylum cohort. Our memorial brings into focus the illegitimate, lost and otherwise abjected babies of the Destitute Asylum, and challenges their erasure from the broader narrative of South Australian colonial history by including them as worthy of remembering and remembrance.

Performing the Destitute Asylum: Building a new family

In 2016 and 2018, the curatorial team went even further to re-enact and inscribe family and community remembrance when we performed in-gallery readings of the Lying-in Home babies' names. These solemn events aimed to create even deeper feeling around our memorial installation in the gallery. By spending considerable time with the babies as a cohort the curatorial team aimed to inspire empathy for these long-abjected persons. *Feeling* was key. Professor Laurajane Smith, who examines heritage as a cultural process of meaning and memory-making, writes that 'it is this ability to feel, particularly when dealing with contentious or dissonant issues, that is often central to the development of critical and progressive insights into the past and its meanings for the present'.[22]

Our performances were emotionally and physically gruelling experiences for presenters and audience: reading 1678 names out loud takes well over an hour. After both events, when we had sore muscles and dry throats, we received feedback that told us our interpretation of the *Register of Infants Born* had been successful as an act of historical re-enactment, what scholar Vanessa Agnew calls 'affective history'.[23] Agnew defines this as historical representation that both takes affect as its object and attempts to elicit it. We knew *we* had experienced the performance as something special, so it was a delight to understand that our audience had as well. One asylum descendant and attendee, Kate, wrote that the 2016 performance 'was a great idea, beautifully

and simply executed. You must all be exhausted today. I thought the event had a real solemnity to it [and I] loved sitting and listening to all those names and wondering about their destinies'.[24] Kate's comment reminds us of Agnew's assertion that affective history is less concerned with events, processes or structures than with the individual's physical and psychological experience during the performance.

Three generations of one family attended the 2016 performance to acknowledge and process their own contested family history. Visitor M explained how our reading had a very real transformative effect on her family story, and on the emotional connections between the present and the past. She

> Looked across at my 79-year-old mother when her dad's name was called. It was a very emotional moment, and for my daughter it was also touching: this was her great grandfather that she hadn't ever met but now she knew a bit about. It was a grounding moment for mum, myself, and my daughter [. . .] and cleansed some of the tarnish of the past.[25]

Another powerful demonstration of empathy and affective response was noticed during the 2018 recitation. Every time a stillborn baby's name was read out, a visitor crossed herself and appeared to whisper a prayer. Given that, in Catholic theology, unbaptized babies were long considered to be in Limbo, we theorized that this woman was interceding on their behalf; for her, in that moment, those little souls were utterly real and their salvation was of desperate importance.

Returning to Butler's concept of abjection, this work we have done with our audiences has brought to light the abjected persons that the South Australian colony disavowed yet could not exist without. The bodies of the Lying-in Home women and babies are forever tied to the regulatory norms of colonial society, and serve, as Butler notes, as the 'constitutive outside of the domain of the subject' (the colonial state).[26] In our performances, both shaped by and shaping our physical inheritance of the Destitute Asylum buildings, we asked visitors to consider the babies *and* themselves as connected across space and time in the museum. Affectively and effectively, performing and experiencing performance in this previously regulatory space destabilizes the outsider status of the names and therefore lives being represented.[27]

Looking for answers

As well as being a space of interpretation and performance, the museum's curators have a significant role in continuing and facilitating the transmission of family stories and inheritances. Ongoing work with Destitute Asylum descendants is continuous, as enquiries, comments, and questions come to the museum from near and far almost weekly. These give insight into how descendants digest and process facts into narratives, and of the frustrations they experience in their research. Rose wrote asking for assistance in finding a missing half-sibling of her great-grandmother, trying to make sense of the 'jigsaw puzzle' of her family tree.[28] Peter wrote, planning a visit from NSW, looking to understand his great-great-great-grandfather's hard life of poverty

and incarceration. Family historians are sharing thoughts and emotions, and looking for empathy as much as genealogical research assistance. Isabelle emailed the Museum in 2019, trying to find out about her grandmother who entered care in 1897, aged just three months. Isabelle's comments are typical of those trying to understand what has previously never been spoken of within their family. She wrote, 'I was told two different stories when I was growing up, neither story mentioned the Destitute Asylum but they did say she was raised by [a German foster] family. She died before I was born and didn't talk about her past with her family [. . .] I would love to know if there was a way to find out who my Grandmother's mother and her family were.'[29]

These emails and letters are, per Ronald D. Lambert, steps on Peter, Isabelle, and Rose's journeys to reclaim their relatives' dark pasts in a way that 'just' records and dates cannot, by 'celebrating lives lived, in their time and place'.[30] As museologists we understand that the (re)presentation of these family stories in the museum can further strengthen emotional connections: museums provide more context and a more public forum, and this can even be redemptive. Descendant M, previously quoted, highlighted our redemptive role when she commented that the memorial reading at Migration Museum had given her grandfather 'a legitimate place in an illegitimate history'.[31] For many families the untangling of shame and story goes some way to righting the historical wrong: they reclaim their relative's shame, and almost wear it as a badge of pride.

In-person interaction is also significant, as the memorial readings above demonstrate. Each year during South Australia's History Festival month of May, we give asylum-focused tours, which usually generate multiple family history conversations and further enquiries. Tour visitors often dally afterwards to present curators with genealogical research, or to ask questions relating to their own family's experiences: in 2023 Greg W. volunteered information about an ancestor who had paid for a young woman's abortion, and asked about finding records relating to that event.[32] Every time we do a research callout or press release, interview or article about the Destitute Asylum, families contact us to share their stories. Dianne requested information about her grandmother (born at the Destitute Asylum in 1898) on a blog post we did, and we were able to give her information and context. In turn she fleshed out the family story for us, including the detail that her great uncle, also born in the Lying-in Home, was given his mother's religious name from when she was a novitiate as a teenager: another type of family and a different facet of inheritance and memory transmitted.[33] Every front desk enquiry, email, phone call and connection increase recognition of Destitute Asylum residents as important social actors, and their stories as vital contributions to both familial and wider public understanding of social welfare and life in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. All these connections and contacts emphasize how our museum practice helps to move these families, and their stories, from invisible to important.

The Destitute Asylum family

Our museum and its staff have played an important role in increasing descendant (and wider public) understanding of family stories. Curators have also been able to

bring different strands of families together who didn't know about each other, have helped people connect through their shared stories, and have hosted numerous get-togethers and memorials, highlighting the institution's special role as an intellectual 'site of memory'.

The work could be even bigger still in the future: the large cohort of residents and welfare recipients during the Asylum period means there are tens of thousands of people living in South Australia and beyond who have a Destitute Asylum connection. Many of these descendants are increasingly open to confronting the skeletons in their family closet and are hungry for information. To echo Lambert again, the rise of genealogy and family narrative in (and based on) genealogy tells us that people feel differently now about the stain of the past than they once did. Museums therefore have an important role in shaping and disseminating the narratives that family genealogists are constructing.

