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**Fatherhood and family shame: masculinity, welfare and the workhouse in late  
nineteenth century England<sup>1</sup>**

**Megan Doolittle**

...I got a pocketful of horse beans ... I put them on a shovel and toasted them over the fire. They weren't all that ripe, but the kiddies scrambled for them. In the rush one was shoved up the babby's nose instead of her mouth. She started to blather, she wouldn't stop, so in the end I carried her to the doctor. ... The horse bean had started to chit! That cost a shilling. The missus was hopping mad when she heard: 'You let those kiddies do what they likes! You'll 'ave us in the workhus yet!'<sup>2</sup>

This story was told by George Hewins, a building labourer from Stratford on Avon, about looking after his four young children circa 1910, during a period when he was unemployed and his wife was out working. The children were often hungry, so this was a good opportunity for a snack of broad beans, which he had filched from a bag outside a shop selling them for pig food. In their very small home, things easily got out of hand but he was never the strict disciplinarian, using his storytelling gifts to keep them in order:

I'd tell them anything to keep them quiet. We had a houseful! They got a bit out of hand sometimes, but not one of the knowed the weight o'mine. I never tapped them. The missus did that – with the slipper. She let them know who was boss.<sup>3</sup>

In this case, things went very wrong not only for the baby, but for the household economy where every shilling was precious and every financial crisis threatened the destruction of family life by entering the dreaded workhouse.

In this anecdote, we can trace the themes that will be explored in this chapter about authority, masculinity, shame and the shaping of welfare subjects. The chapter begins by looking at ways that masculinity and domestic authority were negotiated in the context of interdependent family relationships. It then turns to the relationships between domestic masculinities and welfare interactions between families and welfare providers. The particular effects on masculinity and domestic authority of the institution of the workhouse and of the shame associated with pauperism are then examined. It concludes with a discussion of working-class strategies of engagement and resistance to forms of welfare which undermined men's sense of being recognised and respected as full, adult male citizens.

It is important to acknowledge that welfare and families were (and are) both complex sets of relations and each has extensive histories as well as very diverse sets of practices and meanings. Welfare is used here in its broadest sense as including policies, practices and structures of feeling which were designed to ameliorate or improve social life. Welfare in this period had widely varied origins, scope and implementations with often contradictory as well as reinforcing effects on those defined as its subjects. Families are understood in this context as a set of processes and practices which involved identifiable but flexible and porous relationships which can be traced through social structures such as the household and kinship networks. In

this period, families deployed a very wide range of strategies and responses to welfare in diverse circumstances.<sup>4</sup>

At the heart of social debates about welfare we can find questions of gendered domestic authority and its fluid nature within the economies of poor families. Keeping clear of the harsh and shaming regimes of the workhouse was a significant struggle for working-class men in sustaining a robust gendered identity as provider and head of a household. Providing for a dependent wife and children and exercising authority over them had long been a significant marker of adult masculinity and continued to be so during this period despite the many changes in nineteenth-century labour markets and family strategies.<sup>5</sup> However, this identity sat uneasily with the interdependent nature of family life for the poor, who relied on resources from every available source when poverty struck. There was thus a profound disjunction between these fluid and interdependent relationships and the more bounded model of the household headed by a male breadwinner that was not only a goal for the respectable working class, but was deeply engrained in the thinking of policy makers and philanthropists. The poor law system acknowledged both the interdependencies of the poor and this dominant ideal, seeking to discipline husbands and fathers through the threat of the workhouse and the loss of autonomy and authority it entailed. Resistance and demands for changes to the Poor Laws were rooted in these experiences.

The particular period and location chosen for discussion is England<sup>6</sup> in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries because in this period, new ideas about welfare and its place in the social order were emerging while older regimes were also being questioned. In particular, the Poor Law was increasingly seen as problematic

and fragmented as its basic premise of less eligibility (that poor relief should always be less than what those on the lowest incomes could obtain elsewhere, and therefore was only available to the completely destitute) was impossible to sustain across all its provisions.<sup>7</sup> At a wider level, relationships between the state, the nation and families were being reshaped around questions of ‘national efficiency’<sup>8</sup> which focussed on how to improve the physical health and strength of the poor, as demonstrated by the 1904 Report of the Interdepartmental Committee on Physical Deterioration.<sup>9</sup> Poverty itself was being actively examined and redefined in the great surveys of Booth (1902-3) and Rowntree (1901).<sup>10</sup> Working class political demands for change were also making themselves felt through the extensions to the franchise, burgeoning working class organisations including unions and socialist groups, and also, from 1894, through representation in local government and poor law boards.<sup>11</sup> Citizenship itself was being re-imagined in terms of the need for a healthy and education population, able to exercise democratic rights and responsibilities.<sup>12</sup> This required more extensive forms of welfare to be provided, whether by the state or through voluntary impulses.<sup>13</sup>

This chapter focuses on a small number of autobiographical examples to tease out the meanings of welfare encounters through the lens of fatherhood and masculinity. These sources provide us with some of the very few direct articulations of working-class experiences of poverty, although they do require careful interpretation.<sup>14</sup> Of particular importance were the difficulties that autobiographers experienced in exposing what was shameful in their past, and thus times when they were in their worst straits were not easy to narrate.<sup>15</sup> Many male writers resolved this by omitting most aspects of their family lives altogether particularly in adulthood, being far more likely to write about poverty experienced when they were children.<sup>16</sup> The shameful aspects of being

poor were keenly felt, as we shall see, but these could be more easily expressed when related to the writer's parents rather than themselves. Oral history accounts have been more fruitful in including accounts of family life in adulthood, such as George Hewins' above who told stories of his childhood and young adulthood to his family when he was a very old man.<sup>17</sup> This method gives opportunities for listeners to ask about the low points in their subject's life, and for the speaker to construct stories about painful emotions in ways which make it possible to admit stigma and shame, often through the use of empathy and humour, as Hewins demonstrated.<sup>18</sup>

As often noted, the time of writing or telling a life story is significant in shaping what is included (and absent) and how the story is told.<sup>19</sup> The examples used in this chapter were all narrated after the First World War and were very much coloured by the social changes and political impulses of the period when they were written. In particular, the higher standard of living for many working class families meant that by the time of creating their narratives, many working class men had achieved the respectability of the breadwinner model with its more bounded gender roles. On the other hand, many autobiographers had been personally affected by the traumas of the Great War as soldiers or as the fathers of soldiers, and some were to face the threat of inter-war unemployment and the hated means test. Looking back at the 'bad old days' gave writers like Hewins the space to express difficult and conflicting feelings about their younger lives. Memories were thus necessarily coloured by a writers' social, political and emotional context at the time of telling; when Hewins was interviewed as a very old man in the 1970s, his stories of his younger years were so radically different from his contemporary experience that their sting had largely faded except, tellingly, the

shame of his grandmother's pauper funeral which he admitted he had never before revealed.<sup>20</sup>

Writers and storytellers also found ways of revealing the shame of poverty through a commitment to reforms in welfare policy, in the tradition of the 'condition of England' novel. By exposing their own experiences, writers hoped to draw attention to social inequality and its iniquities in order to bring about change.<sup>21</sup> This agenda necessarily structured and coloured their accounts, but also enabled them to find a way to articulate hidden aspects of their lives, providing political explanations for the ways that masculine identities relating to domestic authority were difficult to sustain. Many writers expressed an overtly political agenda relating to poverty as we shall see below. Many also deliberately and frequently included anecdotes about subverting authority – treading a fine line between illegality and survival, as exemplified by Hewins' theft of a handful of beans for his hungry children. As August argues, this low-level, day to day resistance can also be seen as a political stance, particularly in constructing a narrative which gave the writer a sense of agency in potentially shameful circumstances.<sup>22</sup>

The theme of shame and anger dominates these accounts of poverty and pauperism. Scheff argued that shame is the paramount social emotion. It has the effect of dividing people from each other and breaking social bonds, with the normal response to social shame being an increase in social alienation which turns inwards on the individual, or outward resentment and conflict.<sup>23</sup> On the other hand, Scheff argues that the acknowledgement of shame strengthens social bonds, as 'the glue that holds relationships and societies together, [while] unacknowledged shame [is] the force that

tears them apart'.<sup>24</sup> He also identifies Sennett and Cobb's research in *The Hidden Injuries of Class* as showing that shame and social-economic dependence are intertwined with shame used as a central tool in disciplining workers in the modern American context.<sup>25</sup> Workers saw themselves as individually responsible for their lower class position, not least because of their experience of schooling when they were consistently shamed and silenced. It is not difficult to see that pauperism, a deeply shaming identity, was overtly designed to discipline the poor in similar ways. Writers who experienced it, found it easier to write about it in the context of class oppression rather than individual failure, but ambivalences about personal responsibility could be difficult to avoid. Carolyn Steedman has also explored the more uncomfortable ways that autobiographers can use their narratives to 'hurt' others by telling their stories of bitterness and envy.<sup>26</sup> In the following narratives of poverty and survival we can find these various effects of social shame in the context of poverty and masculinity.

### **Interdependence and masculinity**

The deeply ambiguous nature of relations of authority between men, women and children in working-class families can only be understood in the context of the interdependent relationships which poor families relied upon for survival in this period. The necessity to pool all resources of a household, whether material, financial or social, was a characteristic of many working class families, where the earnings of children and wives, income from lodgers, help from brothers, sisters, aunts and uncles, neighbours and workplace friends were all drawn upon at times of difficulty.<sup>27</sup> The assertion of an independent adult manhood by a husband and father was not

always easy to maintain in these circumstances, and the tensions particularly between husbands and wives were often acute. The many family secrets and silences which needed to be maintained to support viable masculinities were a significant sign of these tensions, which could and did erupt into violence.<sup>28</sup>

There were two central aspects of adult masculinity which underpinned men's authority in domestic life which were difficult to sustain: the breadwinner or provider role, and the position as head of household. Being the breadwinner for a family of dependents was a central aspect of adult masculine identities, but in poor families breadwinning was rarely the sole province of the man of the family.<sup>29</sup> The decline of craft-based employment for men, which was well advanced by the late nineteenth century, also undermined masculine identities rooted in craft traditions.<sup>30</sup> The highly variable and changing labour markets for women and young people meant that earnings from other family members could be the norm, such as in textile areas. Where there was little waged work for married women, less visible occupations were found to supplement family incomes, such as taking in lodgers, laundry and other work which could be done at home. The growing earning power of young women outside domestic service in offices, shops and light industrial sectors and the concerns about the greater availability of casual work for 'juvenile' workers, young men working outside the apprenticeship system brought opportunities for earning for young people without former levels of adult control.<sup>31</sup> While men's earnings were significantly higher than women and young people's, and those in regular skilled employment might be able to 'keep' a wife and children, for most men this was difficult to achieve and even harder to sustain over the whole life course.

If breadwinning was a difficult basis from which to assert authority, there were further tensions around who controlled the day to day use of family resources, very often the province of wives. Men, boys and girls were often called upon to help with domestic work, including caring for babies, as George Hewins demonstrated above, but it was widely acknowledged that women had the crucial role of managing of the household, and they could exercise considerable control over the behaviour and life-chances of everyone within it.<sup>32</sup> As we saw in the Hewins family, it was his wife who kept everyone in order, at least within their home. Men's dependence on others would extend beyond the ties of wife and children as families drew upon kin relationships for resources of all kinds, frequently negotiated through women's social networks. A small inheritance from an uncle, the labour of nieces, nephews, or grandchildren, exchanges of food or clothing, having a relative to 'speak for you' to get a job – these could make a world of difference.<sup>33</sup> But they could also complicate and disrupt authority relations by undermining the position of the husband and father as provider, protector and breadwinner.

Such complex arrangements of care and survival were thus characterised by a fluidity of authority, unlike the dominant family paradigm for the respectable working class, which also underpinned the standpoint of most welfare providers and policy makers. This was based on a fairly rigid set of hierarchical divisions between a father and husband as provider, a mother and wife who managed household resources and children who respected and obeyed their parents. This model placed a husband and father at its apex, and was predicated on a masculinity which looked back to the early modern idea that marriage and children announced a man's entry into full adulthood and an adult masculine identity which included the exercise of authority over others

through the establishment of a separate household.<sup>34</sup> As its head, he also gained a set of public duties and identities as the only independent individual who could fully engage with civil society and the public world. It could be argued that it was the authority he commanded over all other members of the household which gave men this status and without a household of some kind to rule over, a man could not be a public person.<sup>35</sup> As McCormack has pointed out, citizenship in the polity was reliant on successfully establishing domestic responsibilities in ways which were explicitly defined as masculine throughout the process of reforms to the franchise in the nineteenth century.<sup>36</sup> This was recognised in legal terms; husbands and fathers had long-established common law and legislated rights to represent and determine family life with few formal restrictions.<sup>37</sup> A sub-text of authority based on Christian teaching can also be traced, with the language of God the father permeating social discourse.<sup>38</sup>

The position of head of household had always been particularly difficult for labouring men to establish or sustain, and claims to citizenship rights had been closely tied to ownership or control over land and property for centuries. Working class men's political campaigns for the vote had been premised on 'the respectable working man', someone who successfully demonstrated his capacity for citizenship through his role as the provider and protector of dependents. Thus widespread social values of self-help, thrift and independence were reworked as political tools by working-class activists, looking back to the Chartists and forwards to the Labour Party. This argument for an extension of the franchise based on manhood defined in these terms resonated at many social levels, and had been largely accepted by the end of the nineteenth century.<sup>39</sup> At the same time, there were growing political and social demands by women across all classes for recognition as independent adults who

exercised authority within families, thus requiring political rights to fulfil the demands of motherhood and household management. These arguments were difficult to reconcile, and debates raged within the labour movement between those fighting for manhood suffrage and those embracing women's demands for the vote.<sup>40</sup>

This model of adult masculinity based on providing for and heading a household was very much current throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, although for families of all classes, the realities and uncertainties of life meant that many would not easily fit into such ideals. Relationships between genders and generations were thus never equal in these families, but for the poorest, authority and power were particularly fluid and contestable.