Drawing on inspiration from our sister Sites of Conscience institutions, we celebrate our museum's position at an intellectual, physical, and emotional convergence of history. This enables us to act as a safe place where visitors can understand their own family history, examine pressing social issues, and model democratic solutions.[34] *In This Place* serves as a container in which to rebuild the memory of welfare, poverty, and social justice in early South Australia. By careful selection of family stories and documentary resources, and by close cooperation between families, archives and museum professionals, these difficult stories can be, and I would argue are, transformed into a more positive inheritance of South Australia's Destitute Asylum.

Notes

1 Lynette Finch, *The Classing Gaze* (St. Leonards NSW, Allen & Unwin, 1993), 17.
2 Colonization Commissioners, 'Second Annual Report of the Colonization Commissioners', Colonial Register Adelaide, 7 July 1838.
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4 'Migration Museum', *Sites of Conscience*, https://www.sitesofconscience.org/membership/migration-museum-au/ (accessed 2 September 2023).
5 V. Szekeres, 'The Past Is a Dangerous Place: The Museum as a Safe Haven', in *Curating Difficult Knowledge*, ed. E. Lehrer, C. E. Milton and M. E. Patterson (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 41–54.
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7 R. H. Brown and B. Davis-Brown, 'The Making of Memory: the Politics of Archives, Libraries and Museums in the Construction of National Consciousness', *History of the Human Sciences* 11, no. 4 (1998): 17–32 (31).
8 Aboriginal people occupied a different, problematic plane of this hierarchy, given the tensions between the (limited) acknowledgement of their rights in the Letters Patent that established the colony, and early attempts by some governors to integrate

them into European settler life. For more on the paternalism of the early colonial authorities, see the work of Amanda Nettelbeck and Rob Foster, among others.

9 Judith Butler, *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of 'Sex'* (Abingdon: Routledge Classics, 2011), xxiv.

10 'Bound for South Australia: Timeline', *State Library of South Australia*, https://bound-for-south-australia.collections.slsa.sa.gov.au (accessed 23 March 2023).

11 State Records of South Australia, GRG 27/1 Correspondence files – State Children's Department, file 384 of 1891.

12 Little did I know that this tactic would see me spending the next five years researching Mabel's life, culminating in a biography of her. See Corinne Ball, *Three-ring Circus: the Dramatic, Mysterious, and Tragic Life of Mabel Worley, a Destitute Asylum Girl* (Melbourne: Australian Scholarly Publishing, 2022).

13 State Records of South Australia, GRG 28/28 Form of agreement between the Destitute Board and inmates of the Lying-in Home.

14 State Records of South Australia, GRG 27/1 Correspondence files ('SCD' files) – State Children's Department, 934/1890.

15 See Nikki Sullivan and Craig Middleton, *Queering the Museum* (London: Routledge, 2020).

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25 M. B., personal correspondence to author, 23 February 2017.

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27 For more on these performances, see Corinne Ball and Nikki Sullivan, 'A Labour of Love: Re-Birthing the Babies of the Destitute Asylum', in *The Museum as Experience*, ed. S. Shifrin (Ashland: Arc Humanities Press, 2023).

28 Rose S., personal correspondence, 4 August 2023.

29 Isabelle C., email, 8 March 2019.

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32 Greg W., personal correspondence, 15 May 2023.

33 Dianne S., email, 25 January 2019.

34 Pharaon et al., 'Safe Containers', 70.

21

Prince Charlie's Table

Carolyn Williams

> When they left Skye [in 1816] . . . my grandfather took with him to Lochend as a household treasure an old-fashioned mahogany writing table which the Prince[1] was said to have used at Kingsborough. This table he took to Australia, and after many long journeys and strange adventures it was brought back to Scotland in 1865 by me, and is now at Garrallan, Old Cummock (Boswell 1987, 204).[2]

Some 200 years after that journey from the Isle of Skye to Lochend (in Appin, Scotland), the table made an appearance on the British *Antiques Roadshow* (Series 36 Episode 14, 2014, Exeter Cathedral 1). Having survived 'many long journeys and strange adventures' it is, remarkably, still in the possession of the Boswell family.

The Boswells are distant cousins of mine, as I discovered when researching my Campbell family history. The 'grandfather' in the epigraph earlier is John Campbell of Lochend (1770–1827), my fourth great-grandfather. The current owner of the table is also a descendant of John Campbell through Annabella Boswell, the author of the epigraph. Through the *Antiques Roadshow* I was able to contact the current owner and the information he provided enabled me to complete the table's story.

So why was this particular table a 'household treasure' and what can explain the trouble its owners went to in transporting it with them from Scotland to Australia in 1821 and back again in 1865? The answer lies in a small metal plaque affixed to its surface. The plaque reads (citing the wrong year): 'This table was used by Prince Charles Edward, at Kingsborough Isle of Skye 1745.' It seems, then, that the table's association with 'Bonnie Prince Charlie' and events in Scotland nearly 300 years ago explains its significance for this family.

Family legend has it that when Bonnie Prince Charlie famously fled by boat to the Isle of Skye disguised as Flora Macdonald's maid, following the defeat of his army at the Battle of Culloden in 1746, he used this table while hiding out at Kingsburgh House. A new Kingsburgh House was apparently built in the late 1790s for Annabella Boswell's grandfather, John Campbell, when he took up his appointment as Lord Macdonald's chamberlain (estate manager) on the island. The table was probably among the furniture transferred from the old to the new Kingsburgh House, where the growing Campbell family resided from 1798 to 1816.

And so the legend of 'Prince Charlie's table' (as it is known in the family) was born. Most if not all the Campbells' thirteen children were born at Kingsburgh House and

Annabella Boswell tells us that living at Kingsburgh endowed the children with 'a reality to the tales they heard about [the Prince], and impressed them deeply on the minds of the elder children'.[3] These elder Campbell children included Annabella's mother, Georgiana, who told her this story, and my third great-grandfather Patrick. Some of the older inhabitants of the island, who had lived through the events of 1746, were probably the source of some of these tales. And the 'Jacobite heroine' Flora Macdonald had been dead for less than a decade before the Campbells took up residence on the island. It was Flora Macdonald who had told the story of Bonnie Prince Charlie's flight to Skye to James Boswell (a relative of Annabella Boswell's husband) when he visited the Hebrides with Dr Johnson in 1773. Boswell and Johnson stayed with the Macdonalds at (old) Kingsburgh House. It is quite possible that James Boswell wrote up his notes on the conversation with Flora Macdonald at the table, for he tells us in his *Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides* that he and Dr Johnson slept in the same room as the Prince and that there was a table in the room.[4]