### **Welfare and masculinity**

In the field of welfare, tensions of authority and masculinity could be particularly acute. When times were hard and working-class families turned to welfare and charity for assistance, the interactions and relationships between families and welfare providers were necessarily inflected by questions of age and gender. Questions of domestic authority and masculinity within families were thus brought to the surface in these encounters. The one form of assistance which was modelled on the provider and head of household ideal was the friendly society, a collective association with many social and political functions as well as being a source of welfare benefits. Friendly societies were often modelled on male solidarities symbolically linked to ties of blood reflected in rituals of belonging and loyalty, such as parades and initiation ceremonies. They drew on languages of family as well as class solidarities and local

bonds.<sup>41</sup> They were a central marker of self-help and independence for labouring men, and as such, they were called upon as models of working class self-help and respectability in the fight for widening the franchise.<sup>42</sup> Membership of friendly societies was overwhelmingly male and directly related to paid labour, reinforcing masculine roles of protecting and providing for dependents.<sup>43</sup> The small amounts saved through these societies were seen as the first call on a man's wage packet before handing over housekeeping money to his wife. Most families insured the male breadwinner against their own illness, injury or disability, not other members of the family. This indicated, and helped to reinforce, the place of husbands and fathers as providers and the rest of the family as dependents on his labour, rather than welfare subjects in their own right.<sup>44</sup> Benefits were explicitly connected with the paid employment of an individual man (although a small number of employed women were also contributors), in marked contrast to the Poor Law and many forms of charity which rigorously examined the family as a whole.<sup>45</sup> In practice, friendly societies had complex and variable ways of assessing family need, but the channel for assistance remained the working man.<sup>46</sup> Claiming benefits was not seen as shameful, but as a right earned through foresight and thrift. In the friendly society model, the welfare subject was the respectable husband and father, the provider and protector of his dependent wife, children and his parents in their old age.

Other forms of welfare were much less likely to engage with a male head of household. Charity of various kinds was often directly targeted at women, children or the elderly, and thus family survival strategies called for particular gender or age positions to be deployed in encounters with charitable donors. For example, children would often be sent to collect donated food because they were seen by the

philanthropic as more deserving. We can see how a desperately poor family negotiated these opportunities in the autobiographical example of Arthur Harding, who was interviewed by Raphael Samuel in the 1970s. His father had always bullied him, but by the time Arthur was old enough to be useful to the family his father had become a violent alcoholic and was losing his sight.

The people in charge of the Mission gave him a ticket to go round the restaurants to see what they would give him in leavings. I used to go round with him. I used to carry the bag for him. It was a Saturday job which I detested – cadging for food: I would sooner have pinched it.<sup>47</sup>

Arthur's presence was clearly necessary to obtain charity, but to have to do it in the company of his father was clearly a particularly shaming experience for him, despite his frequently being hungry and the high quality of the food from this source. This anecdote emphasises his contempt for his father, a theme which recurs throughout the rest of his story.

I had no respect for my father – no feeling at all. He wasn't really an invalid. It is true his sight became bad – in the end he went completely blind and got a pension - but that was only through neglect and ignorance. By the time I was nine or ten he had become a confirmed part of the casual poor, depending upon alms from the rich, and remained so for the rest of his life. A few years later we threw him out of the house and he went to live with a sister.<sup>48</sup>

Barbara Fox's idea of a 'dialectic of exposure' in working class fiction is useful in interpreting Harding's account. By revealing shameful experiences Arthur is able to claim both authenticity for his story and his personal integrity as the teller of that story.<sup>49</sup> In turn this hateful episode in his life is used to establish his adult identity as a man who would (and did) steal rather than beg. But he also indicates the long-term effect on his father when he adds to this story that his father grew to fear him: once Arthur was older and began to use violence to make his way in the world, his father called him 'the big fellow'.<sup>50</sup> We can see here that deploying children to obtain welfare could have its costs not only for the children concerned but also for their fathers who could find their masculine identities being undermined in quite profound ways.

Wives would often be the ones to deal with a range of welfare encounters in their homes, including the many middle-class philanthropic visitors.<sup>51</sup> Arthur Harding's mother, disabled after a road accident, was well-versed in obtaining charity, insisting that the children be clean and well behaved in front of the philanthropic women they dealt with. Breakfast was available to children at the local mission, but they had to go to Sunday school both morning and afternoon, something they would never have done otherwise.<sup>52</sup> Harding did not express the same kind of anger with these strategies, saving his disrespect for those who doled out charity rather than his mother. His older sister, known by everyone as Mighty, was the main earner of the family selling lemons at the market. She had the most difficult task of dealing with shops where they always owed money. His mother was the one who arranged things so that Mighty could work for the family: 'My mother came to some arrangement with the school inspector. They didn't want to summon her, my mother being a cripple, so they made

this special arrangement – twice a week she went to school and the other days she had off.<sup>53</sup> Thus the Harding family demonstrated a complex set of arrangements which shifted over the life cycle and according to the health and strength of its members, although eventually these arrangements broke down as Arthur left to live on the streets and his father was turned out of their home by Mighty; interdependence had its limits. Their use of many different kinds of welfare provision (and minor criminality) shows how norms of gender and age were actively used and negotiated to bring resources to the family and individuals within it, an example of the agency of poor families in their engagements and negotiations with welfare which Linda Gordon explored in an American context.<sup>54</sup> Assumptions and values about domestic authority in this family rarely conformed to the expectations of welfare providers, even when attempts were made to appear to conform to such expectations. Yet the failure of Harding's father to conform at least minimally to the model of independent breadwinner, and the material consequences of hunger and deprivation, were portrayed by Arthur as the root of his family's many troubles.

The growing engagements with questions of child education and welfare by the state, both nationally and locally, had the greatest potential to challenge and destabilise the domestic roles of fathers. Those who were concerned about the poor and particularly those engaged in welfare, philanthropy and social policy questions, found the blurring of authority within poor families deeply problematic.<sup>55</sup> The maintenance of social order, as they understood it, was threatened by a range of economic and social strategies which poor people were obliged to use in order to survive. In such circumstances, it was not always clear who should be targeted as welfare subjects: husbands and fathers as formal head of household; or wives as managers of the

household economy and carers for young children; or children themselves as future citizens.

One response to these tensions was to define the welfare subject as a person or group who lived outside a recognised family, and therefore was without a father or husband whose authority could be challenged. Paternalism was also a way of framing welfare relationships of this kind. Both philanthropy and state welfare could be understood as a form of substitute fatherhood, providing the protection, care and material aid for the fatherless and powerless, placing the provider and protector in a position of power and authority over the dependant recipient.<sup>56</sup> Anna Clark explores this relationship in the context of Irish orphans in this volume. Another striking example might be the concerns about young children working on the streets, vividly portrayed by journalists such as Mayhew as being inappropriately adult. The rescue missions of Dr Barnardo and others were to some extent premised on the assumption that such children did not have parents at all, and could thus be removed from the street into an institution without any interference. In practice, this sometimes proved to be incorrect, as Barnardo found when he faced hostile parents in court.<sup>57</sup>

In cases such as this, tensions between state and fathers of poor families were partly contained by the widespread use of the generic term of 'parent' when developing policy concerning children, an approach still widely used today. In many ways parents did share responsibilities, and as we have seen, there was much blurring of authority, as Pooley explores in the volume where both mothers and fathers actively engaged with educational authorities. But by using the neutral term 'parent', policy could be more easily shifted away from being directed at fathers to being negotiated with

mothers when it was implemented on the ground. Many day-to-day welfare encounters were between mothers and the middle-class women who implemented philanthropic ideas and projects throughout the nineteenth century.<sup>58</sup> As Clark demonstrates in this volume, women had some difficulty in establishing their authority in such encounters, but gradually moved into professional welfare roles. By feminising the welfare relationship, the underlying conflicts of authority between welfare and families could be mediated and thus minimise their emergence into public discourse. Potentially conflictual situations could be understood as maternal and nurturing when they occurred between women whose mutual concerns, however differently understood, could find some common ground in the territories of domestic life and motherhood.