As the epigraph to this story informs us, John Campbell took the table with him when the family departed Skye in 1816 and brought it with him when the family migrated to Australia in 1821. But why? Apart from its utility as a fairly easily transportable small writing table, what can explain John Campbell's attachment to it when so much other stuff was left behind in Scotland (including accidentally, according to Annabella Boswell, a cloak belonging to Bonnie Prince Charlie)? Annabella tells us that her grandfather was a 'warm admirer' of Prince Charles Edward. In this, he was at odds with most of the Campbell clan, who had fought against the Prince. But John Campbell and his wife, Annabella, were only a couple of generations removed from the events of 1745–6 and their predecessors had fought on both sides of this and the previous Jacobite uprising. Annabella Campbell herself was a descendant of Cameron clan chiefs – the most ardent of Stuart supporters. For this Campbell family, then, did the table serve to keep alive a post-Jacobite Scottish nationalist sentiment and identity in a distant land, a nationalist sentiment that is still evoked by the figure of Bonnie Prince Charlie today?

The table changed hands in 1827 when John Campbell suddenly died, leaving substantial debts. Annabella Boswell tells us, in an unpublished 'biography' of the table, that her father, George Innes, bought the table during the forced sale of the Campbell estate and gave it to her as a young child.[5] Perhaps it was Annabella's mother who insisted that the table stay in the family because of its association with her deceased father and Bonnie Prince Charlie, the stories of whom so impressed her as a child. The table may have also evoked fond memories of Scotland and the Isle of Skye, and sustained a Scottish nationalist sentiment and identity as those became more distant in space and time. Perhaps Annabella's mother instilled in her the same sentiments towards the table, for Annabella kept it until her death some eighty years later. It was at the table that Annabella began keeping a journal of her life in Australia from the 1830s through to the 1860s and wrote her prolific correspondence, a practice she continued for the rest of her life.

There were many opportunities for the table to be lost or damaged as it moved about the colony with Annabella and her family over long distances by road and ship. In her 'biography' of the table, Annabella tells us that it was lost for about ten years when it

was mistakenly misdirected in transit from Port Macquarie to Sydney. Many efforts were made to find the table and it was only returned to her when a 'Port Macquarie clergyman' spotted it in a cottage there during a visit. Its recovery reveals that the table was already well known and identifiable, probably because Annabella and her mother took pains to show Prince Charlie's table and tell its story to visitors – including this clergyman – to their home in Port Macquarie.

Annabella tells us that when the table was found and returned to her in 1862, it was strengthened and a metal 'drop plate' (the plaque) was affixed to its surface 'so as to identify it in the future'. The plaque literally inscribed forevermore the table's identity as 'Prince Charlie's table' and confirmed its meaning and value to Annabella. When Annabella and her mother, husband and children left Australia in 1865 to take up residence in Scotland, the table was apparently the only piece of their furniture not to be sold off before departure. It travelled to Scotland with them. Once in Scotland, further layers of meaning would have accreted to the table as Annabella's own attachments changed. The table may have provided Annabella with an enduring nostalgic reminder of the place of her birth, Australia – stories of which she was famous for in her new home – and of her identity as 'thoroughly Australian'. It would have been at the table that Annabella wrote further reminiscences of her life in Australia.

The table's future was more secure on Annabella's death in 1914. In her will, she bequeathed 'Prince Charlie's table' to her three unmarried daughters with the instruction, 'My daughters to have "Prince Charlie's Table", while they live, & failing heirs of Mine, to be left as they shall agree'.[6] The exact sequence of inheritance from here is unclear, but at some point the table was bequeathed or otherwise handed down to the sisters' surviving nephew, the father of the table's current owner. The table then lived with the Boswell family at Auchinleck House, previously the home of the aforementioned James Boswell. The current owner remembers seeing as a child the table in the library where James Boswell's father, Lord Auchinleck, and Dr Johnson had their famous argument over theology and politics. And so, in one of those funny twists of history, the table on which James Boswell likely wrote up his notes on the conversation with Flora Macdonald on the Isle of Skye now found itself in James' old home some 200 years later. The table came into the hands of the current owner sometime after the death of his father. In turn, the table will be passed on to his son.

With so much time and distance between the people and events of 1746 and now, what can explain the current owner's attachment to the table such that he felt compelled to tell its story on the *Antiques Roadshow*? I cannot say, but I do know that it was the table's association with Bonnie Prince Charlie that dominated the narrative. We find the table's owner recounting to a sceptical Christopher Payne (sceptical about such tables being around in 1746) the family legend of 'Prince Charlie's table' and its association with his Campbell ancestors. The owner is adamant in his defence of the veracity of the story in the face of Payne's doubt. But without proof of provenance, the table is given a modest valuation.

'Prince Charlie's table' is perhaps not only the most travelled of tables but also the most 'storied' of inherited objects outside of a museum. It has been documented by Annabella Boswell and by other family members and historians, and its whereabouts became the subject of fruitless searches until it resurfaced on the *Antiques Roadshow*.

And now I have become part of the table's story as its latest chronicler. Through researching and writing a family history centred on the table, its owners and their travels together, I have unwittingly kept the legend of 'Prince Charlie's table' alive.[7] But more, my chronicle has literally entered into the life of the table, the current owner informing me that a copy of my book now resides in one of its drawers.

In a sense it doesn't matter if the Prince used the table while at Kingsburgh and whether or not this can be verified. What matters is that the table thereafter became thoroughly invested with its association with the Prince and this has defined its identity, meaning and value to this very day. Whether by virtue of this alone or not, the table has survived and provided a traceable line of continuity in this family, and has served as a memorial to those other historical characters and events, for nearly 220 years.

Notes

1 Prince Charles Edward Stuart or 'Bonnie Prince Charlie' (1720–88). Charles was the grandson of deposed King James II of England and Ireland, and VII of Scotland, and sought to reclaim the British throne for the Stuarts.

2 Annabella Boswell was born Annabella Alexandrina Campbell Innes in 1826 at Bathurst NSW to Scottish-born George and Georgiana Lorn Innes (née Campbell). Annabella Innes married Patrick Boswell in 1856 at Christ Church Cathedral, Newcastle NSW and left Australia in 1865. The State Library of NSW and the Port Macquarie Historical Society hold Annabella's published and unpublished journals, letters, papers and artworks. The Port Macquarie Historical Society's collection of Annabella's papers is recognized for its significance and has been inscribed on the UNESCO Australian Memory of the World Register.

3 Annabella Boswell, *Annabella Boswell's Journal* (North Ryde and London: Angus & Robertson, 1987), 5.

4 James Boswell, *The Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides with Samuel Johnson* (1785). Project Gutenberg e-book [EBook #6018], https://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/6018/pg6018.html (accessed 28 January 2023).