But there were also more direct ways that parental rights and the authority of fathers were being challenged. For example, the establishment of industrial schools in the mid nineteenth century to incarcerate children found begging, destitute or deemed to be beyond parental (or Poor Law) control meant that fathers and mothers could be coerced into giving up their children on the grounds that they had failed to protect and provide for them.<sup>59</sup> One example of this kind of intervention can be seen in the childhood of Sam Shaw, who was born in 1884.<sup>60</sup>

Sam was the sixth child of eight, and was physically abused by his father until his younger brother became the focus of his father's violence. His father lost his sight and stopped working when Sam was seven, and shortly afterwards was taken away to a mental hospital. The family was broken up and Sam was sent to live with an aunt and uncle, one of many temporary homes. Once his father came out of hospital, Sam went

back to his parents who sent him out to sell matches on the street with his older sister, the family's main source of income. Finally the family went on the tramp; he was sent to the workhouse, and then to a cottage home. He expressed a mixture of feelings about this:

Family life, however poor, possesses the family ties of love. Pauperism cuts into the human love ties and mercilessly rips them asunder. On arriving at Erdington we were separated from one another. ... I forgot the past and all its troubles.<sup>61</sup>

He puts the pain of separation into an impersonal voice here rather than something he felt himself, thereby deflecting the more shameful aspects of his family life. Whether he experienced his family as a loving one he does not reveal to us, although he frequently mentions how important his brothers and sisters were to him in his childhood elsewhere in his autobiography. After about a year, the family came back together without his older siblings and travelled to London where Sam found a match-selling pitch at Victoria. After a few months, he was arrested and sent to an industrial school. He was not yet 11 years old.<sup>62</sup> His family were appalled to lose his earnings, but he remembered the relative security of industrial school as a welcome relief. He lived in institutions until he was an adult, only seeing his parents once in that time.

Sam was brought up in a complete and recognisable family, but one whose father had failed to provide for his children and this had been made visible through Sam's very public role as a breadwinner. It was this which enabled welfare authorities to successfully challenge his father's authority. It also deeply affected Sam, who longed

for a father-figure, often mentioning other men who had fulfilled this role at different times in his life. Like Arthur Harding, he bitterly resented his father's failings: 'His attitude towards me robbed me of the joy of hero-worship which every child has towards his father whom he generally looks up to as a big, big father supreme over all other fathers.'<sup>63</sup>

Another key area which directly challenged domestic authority relations was the growth of child protection policies and institutions.<sup>64</sup> It is clear, however, that it was often mothers, not fathers, who were principally targeted by child protection agencies.<sup>65</sup> We can see how complex such encounters could be in the case of Annie Barnes who was the eldest of 12 children, six of whom survived childhood.<sup>66</sup> Her mother died when she was aged 23, and she stayed at home to look after the rest. When she left home to get married her father remarried, but she was very concerned about her younger siblings who she left behind and eventually called in the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) who took her stepmother to court for neglecting them. It is interesting to note that it was the mother, not the father, who was prosecuted, perhaps because they felt it was the mother's role to care for the children and not the father's responsibility. But also as a stepmother, she was an 'outsider' and it might have been easier to for family and neighbours to blame her when things went badly. Annie herself had an ambivalent view of her father's responsibility. She said: 'My father didn't care about us kids. He kept us and that was it.'<sup>67</sup> And she repeated again: 'Our old man didn't care about us kids. We worked there and lived upstairs, that was all.'<sup>68</sup> While these statements affirms the centrality of the breadwinner role and her father's ability to provide, it also shows deep anger that his emotional engagement and concern for her and her siblings was so limited.

While the NSPCC may not have thought it was his fault that they were neglected, in her eyes he had a moral responsibility which he had failed. The guilt and shame of her siblings being very publicly shown to be neglected was clearly something which still rankled even at the age of 92. In Annie's narrative, the division of responsibility in her family may have reflected the dominant welfare paradigm of masculine provider, but it was seen as woefully inadequate in the context of the more complex and interdependent arrangements of poor families.

### **Entering the workhouse**

There was one core welfare institution which was not a novel intervention: the New Poor Law, which since 1834 had explicit powers to break up a family if they were destitute.<sup>69</sup> The workhouse system was the symbolic as well as physical means for cutting off day to day relationships between family members as a punishment and deterrent to those who sought assistance from the state. The workhouse was a celibate institution deliberately policing the sexual and reproductive practices of families to prevent further paupers being born or recruited through 'moral contamination'. The workhouse system deliberately used shame not only to discipline its inhabitants, but also to divide communities. To submit to the workhouse, to wear its uniform, and to have its shadow cast across a family's history was to lose any claims for respectability among neighbours, friends and family for the majority of the working class, not only at the time of incarceration but for their lifetime, and their children's lifetimes as well. George Hewins argued about this with his wife. One of his jobs was to repair the local workhouse roof, and while there he saw the children of a workmate living there.

Who should I see but Hilda Rowe and Violet. They'd had their hair chopped off, weared long Holland pinnas with big red letters: STRATFORD-ON-AVON WORKHOUSE. ... those red letters haunted me all day... when I got home I told the missus but she said: 'It's to *distinguish* em.'

'Oo from?'

'From kiddies oo's Dad's workin! Ow would you like our George took for a pauper?'

'Teddy Rowe *was* workin' I said, 'till e went to the Infirmary.' He'd got T.B. They took you to the Infirmary to die.

I was angry: 'There's no need for them red letters! The pauper kids is distinguished alright! You can spot em straight away... when they marches out a-night [from school back to the workhouse], the other kiddies is callin "Workhus brats!" after em. ...

I could see she didn't think the same as me. She was wrong, the Guardians was wrong, and all of us, letting it happen. Why was you punished for being poor? 'Why do they part husbands and wives in the workhus, mother an kiddies, tell me that? Some sent one way, some t'other, according? It's cruel!' 'Shut up, George,' said the missus.<sup>70</sup>

Hewins was one of many autobiographers who railed against the workhouse and its regimes. While the humiliations of the workhouse affected all who entered, it had particularly devastating impacts on masculine identities. To be deprived of civil rights, to be incarcerated, to be cold, hungry and uncomfortable were not unfamiliar experiences to many working-class men. But what the workhouse deprived them of was their wives and children, their position as head of their household and their

standing in the world as providers and protectors. To expose themselves and their dependents to shame as well as deprivation was what was so bitterly felt.

To explore the workings of the Poor Law on domestic authority, we turn to another example, the story Frank Steele told in his autobiography about his family's struggles with poverty and the poor law.<sup>71</sup> He was born in the 1860s and his autobiography was written around 1919, by which time he had emigrated with his wife and two sons to North America. It followed many of the conventions of the genre of working class autobiographies, including a polemic about the punitive treatment of his father and himself by the poor law authorities.

Frank Steele's parents held a rather ambiguous class position. He describes his father as a 'gentleman' and 'a bit of a snob', and his mother as coming from a well-off family.<sup>72</sup> When in work, his father was employed as a draper, then a salesman, but seemed unable to stay in work for very long, especially after his sight began to fail. His mother was twenty years younger, and had worked as a barmaid. His childhood in Hackney, East London, was characterised by short periods of respectable poverty between longer periods of severe deprivation. This included times when his father was in debtor's prison, other times when the family received outdoor relief, and a period of four years spent in the workhouse. He had an older brother, who (unlike Frank) was sent to dame school and then to boarding school, supported by a local charity. He had two younger brothers, both of whom died in infancy. The family had very few contacts with wider kin networks, perhaps because they were much poorer than most of their relations.

When poverty finally reached a crisis point, the family was initially rescued by his mother's sister, who bought them a mangle to bring in some much-needed income. This enterprise disrupted the clear divisions of gender and generation which they had struggled to maintain: Frank and his brother looked after the baby, while his father turned the mangle and delivered laundry. He did so in the evenings: 'Such was my mother's unwillingness to have my father publicly identified with the mangling trade'.<sup>73</sup> His wife was attempting to minimise his exposure to shame; not only did he have to rely on his wife's earnings, but was obliged to assist her in a highly feminised area of work in a public way. Tensions arose leading to rows and even swearing by his father, shocking to his children who had never heard their parents argue or use course language before.

The family was finally forced to go into the workhouse for several years. They emerged from its clutches through the efforts of this same aunt, who brought his mother out and established a small cookshop. After a year they had earned enough to bring Frank and his father out to join them and re-establish a home life together. His older brother returned home from school to begin earning, as did Frank who from the age of 12 began to work his own way out of poverty. After one more short-lived business venture, his father no longer pretended to work: 'no longer worrying about "getting something to do"'.<sup>74</sup>

The results of his father's inability to provide for his family were profound. Frank expressed a great affection and love for his father, but it is clear that he could not respect him. He felt that the demands made upon his father were unreasonable:

There runs through all our false social consciousness a pervading and prevailing inference and implication conventionally applicable to a man placed as he was: some absurd axiomatic fiction about “standing up” and “being a man” – showing what is “in him” (deuced little when he is at starving point!), and rot of that kinds, that stirs me to anger against its parrot-like enunciators.’<sup>75</sup>

Despite his sympathy, the shame of his father’s failure permeates his account. Before the cataclysm, he describes his home life as revolving around his father’s return from work each day. His mother would prepare their tea by firelight, only lighting candles when his father arrived home, which would be followed by storytelling, jokes and reading out bits of the newspaper.<sup>76</sup> This echoes John Gillis’ insights about the role of gendered rituals of the threshold which served to emphasise the home as a wife’s domain, where men’s coming and going was marked by welcoming and leave-taking each day.<sup>77</sup> Steele goes on to contrast this ordered vision of domestic life with the degradation of the rituals of entering the workhouse:

It struck me with a distinct feeling of outrage on my father’s dignity that he could be (by a man who, though larger, was so palpably inferior to himself) ordered to go here and there – to do this and do that. To take a bath, for instance. “Everybody takes a bath fust thing here,” the old fellow explained. It was doubly an outrage when my father had to strip before us boys. We all bathed together in a big tank that would perhaps have held twenty.<sup>78</sup>

Steele articulates here the humiliations incurred in marking the transition from independence to pauperism. The bath marked the stripping away of his father's former life as head of his family and the emergence from the bath into the new, humiliating role of pauper. It exposed him to his son, and everyone else, as a failure as a man and a father.

Then – horror upon horrors!....when I saw our dear old Dad arrayed in the ugly brown cloth coat with brass buttons, which I had seen often in the streets and learned to despise as something wholly alien and remote from our family outlook or concerns, my young mind was simply ablaze with the sense of accumulated abasement and indignity. I shall never forget it!<sup>79</sup>

As we saw with Hewins, the workhouse uniform provoked the deepest shame, representing a public and inescapable display of the family's descent into the abyss. For Steele's family, it was a shock from which they never really recovered:

My experiences of that day were burned into my brain as with a branding-iron. And though my father has now been dead for over a third of a century, my ears tingle and the blood rises hot in my face on his behalf as I write.<sup>80</sup>

His father never spoke of this episode in their lives again. In this narrative, Scheff's outlines of the social meanings of shame emerge very clearly. The workhouse experience finally undermined any claim his father could make to an adequate masculine identity and his reaction was to withdraw into himself, a process of social alienation in Scheff's terms. The workhouse also drove his family apart from each

other and from their wider social networks with the notable exception of his aunt. But by sharing this shame with his readers Steele found a way to build a sense of shared injustice by demanding change in the poor laws, and refusing to accept the alienation that silence would entail. Steel's autobiography thus falls within the longstanding themes of anti-poor law discourses, including the fiction of Dickens and many other first-hand accounts, in which issues of shame could be explicitly articulated as part of the history of working-class resistance.

However, his experience of pauperisation was not a common one, even for the very poor. The proportion of families incarcerated in workhouses compared with other kinds of paupers was very small, variously estimated at 4-10% by the end of the nineteenth century.<sup>81</sup> Its punishing regimes and in particular its disruption of familial authority relations, could thus be seen as a successful deterrent. We have seen throughout this chapter some of the many strategies which families drew on to avoid the workhouse, including drawing on kinship, charity, philanthropy, crime, and even other kinds of incarceration such as industrial schools. Given their very limited choices, some destitute men even deserted their families rather than face the workhouse. George Lloyd (born around 1850) wrote about the time after his mother had died after giving birth to her seventh child:

My father was terribly depressed at the loss of Mother and work getting slack he was nearly demented. Then one day [he went] down the docks looking for work. A ship was going out minus a carpenter. So Father jumped aboard. She was bound for the West Indies. We children waited up all night. But no father returned.<sup>82</sup>

His grandparents had to send the children to the workhouse, and some years later when George's father returned: 'He went to the Poor Law authorities right away to get us children. He paid for their keep which they eagerly took and had him arrested for deserting us. Which everyone said was an injustice. However, he had one month in Cardiff jail.'<sup>83</sup> When he emerged from prison he found George, offered to take him to London and look after him, but George (aged about 13) refused to leave the family who had taken him in when he was homeless, given him work as a miner and treated him as 'family'. This led to a long break from his father, brothers and sisters. He could not easily set aside the resentment at being abandoned, the hardships of life without a father, and the shame of being sent to the workhouse.

For some, respectability had long been abandoned as a goal, and for these families the workhouse was treated as just another resource.<sup>84</sup> Poor Law officials were constantly attempting to restrict the ways that families and individuals would move in and out of workhouses to suit their own needs and desires. Charlie Chaplin remembered his mother taking him out of the workhouse school for a day so they could see each other outside of the normal three monthly visiting times, a process which involved days of bureaucratic procedures of checking out and readmission.<sup>85</sup> Sam Shaw remembered using the casual wards as 'bed and breakfast' each night as his family walked from Birmingham to London to improve their fortunes.<sup>86</sup> In the desperate straits of these families, social shame was of little use as a deterrent.

But in most circumstances, the workhouse represented the most drastic form of state intervention in family life, challenging the core elements of masculinity and

adulthood as a way of disciplining poor families into submission to the most rigorous hardships, both inside and outside its grim walls. Pauperism for the able-bodied man was always coloured by the assumption that it was the result of a failure of individual character rather than social circumstances, and this was the basis for the shame which was attached to it. Failure came at a very high cost to a man and his family, not only in terms of his inner sense of who he was, but also in the display of outward signs of humiliation: the uniform, the social stigma demonstrated by the taunts suffered by his children, and the withdrawal of the rights of citizenship.