5 Annabella Boswell, 'Prince Charlie's Table', Unpublished manuscript 1905. Provided to the author by Annabella Boswell's great-grandson, the table's current owner.

6 Copy of Annabella Boswell's will retrieved from 'Scotland's People' website by Bobby Grierson, Chair, Cumnock History Group, Scotland, and provided to the author.

7 Carolyn Williams, *The Travelling Table. A Tale of 'Prince Charlie's Table' and its Life with the Macdonald, Campbell, Innes and Boswell Families in Scotland, Australia and England, 1746-2016,* 2nd edn (2017), https://www.hawkesburyaustralia.com.au/_eventimages/imagesDB/events/The-Travelling-Table-Carolyn-Williams-updated.pdf (accessed 28 January 2023).

22

Missing Medals

Unearthing Invisible Seafaring Histories of Empire

Asif Shakoor

My paternal grandfather Mahomed Gama was born in the village off Jang, in old Mirpur in the erstwhile princely state of Jammu and Kashmir, in British ruled India, and in a region of what is now Pakistan, in 1895. I did not know and could never have imagined that my beloved grandfather had some form of war service in the First World War. I never met him. Many years of my life had passed, and I always wondered what did Grandpa do in his life? I first discovered my paternal grandfather, Mahomed Gama, had been recognized for his war service in the First World War when I came across some letters in a 'magical' wooden box my paternal grandmother kept.

In October 2011, my mother and I were in Pakistan helping to renovate our family home. My late grandmother's belongings had been dumped at my great-uncle's home, opposite my grandmother's. My mother kept asking me to look for a wooden box my grandmother kept and never let anyone touch or look inside. She told me that my grandmother kept the box high up – out of reaching distance – and once mum tried to have a look inside it and Grandma freaked out in a fit of a rage at her for attempting to reach for the wooden box. I searched through Grandma's belongings. It was a pile of old rubbish not even worth looking at. I came across old duvets and pillows. I nearly gave up. Mum yelled at me angrily to look for it! I carried on searching. I became really tired and fed up when I found the wooden box hidden under some rubble.

I looked inside it and found faded and disintegrating paperwork. The papers inside the box seemed yellowy. I found letters written in 1967 from the British Government to my grandmother after she had contacted them regarding claiming my grandfather's pension following his death in 1965. In a letter in September 1966, my grandmother said, 'My husband served during the war 1914-1918 in Merchant Navy. I can produce war medals if and when required.' I could not understand why Grandma said this as there are no medals in the box. I was surprised, almost shocked to read about the war medals! My eyes boggled out of their sockets in astonishment to read about War Medals in letters written before my birth, correspondence between an ancestor I had never met, my beloved grandmother, and the UK's Ministry of Social Security. What medals is she on about? There are no medals in the box? What did granddad get them

for? What do these medals look like? Over a hundred questions rapidly crossed my mind.

Inside the wooden box, I also discovered a Continuous Discharge Certificate (CDC) for Rohama Hassa for war service in the First World War, dated in 1914. I am just amazed at how my late paternal grandmother came to meticulously preserve this, for such a long time. I never thought something of this nature would have been saved by my grandmother. At the time of the discovery of these documents, I felt very emotional and therefore decided to have them laminated when I brought them back to the UK. I felt a great sentimental attachment to them and overprotective because they offered a direct connection to my beloved grandmother.

After safely bringing the CDC 5,029 miles back to Great Britain, carrying out research at the reading rooms in the National Archives, the British Library and the Caird Library at the National Maritime Museum, and showing the CDC to archivists and specialists, I safely came to the conclusion: this has to be oldest surviving 'nolly' CDC for a South Asian Seafarer in the First World War.

I did not get to meet Grandpa in my lifetime. All I heard from my mum were words from the mouth of my grandma,Grandpa 'was in the army'. I heard from dad's mouth, 'he was good looking for his age, a very big bloke', whom dad told me 'had a double body'. What an earth is that meant to mean? So it was a surprise to me that he had been involved in the conflict. I found out he had received the British War Medal and the Mercantile Marine War Medal as one of the letters mentioned that my grandmother had sent them to Great Britain to prove he had served, as part of her pension claim.

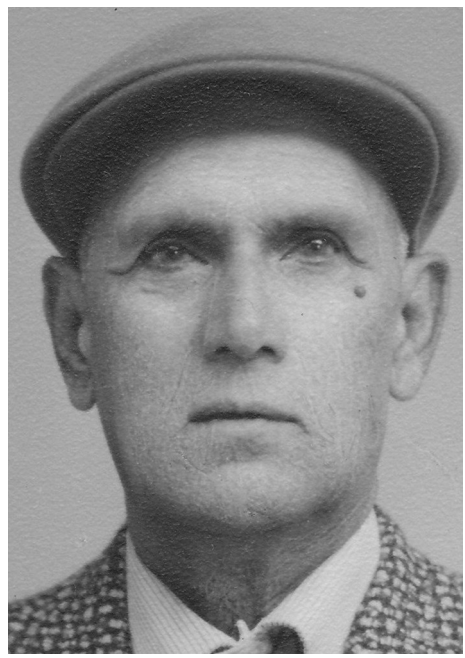

Figure 22.1 Photograph of Mahomed Gama.

In a letter in April 1967 from the Ministry of Social Security, Mr Anderson said: 'It is noted that the 1914-1918 war medals supplied by you in support of your claim bear on the rim the inscription "Mahomed Gama"'. A letter from Mr Taylor, in June 1967, said: '. . . and two War Medals are returned herewith'. I never found any medals inside this wooden box.

Thoughts ran rapidly in my mind as I attempted to find an answer to what happened to these medals. Who's got them? Where are they, now? Could the medals have fallen out when the builders hurriedly moved my grandma's belongings into my great-uncle's garden during the repair works? I asked in my mind angrily who took them? Where are they? I would have liked to have kept them! Why were they not passed to me? I would have kept them in Grandpa's memory. If only I knew he had been given medals. I would have like them to be in my hands. I began investigating like a severely annoyed detective. I began accusing, cursing and casting suspicion on my blood relatives in Pakistan. One of them must know where the medals are? One of them probably took the medals? Or even has them hidden at their home?

I feel a great sense of belonging to Great Britain, as my homeland and I feel honoured to have learnt my grandfather received some form of honour in the form of medals from the British Government. So I pondered and dwelled upon who could have the medals? And I began putting together a list of names from my family who could have them or taken them from the wooden box.

However, the family did not have his medals, and I concluded that the medals were never returned! Or perhaps they were stolen when they were posted back. I was keen to trace them and bring them back into the family's possession. I decided to research Mahomed Gama's service in the First World War, always hoping I would find his medals. The research took me on an incredible journey through to the National Archives based in Washington, London, Islamabad and New Delhi. I finally traced his war service via the crew lists held at Ellis island, New York, US.