### **Turn of the century reforms**

Working class men and women had actively opposed the humiliations of the New Poor Law since its inception in 1834 both politically through the labour and socialist movements and through developing alternative forms of welfare such as friendly societies. Working-class men and women became eligible for office as Poor Law Guardians in 1896 and began to press for reform from within. For example, Percy Wall wrote about his father who was an active trade union and Labour Representation Committee member, and was elected as Guardian in Fulham, London in 1904, contributing evidence to the Poor Law enquiry of 1909.<sup>87</sup> Percy remembered: 'My father often raged inwardly at his inability to help where he would, when satisfied in his own mind of genuine hardship.'<sup>88</sup> His father successfully campaigned for old couples in the Fulham workhouse to be able to live together, a provision available from 1896 but not always implemented.

His mother and aunt had spent some time in a workhouse as children after their father (his grandfather) died leaving them penniless. He remembered his aunt being deeply affected by this experience:

She was not suited to any form of institutional life. Probably the experience of her childhood remained predominant and all the ameliorations in the way of furnishings, heat and light, ample and varied food regularly supplied, could not soften the impact of institutionalism. Aunt was a natural rebel: she could impose discipline and routine but could not endure it.<sup>89</sup>

And his mother also:

The early life of my mother had not fit her for the struggle on which she was now engaged. ... She must soon have learned how to make a little go a long way. She was never guilty of waste. ... The effort was praiseworthy, if not the skill.<sup>90</sup>

His father's commitment to poor law reform sprang from his knowledge of the damaging effects of the workhouse on these sisters, but also his own family's frequently perilous state as his own health deteriorated. He found it increasingly difficult to provide for them, only avoiding the workhouse himself by calling on relatives and comrades for assistance.

Attempts to reform the Poor Law were gathering strength by the turn of the century, driven by socialists and the trade union movement, who demanded justice, not charity

or pauperism.<sup>91</sup> Feminists demanded greater recognition and support for wives and mothers in managing poverty rather than the breaking up of families, most strikingly seen in the work of the Women's Cooperative Guild.<sup>92</sup> Women guardians (elected from 1875) were also noted for their efforts to de-stigmatise and redefine poverty.<sup>93</sup> For example, Hannah Mitchell reported that her (female) predecessor as Poor Law Guardian had successfully campaigned to abolish workhouse dress for children in Ashton under Lyne by 1904. Their efforts were reinforced by wider concerns about the ill effects of institutional life on children, being recast as future citizens of the nation.<sup>94</sup> By the end of the nineteenth century, workhouses had lost many of their original functions to more specialised institutions such as schools, hospitals, asylums for the mentally ill, and homes for the elderly. The de-pauperisation of these institutions was slow and uneven, but, for example, those receiving free medical treatment through the poor law system gradually regained rights of family life, and also from 1885 no longer lost the franchise.<sup>95</sup> The Royal Commission on the Poor Law of 1909 recognised these changes, and to a large extent welcomed them. The question which most deeply troubled the Commission was how to manage the able-bodied pauper, that is those men (and a few women) who were fit enough for the labour market but who were still destitute, unable or unwilling to provide for themselves and their dependents. The Minority Report, with its origins in Fabian ideas about the role of the state and welfare, marked the growing importance of the concept of unemployment as a structural rather than an individual failing.<sup>96</sup> Under their proposals for dismantling the Poor Law, the existing requirement of the able-bodied to work would be transformed into a requirement to *seek* work. Benefits were to be based on the individual as a worker, who was assumed to be a head of household with dependents, much like the Friendly Society model. In these ways, masculinity based

on the breadwinner model could be protected, not undermined, and the social shame associated with pauperisation could be removed.

## **Conclusion**

In this chapter, stories of shame, anger and resistance have been used to explore the tensions surrounding domestic authority and masculinity in families which struggled for survival in the face of poverty. The interdependent relationships of support and care in such families challenged two touchstones of adult masculinity: the role of provider for dependents and the position of head of household. Multiple sources of income and support for poor families could undermine a husband and father's position while the vital work of a wife in managing scarce resources further blurred questions of domestic authority. The wider context of working-class demands for employment rights and the suffrage demonstrated a desire to resolve these tensions as the labour movement focussed on measures which would enable men to successfully assert these two roles. The dominant model of family life of clear, hierarchical distinctions between the place of men, women and children for both respectable working-class families and middle-class philanthropists thus sat uncomfortably with the day-to-day exigencies of life for the poor.

It is in the encounters between those in need and the many sources of welfare to which they resorted that these domestic and political tensions became visible. Many forms of charity required families to deploy women and children to access their resources, thus bypassing questions of men's responsibilities and failings. Both philanthropy and the growing number of state providers tended to use women to work

with the poor, further diffusing and feminising the welfare relationship. Welfare was also concentrated on those who it was assumed had no father or husband to support and protect them, even where this was patently not the case. Thus welfare subjects were constructed around norms of feminine (and young) helplessness which confirmed the dominant model of family authority relations rather than challenging it overtly.

On the other hand, the Poor Laws were directly aimed at disciplining the poor through the pauperisation of men who were forced to turn to its provision to keep their families alive, explicitly removing rights to family life and citizenship, challenging men's domestic authority and social standing. The shame which accompanied pauperism was deliberately generated through such measures as the wearing of uniforms, not only by husbands and fathers deemed to have failed as men, but also their children whose lives were blighted by their experiences in the workhouse system and the social shaming that persisted afterwards. Thus it is not surprising that the Poor Law was widely hated by the working classes, and formed the focus of day-to-day acts of resistance and wider political action which became more intense by the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. As Poor Law provision fragmented and diversified and as working class Guardians worked for reforms from the inside, other forms of state welfare began to emerge. One of the long-term results was to be the shaping of benefits around the model of friendly societies which supported dominant ideals of family authority rather than challenging and undermining men's positions as husbands and fathers.

Thus, the relationships between families and welfare in this period were being shaped by acute tensions about men's authority within families and ideas about the rights and responsibilities associated with adult masculinity. As welfare regimes and the assumptions behind them were contested, disrupted and subverted, the blurring of authority which had long been a necessary feature of life for the poor became more visible and problematic. Solutions which would reassert and strengthen families along normative lines were constantly being sought, but as we still see today, rarely completely achieved.

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<sup>2</sup> A. Hewins (ed.) (1982) *The Dillen: Memories of a Man of Stratford-upon-Avon*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press).

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*, p. 93.

<sup>4</sup> L. Davidoff, M. Doolittle, K. Holden, J. Fink (1998) *The Family Story: Blood, Contract and Intimacy, 1830-1960* (London: Longman), ch. 4.

<sup>5</sup> S. Rose (1992) *Limited Livelihoods: Gender and Class in Nineteenth-Century England* (London: Routledge), p. 138-48. See also Creighton's discussion of these changes in C. Creighton (1996) 'The Rise of the Male Breadwinner Family: a Reappraisal', *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 38(2), pp. 310-337.

<sup>6</sup> There were significant differences in welfare provision in Scotland, Ireland and to a lesser extent Wales which are beyond the scope of this paper.

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<sup>7</sup> Thus for example, provision for the sick began to focus on higher standards of medical care and the disqualifications associated with pauperism were removed from those entering workhouse infirmaries in 1885. P. Thane (1996) *Foundations of the Welfare State* (London: Longman), pp. 31-37. See also M. Daunton (2007) *Wealth and Welfare: an Economic and Social History of Britain 1851-1951* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), p. 527-532.

<sup>8</sup> L. H. Lees (1998) *The Solidarities of Strangers: The English Poor Laws and the People, 1700-1948* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), p. 318; H. Hendrick (2003) *Child Welfare: Historical Dimensions, Contemporary Debate* (Bristol: Policy Press), p. 69.

<sup>9</sup> Report of the Interdepartmental Committee on Physical Deterioration 1904, Cd 2175, 2210 and 2186 Vol. xxxi.

<sup>10</sup> C. Booth (1902-3) *Life and Labour of the People in London* (London: Macmillan); B. S. Rowntree (1901) *Poverty, A Study of Town Life* (London: Macmillan).

<sup>11</sup> L. H. Lees, *The Solidarities of Strangers*, ch. 9.

<sup>12</sup> Hendrick discusses this in the context of child welfare: H. Hendrick *Child Welfare*, p. 19-20.

<sup>13</sup> D. Vincent (1991) *Poor Citizens: the State and the Poor in Twentieth Century Britain* (London and New York: Longman), pp. 24-5.

<sup>14</sup> For example: R. Gagnier (1991) *Subjectivities: A History of Self-Representation in Britain 1832-1920* (New York: Oxford University Press); J. Peneff (1990) 'Myths in Life Stories', in R. Samuel and P. Thompson (eds.) *The Myths We Live By* (London: Routledge). See also the discussion about autobiography as a source by Jane Hamlett in this volume.

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<sup>15</sup> Peneff discusses the silencing effect of shame in shaping life stories, J. Peneff, 'Myths in Life Stories'.

<sup>16</sup> In the middle-class autobiographies analysed by Donna Loftus, few contain details of their adult family life: D. Loftus (2005) 'The Self in Society: Middle-Class Men and Autobiography' in D. Amigoni (ed.) *Life Writing and Victorian Culture: The Nineteenth Century* (Aldershot: Ashgate), pp. 67-86. The same can be found in working-class autobiographies: M. Doolittle (1996) 'Missing Fathers: Assembling a History of Fatherhood in Mid-Nineteenth-Century England' (PhD Thesis, University of Essex), p. 176.

<sup>17</sup> These taped conversations were then edited by his daughter-in-law: A. Hewins (ed.) *The Dillen*, pp. v, 178.

<sup>18</sup> See L.H. Lees, *The Solidarities of Strangers*, ch. 9.

<sup>19</sup> J. Burnett, D. Vincent, and D. Mayall (1984) *The Autobiography of the Working Class: an Annotated Critical Bibliography* (Hassocks: Harvester Press), p. x.

<sup>20</sup> A. Hewins (ed.) *The Dillen*, p. ix.

<sup>21</sup> D. Vincent (1981) *Bread, Knowledge and Freedom: a Study of Nineteenth-Century Working Class Autobiography* (London and New York: Methuen), p. 23. For a discussion of popular literatures and poverty, see P. Joyce (1991) *Visions of the People: Industrial England and the Question of Class 1848-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pp. 294-300.

<sup>22</sup> A. August (2001) 'A Culture of Consolation? Rethinking Politics in Working-Class London, 1870-1914', *Historical Research* 74(183), pp. 202-204.

<sup>23</sup> T. J. Scheff (2000) 'Shame and the Social Bond: A Sociological Theory', *Sociological Theory* 18(1), p. 84.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid*, p.98.

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- <sup>25</sup> R. Sennett and J. Cobb (1973) *The Hidden Injuries of Class* (New York: Vintage Books), pp. 45-49, quoted in T. J. Scheff, 'Shame and the Social Bond', p. 96.
- Carolyn Steedman also refers to this research and its silencing of working class women's experience. C. Steedman (1986). *Landscape for a Good Woman: a Story of Two Lives* (London: Virago), p. 113.
- <sup>26</sup> C. Steedman (1992) 'History and Autobiography: Different Pasts', in idem, *Past Tenses: Essays on Writing, Autobiography and History* (London: Rivers Oram), p.43.
- <sup>27</sup> See, for example W. Seccombe (1993) *Weathering the Storm: Working Class Families from the Industrial Revolution to the Fertility Decline* (London and New York: Verso); E. Roberts (1984) *A Woman's Place: An Oral History of Working-Class Women 1890-1940* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell); E. Ross (1993) *Love & Toil: Motherhood in Outcast London 1870-1918* (Oxford: Oxford University Press); A. Davin (1996) *Growing Up Poor: Home, School and Street in London 1870-1914* (London: Rivers Oram Press).
- <sup>28</sup> S. D'Cruze (1998) *Crimes of Outrage: Sex, Violence and Victorian Working Women* (London: UCL Press), ch. 4.
- <sup>29</sup> C. Creighton, 'The Rise of the Male Breadwinner Family'.
- <sup>30</sup> P. Joyce (1993) 'Work' in F. M. L. Thompson (ed.) *The Cambridge Social History of Britain 1750-1950. Vol. 2: People and their Environment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pp. 149-56.
- <sup>31</sup> J. Harris (1972) *Unemployment and Politics: a Study in English Social Policy 1886-1914* (Oxford: Clarendon Press), p. 31; J. Burnett (1994) *Idle Hands: the Experience of Unemployment, 1790-1990* (London and New York: Routledge), pp. 172-4.
- <sup>32</sup> For a discussion of this division in poor London families, see E. Ross, *Love and Toil*, pp. 78-81.

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<sup>33</sup> Davidoff et al. *The Family Story*, p. 121.

<sup>34</sup> For the early modern period, see A. Shepard (2003) *Meanings of Manhood in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press). For the early nineteenth century, see A. Clark (1995) *The Struggle for the Breeches: Gender and the Making of the British Working Class* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press); For the middle class in the nineteenth century see J. Tosh (1999) *A Man's Place: Masculinity and the Middle-Class Home in Victorian England* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press).

<sup>35</sup> M. Doolittle, 'Missing Fathers', pp. 87-97; C. Pateman (1989) *The Disorder of Women* (Cambridge: Polity Press), pp. 183-4.

<sup>36</sup> M. McCormack (2007) "'Married Men and the Fathers of Families': Fatherhood and Franchise Reform in Britain' in T. L. Broughton and H. Rogers (eds.) *Gender and Fatherhood in the Nineteenth Century* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan).

<sup>37</sup> M. L. Shanley (1989) *Feminism, Marriage and the Law in Victorian England, 1850-1895* (New York: Princeton University Press).

<sup>38</sup> For example, J. Tosh, *A Man's Place*, p. 90.

<sup>39</sup> K. McClelland (2000) 'England's Greatness, the Working Man' in C. Hall, K. McClelland and J. Rendall (eds.) *Defining the Victorian Nation: Class, Race, Gender and the Reform Act of 1867* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).

<sup>40</sup> S. S. Holton (1986) *Feminism and Democracy: Women's Suffrage and Reform Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), ch. 3.

<sup>41</sup> D. Weinbren (2002) "'Imagined Families': Research on Friendly Societies", *Mitteilungsblatt des Institutus fur die Geschichte der sozialen Bewegungen* 27, pp. 129-31; S. Cordery (2003) *British Friendly Societies 1750-1914* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan), p. 39.