I also found out that my grandfather's British War Medal was sold at an auction held by the auctioneer Lockdales, Ipswich, in March 2014. I contacted the auctioneer numerous times. I had no luck! I also wrote to the auctioneer and a medal specialist at the auction house. I still had no luck. It seems like they blatantly turned a blind eye to my letters. I felt like I was being ignored. It felt like it was a 'big' man's trade, to buy, sell and collect medals, as a hobby. I was treated like an outsider to the trade. I then paid and ran advertisements in the *Medal News* magazine. I still had no luck. I visited Britannia Medals Fair in Edgware, London quite a few times and spoke to various medal dealers, auctioneers, collectors there and to staff at the *Medal News* magazine. I became really frustrated and I decided to write to 200 or so medal dealers, auctioneers and collectors both in the United Kingdom and abroad in Australia, Canada, the United States and South Africa.

I was still in two minds whether to do this, as it was going to cost almost 200 pounds or so in postage costs. I hand wrote half of the 200 addresses onto envelopes. I became fed up and decided to run a final search online. I did not believe this would yield any luck. I searched online for several hours, surfing website after website. It was a nightmare! So boring, tiring and exhausting! My eyes were hurting. I was about to give up when a website kept on popping up. I kept on seeing www.coinsale.co.uk. I

first saw this website as irrelevant, probably a website in relation to the sale of coins. It was only by chance I happened to click through. I scrolled down the website, through a very huge list of medals for sale. I thought it mission impossible to inspect the name for each war medal for sale on the website. I scrolled to the top of the website on my exit. I came across a search button. I decided to enter my grandfather's name in the anglicized spelling given in the Ministry of Social Security's letter of 1967, sent to my grandmother. It came as a surprise when it yielded a result for Mahomed Gama.

I double checked the name as spelt on the letter and on the website. My eyes blinked several times in astonishment! I double checked to make sure my eyes were working fine and that this was correct! I made several attempts in messaging the website owner Jim Strawbridge, a medal dealer based in Devon. He did not reply to any of my emails. I managed to track him down on Facebook and subsequently sent him a series of messages. I never received a reply and kept on sending him messages, like a 'crazy' person until one day when I received a reply on Messenger. I was able to track the medal down and buy it back in December 2017 from the Devon-based medal dealer Jim Strawbridge of Coin Sale. He sent me Grandpa's war medal via Royal Mail special delivery just around Christmas time, and it was the best thing to receive in the festive season! It brought so much joy to my heart.

Figure 22.2 Mahomed Gama's British War Medal.

Upon arrival of the package, my mother told me she would like to see it and expressed a desire to open the package. So I let my mother have the honour of opening the package. Wow! It was amazing to see and touch something that passed through Grandpa's and Grandma's hands and then went missing for fifty years and passed so many hands, causing it wear and tear. It was finally back in my hands after fifty years since it left Grandma! It was back in the hands it should have been in! I took it to my bedroom. I could not believe it was back in my hands! I admired it and looked at very closely! I felt proud of Grandpa and his achievement!

I ran advertisements inside the *Medal News* for the other missing medal. The Mercantile Marine War Medal impressed with my grandfather's name had been sold at auction by eMedals based in Ontario, Canada, and to a buyer in India in 2016. I cannot see myself getting the second medal back after the pain and grief I went through in getting the first one! It has been a nightmare! I could not go through that again!

While I pursued my search for my grandfather's missing Mercantile Marine War Medal, I decided to search which ships my grandfather served on and where he travelled to. I was surprised to find out he arrived on the SS *Khiva* and stayed for a month from December 1917 to January 1918 at the Royal Victoria Dock.

My grandfather Mahomed Gama died in August 1965 and was buried in the old city of Mirpur, which now rests under the waters of the Mangla Dam, which was constructed by a London firm Binnie and Partners, led by engineer Geoffrey Binnie, in 1962 and was completed in 1967. It is sad that his grave is not accessible, but I am glad his war medal is back in my hands and that I have seen a picture of the other missing war medal. After all it seems like the wooden box was a 'magical' box and a mystery how it survived. Had I not gone to Pakistan and had my mum not pushed me to really search for it, God knows what unknown precious element of my family history and that of my grandfather would have been lost forever!!! I always wanted a sense of belonging here, in the UK, and I feel connected with the medal back with me!

23

War Writing and Peacetime Preservation

The Role of Families in Salvaging Letters from Twentieth-Century Conflict

Emma Carson

In the lead-up to my Honours year in 2018, and the otherwise agonizing process of choosing a thesis topic, I had a chance conversation with my paternal grandmother Gwen about my indecision. Gwen mentioned that she possessed letters that were written between her parents, Bill and Florence Wiseman, during the Second World War and asked whether I could use them in my research. Gwen lent me one box of letters, so I could read them while I deliberated. At random, I picked out and read a five-page letter from Bill to Florence dated 16 May 1943. I was immediately astounded at the richness and intimacy of this single letter that covered several topics related to both war and family. Five years later, this letter and others that Bill and Florence wrote have inspired my research. From initially sparking my interest as an untapped primary source, which I used in my broader research on marital relationships during wartime military service, this collection of correspondence is now my most prized possession as it connects me to my family's past.

Early in my research, I recognized that analysing these letters contributes across the fields of social, military and feminist history, the history of emotions, and the history of the family. In general, letters from twentieth-century conflict provide insights on working-class lives and material culture during modern war. They illuminate the nature of relationships between writers and, by extension, familial bonds more broadly, what these people believed was important or, perhaps more pertinently, what they believed their recipients would think was important.[1]

I have only recently thought more about how my emotional connection to the correspondence is academically significant. While the attachment that writers often had to their own letters has been studied extensively, the role of their descendants in preserving, archiving and, in some cases, eventually donating collections to public institutions, has been neglected.[2] Inherited objects tell stories that are important beyond the period in which they were first made and used, including how families stored and treated them, how archivists with no prior connection to donated objects

judged their historical worth and subsequently preserved them, and how historians' emotions shaped their own analysis of the objects.[3]

Private records created by working-class individuals were often not preserved beyond the lives of their original creators during this period, but war created a situation in which these objects gained greater cultural significance.[4] In nations such as Australia that mythologize modern war in their national narrative, there is an assumption that private records relating to war have greater intrinsic value to historians and the wider community than other private documents produced by working-class people. This likely motivated more families to keep war letters rather than other records and, in many cases, to donate them to public archives where they join a substantial, pre-existing corpus. Furthermore, outside of wartime, many working-class families had little reason to write large exchanges of letters, as they would not otherwise face long intervals of separation, and did not necessarily have the space to store large collections of documents.