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- <sup>42</sup> K. McClelland (2000) 'England's Greatness, the Working Man', pp. 93-4.
- <sup>43</sup> P. Thane (1991) 'Visions of Gender in the Making of the British Welfare State: the Case of Women in the British Labour Party and Social Policy, 1906-1945' in G. Bock and P. Thane (eds.) *Maternity and Gender Politics: Women and the rise of the European welfare states, 1880s-1950s* (London and New York: Routledge), pp.27-9.
- <sup>44</sup> M. Levine-Clark (2006) 'The Gendered Economy of Family Liability: Intergenerational Relationships and Poor Law Relief in England's Black Country 1871-1911', *Journal of British Studies* 45(1), pp. 72-89.
- <sup>45</sup> But on the blurring between charity and mutual aid in this period see D. Weinbren (2007) 'Supporting Self-Help: Charity, Mutuality and Reciprocity in Nineteenth-Century Britain' in P. Bridgen and B. Harris (eds.) *Charity and Mutual Aid in Europe and North America Since 1800* (New York: Routledge).
- <sup>46</sup> S. D'Cruze and J. Turnbull (1995) 'Fellowship and Family: Oddfellows' Lodges in Preston and Lancaster, c.1830-1890', *Urban History* 22(1), pp. 46-7.
- <sup>47</sup> A. Harding with R. Samuel (1981) *East End Underworld: Chapters in the Life of Arthur Harding* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul), p. 29.
- <sup>48</sup> A. Harding, *East End Underworld*, p. 30.
- <sup>49</sup> P. Fox (1994) *Class Fictions: Shame and Resistance in the British Working-Class Novel, 1890-1945* (Durham and London: Duke University Press), p. 93.
- <sup>50</sup> A. Harding with R. Samuel, *East End Underworld*, p. 28-9.
- <sup>51</sup> E. Ross (1990), 'Hungry Children: Housewives and London Charity, 1870-1918' in P. Mandler (ed.) *The Uses of Charity: the Poor on Relief in the Nineteenth-Century Metropolis* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press), pp. 161-196.
- <sup>52</sup> A. Harding, *East End Underworld*, p. 27.
- <sup>53</sup> A. Harding, *East End Underworld*, p. 31.

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<sup>54</sup> L. Gordon (1988) *Heroes of Their Own Lives: the Politics and History of Family Violence, Boston, 1860-1960* (New York: Viking).

<sup>55</sup> See Siân Pooley's chapter in this volume.

<sup>56</sup> This position had long been held by the monarch in wardship relationships, see M. Doolittle, 'Missing Fathers', p. 35.

<sup>57</sup> Barnardo was taken to court twice by parents who wanted their children returned to them. In one case which went to the House of Lords, the mother of an illegitimate child (who had then married) was successful in having her son returned to her and her husband's care. *Barnardo v. McHugh* [1891] A.C. 388. See also L. Murdoch (2006) *Imagined Orphans. Poor Families, Child Welfare and Contested Citizenship in London* (New Brunswick, New Jersey and London: Rutgers University Press). For a discussion of the ways Barnardo used photography and other representations of orphan children see S. Koven (2006) *Slumming: Sexual and Social Politics in Victorian London* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press), ch. 2.

<sup>58</sup> E. Ross (2007) *Slum Travellers: Ladies and London Poverty, 1860-1920* (Berkeley: University of California Press); H. Rogers (2006) 'Women and Liberty' in P. Mandler (ed.) *Liberty and Authority in Victorian Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), pp. 125-155.

<sup>59</sup> H. Hendrick (2003) *Child Welfare*, pp. 84-6.

<sup>60</sup> S. Shaw (1946) *Guttersnipe* (London: Sampson Low, Marson & Co.) This is a written memoir, published just after the Second World War just as Beveridge's welfare state was coming into being.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid*, p.27-8.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid*, p. 35

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<sup>63</sup> Ibid, p. 5. It is interesting that both Harding and Shaw were involved in right-wing politics in the interwar period, Harding joining Moseley's fascists, and Shaw working as a public speaker for right-wing causes.

<sup>64</sup> H. Hendrick, *Child Welfare*, ch. 2; G. Behlmer (1998) *Friends of the Family: the English Home and its Guardians, 1850-1940* (Stanford: Stanford University Press). See also Siân Pooley's chapter in this volume.

<sup>65</sup> M. Arnot (1994) 'Infant Death, Child Care and the State: The Baby Farming Scandal and the First Infant Life Protection Legislation of 1872', *Continuity and Change*, 9, pp. 271-311.

<sup>66</sup> A. Barnes (1980) *Tough Annie: From Suffragette to Stepney Councillor* (London: Stepney Books Publications). This text was produced through interviewing Annie as part of a local history project in 1979.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid, p. 21.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid, p. 23.

<sup>69</sup> L. H. Lees, *The Solidarities of Strangers*; M. MacKinnon (1987) 'English Poor Law Policy and the Crusade Against Outrelief', *Journal of Economic History*, 47, pp. 603-625; M. A. Crowther (1981) *The Workhouse System 1834-1929: the History of an English Social Institution* (London: Batsford Academic and Educational Ltd); F. Driver (1993) *Power and Pauperism: the Workhouse System, 1834-1884* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).

<sup>70</sup> A. Hewins (ed.), *The Dillens*, pp. 72-3.

<sup>71</sup> F. Steele (1939) *Ditcher's Row: a Tale of the Older Charity* (London: Sidgwick & Jackson).

<sup>72</sup> Ibid, pp. 10 and 26.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid, p. 70.

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<sup>74</sup> Ibid, p. 234.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid, pp. 72-3.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid, p. 41.

<sup>77</sup> J. R. Gillis (1996) *A World of Their Own Making: Myth, Ritual, and the Quest for Family Values* (New York: Basic Books), pp. 193-5.

<sup>78</sup> F. Steele, *Ditcher's Row*, p. 79

<sup>79</sup> Ibid, p. 79.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid, pp. 79-80.

<sup>81</sup> For a discussion of the counting of workhouse inmates see M. A. Crowther, *The Workhouse System*, pp. 226-235.

<sup>82</sup> G. Lloyd (n.d.) *The Autobiography of 'Georgie Brawd'*, p.6. This was an unpublished memoir.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid, p. 22.

<sup>84</sup> L. H. Lees (1990) 'Survival of the Unit: Welfare Policies and Family Maintenance in Nineteenth-Century London' in P. Mandler (ed.) *The Uses of Charity: the Poor on Relief in the Nineteenth-Century Metropolis* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press), pp. 68-91.

<sup>85</sup> C. Chaplin (1964) *My Autobiography* (London: the Bodley Head), p.21.

<sup>86</sup> S. Shaw, *Guttersnipe*, p. 29.

<sup>87</sup> P. Wall (n.d.) *Hour at Eve*, unpublished ms, p. 17.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid, p. 19.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid, p. 25.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid, p. 68.

<sup>91</sup> L. H. Lees, *The Solidarities of Strangers*, pp. 305-8.

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<sup>92</sup> As demonstrated in M. Llewellyn Davies (ed.) (1977) *Life as We Have Known It by Co-operative Working Women* (London: Virago).

<sup>93</sup> H. Mitchell (1984) *The Hard Way Up: the Autobiography of Hannah Mitchell, Suffragette and Rebel* (London: Virago), p. 122.

<sup>94</sup> H. Hendrick, *Child Welfare*, ch. 2; see also the chapter by Anna Clark in this volume.

<sup>95</sup> P. Thane, *Foundations of the Welfare State*, p. 35.

<sup>96</sup> B. Webb and S. Webb (1909) *The Break-Up of the Poor Law: Being Part One of the Minority Report of the Poor Law Commission* (London: Longmans, Green and Co.); I. Gazeley and P. Thane (1998) 'Patterns of Visibility: Unemployment in Britain during the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries' in G. Lewis (ed.) *Forming Nation, Framing Welfare* (London and New York: Routledge), pp. 182-226.