Less so than because of what they reveal about war, the letters that personnel and their loved ones wrote are often cherished by families due to the insights they give about the correspondents' lives during major world events and connections that they forge between writers, recipients and descendants. Carol Acton argues that letters enable families to maintain relationships with personnel from the First World War who had since died, and allows the original writers to exist beyond their deaths.[5] Inheriting letters from family enables custodians to access the personal emotional worlds of their relatives, to connect with loved ones who have since died, and to intimately access the past lives of family members who they never met. Reading my great-grandparents' letters for my research enabled me to enter their subjective and performative emotional lives, and to similarly witness by proxy the infancy and early childhoods of my grandmother Gwen, and some of my great-aunts and uncles.

The letters offered a delightful glimpse of Gwen's youth. In particular, Bill's descriptions of Gwen's penchant for misbehaviour were entertaining to read and contrast with my interactions with her; to me she seemed to always be responsible and conservative in her attitudes and behaviour.[6] For example, after Bill returned to his unit from leave in August 1944, he recounted a family picnic and compared Gwen's behaviour with her elder sister Lorraine:

> I really mean Gwennie, she wouldn't stop still for five minutes would she, I shall never forget her that day . . . I suppose she is just as naughty now as she was then, the difference between her and Lorraine while I was home last time, Lorraine would do almost anything I told her while Gwennie was just the opposite.[7]

In his letter dated 17 August 1944, Bill drew an amusing caricature of Gwen having a tantrum (Figure 23.1), which similarly filled me with mirth.[8] Most people do not get to see their grandparents' childhoods unfold in this way and so I feel incredibly privileged to have these letters.

Like the intimate past space that war letters opened for me about my grandmother's childhood, they brought me closer to my great-grandmother Florence, who I only saw a handful of times before she died in 2002 when I was five years old. My memories of

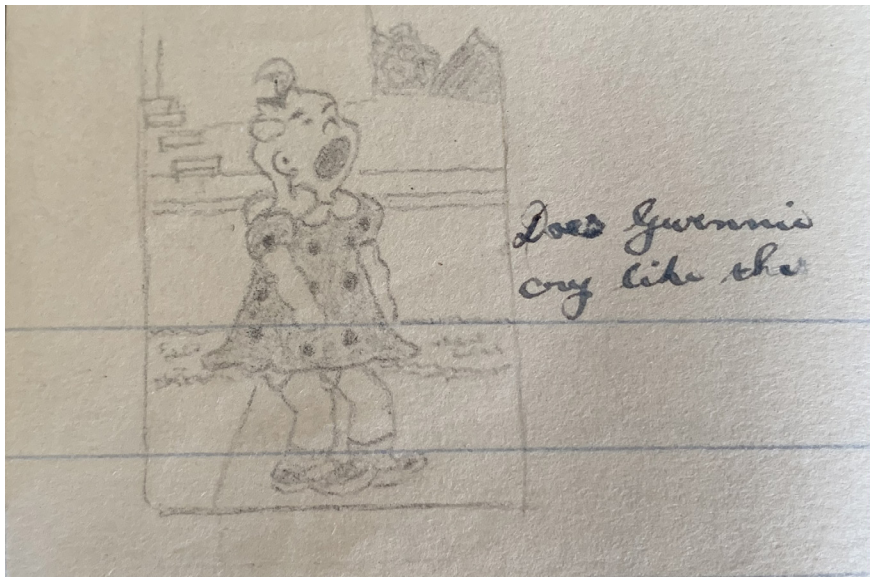

Figure 23.1 Bill's sketch of Author's grandmother in his letter, 12 August 1944. The annotation says, 'Does Gwennie cry like this'.

her are few. I remember her sharp wit and fondness for beetroot; most of what I know about her is grounded in recollections made by my grandmother and father rather than from my own interactions with her. Reading the letters helped me to appreciate Florence beyond the brief and distant interactions we had and to see her life at a similar age to my own. While only two of Florence's letters survived from the war, they still offer a rich portrait of her young adult life, especially when read in tandem with the replies that Bill wrote.[9] In her letter dated 20 October 1945, Florence emphasized that she was a devoted housewife who doted over her husband and children. She recounted the antics of her daughters and infant son, who she claimed often distracted her from writing letters, and emphasized her desire to have a big family when Bill returned by outlining her reluctance to use birth control.[10] Her repeated declarations of affection for Bill and chastizing him for pulling a muscle during a game of basketball with his unit were a joy to read and reinforced my prior understanding of her humour and nurturing attitude towards the family.[11]

Perhaps more crucially, this correspondence introduced me to my great-grandfather Bill, who died twenty-three years before I was born. Prior to reading the letters, my only exposure to Bill was through my family's memories. Gwen occasionally told me about Bill's service in places like Tobruk and the terrible things he experienced, such as a bombardment, in which a shell landed near the foxhole where he and two childhood friends were sheltered. Bill's friends died instantly, and he was unconscious for almost two days. This, and similar recollections, provided me with a narrow interpretation of my great-grandfather as simply a brave soldier who defied death. It fed into my adolescent understanding of the ANZAC legend, and imbued me with a sense of pride,

as I could say that my family participated in preserving Australia's national narrative and identity.

Reading Bill's letters and interviewing my grandmother and one of my great-uncles about the wartime and post-war lives of their parents for my Honours and then PhD research, greatly enriched my understanding of Bill's and Florence's relationship. It also provided a more nuanced interpretation of who Bill was and of the parts he and other military personnel played in the ANZAC legend. Bill's letters revealed that he was an incredibly sentimental man who adored his family, especially Florence. Every letter he wrote was peppered with 'kisses', endearments and descriptions of his longing to be reunited with Florence and their children. For example, Bill often wrote affectionate outbursts to Florence, like this excerpt from 1945:

> I love you so sincerely and devotedly, I would do anything to be with you now to see the lovely smile on your sweet face + have never been so badly bitten by the love bug in all my life.[12]

Talking to my grandmother and great-uncle about Bill provided a more complicated interpretation of the romantic and dedicated husband that he presented in the letters. I learned that Bill was a troubled man after the war, who dealt with his trauma through excessive drinking and sporadic violence towards Florence and the children.[13] Hints of Bill's alcoholism emerged early in his letters, along with some marital tension, but the abuse seemed at odds with the man I thought I knew through reading the correspondence. It was a reminder of the performative nature of written communication and the importance of recognizing that how interlocutors presented themselves should not be taken at face value. Reading his letters challenged my previous perception of Bill and other personnel who served during the Second World War, by revealing that that Bill's own identity was more intertwined with his civilian life and family than his military service. This challenges the popular notion that soldiers in modern war were apathetic about their families and instead preferred their comrades' company once they returned home. Instead, the ANZAC legend was full of sentimental soldiers who begrudgingly fought for their nations to defend the people they loved. Private family records give historians access to the personal and intimate lives of individual people in a way that documents in public archives cannot. By using them, researchers can determine how people simulate emotions and describe their everyday experiences, in addition to how major world events affected these expressions.

Inherited objects make excellent and often fresh sources of information for academics who are interested in the history of the family and emotions. Through reading Bill's and Florence's letters, I was transported to a temporal space in my family's history that few people can enter. It has been a privilege to witness brief snippets of my grandmother's childhood and Bill's and Florence's early marriage, at an age that mirrors my own. Nevertheless, it has similarly been confronting and challenging to learn about the noxious aspects of Bill's relationship with Florence, which easily dampens the romance and delight that I derive from their letters. More broadly, I am grateful for the support and trust of my relatives, who respect my expertise and believe

in my ability to respectfully share Bill's and Florence's story with a broader academic and public audience.

Notes

1 Sonia Cancian, '"My Dearest Love…:" Love, Longing, and Desire in International Migration', in *Migrations: Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, ed. Michi Messer, Renee Schroeder, and Ruth Wodak (Vienna: Springer, 2012), 176–7.
2 Bart Ziino, '"A Lasting Gift to His Descendants": Family Memory and the Great War in Australia', *History & Memory* 22, no. 2 (2010): 125–46.
3 Stephanie Downes, Sally Holloway and Sarah Randles, 'Introduction', in *Feeling Things: Objects and Emotions through History*, ed. Stephanie Downes, Sally Holloway and Sarah Randles (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 2.
4 Anne-Marie Condé, 'Capturing the Records of War: Collecting at the Mitchell Library and the Australian War Memorial', *Historical Studies* 36, no. 125 (2005): 134–52.
5 Carol Acton, '"You Yourself Are Here Now Looking Over My Shoulder as I Write": Emotional Dialogue and the Construction of a Shared Intimate Space in First World War Letters', *L'Atelier* 8, no. 1 (2016): 215.
6 Letters from Bill Wiseman to Florence Wiseman, 12 August 1944. Private collection in possession of the author.
7 Letter from Bill to Florence, 9 August 1944.
8 Letter from Bill to Florence, 12 August 1944.
9 Department of Defence, Military Service Records of William James Francis Wiseman (SX13335), National Archives of Australia, B883, 6397767.
10 Letter from Florence to Bill, 20 October 1945.
11 Ibid.
12 Letter from Bill to Florence, 16 October 1945.
13 Interview with Gwen Carson and Bill Wiseman Jr., conducted by Emma Carson, 13 September 2018. Recording in possession of the author.

24

‘Two Suitcases’

A Personal Reflection on a Family Archive

Alison Pedley

While sorting out our late parents’ home in readiness to sell, my brother and I found two vintage suitcases. Inside were documents, photographs, letters and other family ephemera, an eclectic array of papers from our grandparents’, our parents’ and even our own lives. After many years of sporadic exploration of my family history, it was slightly disconcerting as well as moving, to have physical proof of many of the stories passed down through three or four generations. The retention of certain documents, and undoubtedly the destruction of others, is intriguing. The initial preservation seems to indicate a need to show others that they ‘were there’; that they had a first-hand experience of events. Whether the ephemera was retained specifically for future generations is unclear. The contents of the suitcases open direct emotional connections with and stir up a curiosity about past lives as ‘real’ people, not just faces in faded photographs.

Finding a way to present the material cohesively in an interesting way for others, outside of my immediate and extended family, was difficult. In this chapter I reflect on my emotional responses to documents which highlight passed-down stories from my maternal family. Do they come from a desire to cement a place in the family tree, affirm heritage and assuage some deep-seated need to be part of the past? The suitcases’ contents of family ephemera chronicle the lives of ordinary people over roughly a hundred-year period, from 1852 to the mid-twentieth century. Like so many other families in the twentieth century, the two world wars did not leave my kith and kin unscarred. My four grandparents were all born in the 1890s, so lived through the First World War and the social and cultural changes which followed. Likewise, my parents were children of the 1920s and much as their parents’ lives had been, their youth was overshadowed by war. Before that, in earlier generations, national calamities, profoundly impacted on people’s lives and society, the effects of which were still felt down the years.

To capture an essence of this, this essay explores the life experiences of my great-great-grandfather, Samuel McCartney (1826–1914) and my grandfather, Gilbert McCartney (1892–1968). The choices Samuel made and the changes in his life between 1852 and

1885 affected the future dynamics of the McCartney family; his seemingly selfish actions were remembered but never explained. Gilbert McCartney, his grandson and my maternal grandfather, enlisted in the Royal Army Military Corps in 1916, and like so many of his generation, the war had a profound impact on his mental and physical welfare. In *Afterlives of War*, Michael Roper suggests that the efforts of family historians in placing an ancestor in history, is about finding a personal space in the historical family, when that family is no more.[1] For me it is a very salient point. My brother and I grew up with stories about my great-grandfather and his fixed views on religion and personal behaviour. Our grandparents were devoted to each other, but not given to outward demonstrations of emotion. Family relationships and intergenerational bonds were close but considered private. It is only with our generation that public shows of affection have become the norm. This is probably what lies behind my emotional drive to examine my family archive and maybe trace where this emotional reticence began.

This chapter shows that an ordinary family's papers and mementos can encapsulate the history of ourselves and the wider community. There are many items in the suitcases which reflect major events in national and international history from a personal perspective. The idea that an ordinary family's archive can add nuance to such histories is thought-provoking and, I believe, important to present-day society. Family archives reflect how ordinary citizens actually felt, reacted and behaved towards events going on around them. The two old suitcases' contents show that calamitous world and national events change the dynamics not only within general society but also within a family sphere. My aim is also to show that my 'Two Cases' family archive speaks in a small way, to national histories as well as one family's history.

Figure 24.1 The Two Suitcases 2023. Author's own picture reproduced with permission.

Family historians frequently discover errant ancestors in their research – a renowned or infamous figure, a criminal or a runaway parent. Their lives become to their descendants challenging but solvable mysteries and part of genealogical lore. Samuel McCartney and his life is that to me. Samuel was born on 11 June 1826 in Comber, Co Down, and in 1852 he married Agness Robinson in Comber First Presbyterian Church. There appears to have been a family rift not long after their marriage causing the couple to become migrants like so many of their generation of Irish people. In 1852, they moved to Walker, Newcastle upon Tyne, where Samuel worked in the ironworks. In the November of that year, Agness gave birth to a baby, David, who sadly died of tubercular peritonitis six months later in July 1853.[2] My great-grandfather, John McCartney, was born the following year on 23 April 1854. There is a poignant letter in the suitcases from Agness to her mother-in-law, written in July 1854. This letter gave the news that John had been born. Agness wrote, 'I got another son and he is a strong healthy child.' The use of the word 'another' haunted me. There had never been any suggestion in the family that John had had an older brother, who died before he was born. My historian's brain told me it needed further investigation. I trawled through the BMD registers and found David's birth and death records. I added him to the family tree, with feelings of sorrow that he had been 'lost' for so long and I believe John McCartney never knew he had had a brother. In the same letter, Agness told the family that she had 'been poorly in health this some time back', but now she was 'thank god . . . quite recovered.' This proved to be untrue and in January 1856, Agness died of tuberculosis, a tragic event which profoundly affected her son's future life. Samuel returned to Ireland with John whom he left with his parents, John's grandparents, and then went to sea. Samuel joined the Royal Navy as a stoker, serving mostly in the Far East. He was discharged from the navy in 1864 while in China; it is not clear whether it was at his own request or by desertion.[3] He went to work on the coastal steamers between Sydney and Melbourne, eventually making his way to New Zealand. There he became a gold miner in the 1860s gold rush. Samuel only returned once to his native Ireland, living the rest of his days in Rimu, near Hokitika on New Zealand's South Island. He died on 8 December 1914.[4]

The family story was that, in 1882 on that sole return to Ireland, he went into Conlig post office to ask if anyone knew of his son's whereabouts. The daughter of the local Baptist minister happened to be there too and told Samuel that she was engaged to John McCartney. She was my great-grandmother, Carrie Harris. It is possible that this chance meeting is a romanticized version of whatever happened, but Samuel came back into the life of his son. John refused to acknowledge a father who had deserted him twenty-six years earlier. The father–son rift might have carried on for many more years if it were not for my great-grandmother, who corresponded with Samuel from then on until his death. In the suitcases are eight letters from Samuel written to Carrie, the earliest dated 1888 and the last, November 1914.

The family was aware of the bare outlines of Samuel's life; however, reading his letters has enriched the details and added nuance to a story of paternal abandonment and filial resentment. The letters are also a fascinating first-hand account of nineteenth-century New Zealand and contain the occasional throw-away comment on Samuel's views of his native Ireland and hometown. 'Comber is the same dead & alive miserable

place, it always was a very good place to live away from. I never was patriotic enough to praise it.' Thinking on the topic of relevance to national histories, Samuel briefly mentions his memory of the 1847 Irish potato famine, in the context of New Zealand's 1905 potato crop, which he wrote was suffering 'with what is called the Irish blight and is the same as caused the famine of 1847 I have good reason to remember it'. This phrase may put into context his desire to leave Ireland in 1852, looking for a better life elsewhere for himself and his family. All the letters were written in reply to the ongoing correspondence from Carrie and latterly, his grandchildren. They are a testament to the determination of my great-grandmother to reach out and include Samuel in her children's lives. Carrie died in 1918 and the letters were fortunately kept by John.

In an early letter, Samuel admits that he had 'led an irregular kind of life nothing to be proud of', however he does appear to lack in self-introspection continuing '. . . but at the same time I have not done much harm except myself'. Sadly, this was not borne out by John McCartney, who, in the family's collective memories was very stern and cold in nature. Having looked into the story, this coldness was probably a protective emotional mechanism. John was not quite a year old when his mother died and just eighteen months old when Samuel left him in Ireland. John did not have a happy childhood. He was considered a burden to his grandparents, but found solace in education and evangelism. This shaped his future life and influenced his family relationships. By the time he died in 1949 aged ninety-five, he had partly reconciled himself to his early life but from all accounts, he never totally forgave his father for abandoning him.

The discovery of my grandfather's First World War service papers was sobering and heart-rending. Gilbert's decision to join up was not taken lightly. His strong Christian beliefs meant he did not want to serve as a combatant soldier but wanted to help his fellow man, so he enlisted in the RAMC. He was a stretcher-bearer and the story was that he was the survivor of a shell attack that killed his partner and the man on the stretcher. Whether this was the case or not, he was transferred to No. 31 hospital train on 31 August 1916, recorded as suffering from shell-shock. Eventually he was transferred to Fusehill Military Hospital, Carlisle, suffering from VDH or valvular disease of the heart. Like so many of his generation, he rarely spoke of his war experiences, although I do have a memory of him telling us that he could lean on the wind on Salisbury Plain when he was in training camp before being sent to France. In view of his pacifist opinions and his experiences in the war, his retention of all his military papers and photographs of his unit was a surprise.

His saving of the memorabilia was haunting and disconcerting. Despite not directly telling his family about his war experiences, my grandfather seemed to feel a need to retain this documentation. He had had a dreadful experience, yet he wanted to remember. The photographs of his unit showed happy smiling faces of young men in training and one in particular showed my grandfather with a wide grin on his face. In contrast, there is a photograph of him dressed in hospital blues taken a year later with haunted eyes, looking so much older than his twenty-four years. His war experience left him an anxious man and someone who would avoid any argument and conflict. He relied heavily on my grandmother for emotional support and he found greatest comfort in being with family at home or in his church.

Handling old family documents and photographs, filling gaps in stories, proving (or disproving) family legends, appeals to the historian in me. My ancestors came from ordinary backgrounds, living their everyday, unexceptional lives without fame, but they still attached some value to objects representing their part in national history. My small family archive holds eyewitness accounts of world wars, coronations and other significant historical events. All the saved letters and objects together speak down the years to future generations and carry with them emotional insights into our ancestors' lives. My parents, my grandparents and other ancestors must have attached meaning and importance to the items, enough to preserve them for posterity. Although what was kept established a deeper emotional connection with my forebears, it is coupled with a sense of sadness for all the unchangeable facts in my family's history. In the case of my family archive and with my personal knowledge of my mother's family, which pieces of documentation were kept or thrown away, was a decision made somewhat arbitrarily and possibly with some 'emotional' editing. Whether it was foresight to keep their descendants informed or plain sentimentality is debateable. Perhaps it came from some deeper level, a need to record a personal experience of momentous and significant happenings for successive generations.[5] Although, in reality, most of the items and letters are only of true meaning to the family, their retention affords me and my kith and kin a place in the long family history and lore, as well as a small niche in national and international history.

Notes

1 Michael Roper, *Afterlives of War: A Descendants' History* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2023), 231.
2 England and Wales, Civil Registration Death Index, 1837-1915, Ancestry.com Q.3, Vol.10b, 195.
3 ADM38/9302 HMS Vulcan Muster Book, The National Archives, Kew.
4 Burials: Hokitika, No. 4075,100. New Zealand, Cemetery Records, 1800-2007, Ancestry.com. (Original data: New Zealand Cemetery Records. New Zealand Society of Genealogists Incorporated).
5 Roper, *Afterlives of War*, 307.

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