

## CHAPTER FOUR

# Family, Community, and Sociability

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In 1875, twelve-year-old pupil Frank Bunting diligently wrote a long essay on “The Albatross” during free time at his school, the Croydon Friends’ School, a small Quaker boarding school near London.<sup>1</sup> By doing so, he was most likely surpassing the educational achievements of his widowed mother, Lydia, who at age twelve had already started working in the family business after her own mother was widowed.<sup>2</sup> Frank’s experience suggests the impact of the rise of schooling in nineteenth-century Western societies. However, if we take Lydia and Frank’s lives together, we can see other influences on education: the priority on maintaining the family unit and traditions of formal or informal apprenticeship within families.

Family and education were intertwined in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in a range of ways. The shifting values and habits of families shaped pedagogies, books, and institutions, while families intervened in schoolchildren’s lives and the running of institutions. Families facilitated informal educational practices such as conversation and reading, and attendance at clubs and societies. This chapter examines individual experiences such as Frank’s in order to consider the enduring influence of family on the development of education in this period. Family, as a growing body of research suggests, was vital to imperial and global networks and economic strategies.<sup>3</sup> British families, in particular, benefited from their global position, with even small businesses tied to the slave trade, plantations, and the transcontinental flow of goods.<sup>4</sup> In the “family enterprise,” education was a key strategy to secure this imperial and global position.<sup>5</sup>

Much of the work in histories of education focuses on the rise of institutions such as schools and colleges. Indeed, the nation played an important role in the rise of institutional education, as campaigners and educators were prominent in political networks, institutions were subject to state policies, and schools and colleges were tasked with selecting books and activities that promoted national identities and histories.<sup>6</sup> Yet these were also transnational phenomena. Networks of educators and organizations, policies and institutional structures, and pedagogies all crossed national boundaries.<sup>7</sup> As a result, emphasis has shifted away from the “trickle down” of educational practices from nation-state and metropole to other parts of the world, instead examining the more complex patterns of interaction and identification between institutions, associations, and communities in different geographical locations.<sup>8</sup> This scholarship largely focuses on institutions in order to develop our understanding of the entangled networks and systems that emerged in a period of colonization and globalization.

However, education also expanded due to the growing number of middle-class families seeking schools and colleges to instill the values of domesticity, public service, and self-improvement, which would ensure the family’s financial security and success.<sup>9</sup> British colonization was often justified in terms of its spreading domestic and public virtues through legislation, policies, missionary activities, and education.<sup>10</sup> Therefore, family did not exist merely within national bounds but was an ideal shaping politics, personal life, and education across the world.<sup>11</sup> Family is a promising scholarly lens, as it brings into view the varied familial strategies, educational spaces, and forms of childcare, chores, and work that characterize education across the world, and complicates a chronological narrative of the rise of institutional provision.<sup>12</sup>

This chapter uses the educational experiences of four learners—Frank Bunting (1862–1910), Anna Legge (1865–1946), William Barron (c. 1865–?), and Sydney Frankenburg (1881–1935)—to reexamine the role of family in shaping experiences of education. While Frank, Anna, Sydney, and William were educated in Britain, the chapter highlights how family practices in Britain were shaped by the imperial and global circulation of ideals, pedagogies, books, and clubs and societies. The chapter also draws attention to their families’ global and imperial connections and their encounters with people and places outside Britain. Examining such circulations, connections, and encounters has enabled historians to challenge existing historiographical assumptions about the “trickle down” of influence from the nation state, or from the West to other regions.<sup>13</sup> This includes a rich body of biographical studies that provide intimate insight into the economic and personal benefits imperialism brought to individual families or groups of interconnected families.<sup>14</sup> A biographical approach has also benefited histories of education by providing a more individual perspective on overarching developments, particularly in a period when the gradual emergence of state education meant most learners continued to vary considerably in their

experiences.<sup>15</sup> Indeed, these individual variations are a key characteristic of education in this period, as demographers emphasize that the modern life cycle—with a neat trajectory of home, school attendance, work or further education, and marriage—did not emerge until the middle of the twentieth century.<sup>16</sup> The family therefore provides a powerful lens on education in this period by connecting the ideals, institutions, and practices that were circulating globally with the uneven and varying opportunities and expectations at a local level.

## FAMILY

In 1884, eighteen-year-old pupil Anna Legge published an essay on “Women in China” in the *Oxford High School Magazine*, at a newly established girls’ high school in Oxford, England. Anna was benefiting from the expansion in girls’ schooling across Britain. However, her essay also gestured toward her family. Her father was the missionary and scholar of Chinese literature, James Legge, and by displaying her knowledge of his specialism, Anna’s essay draws attention to the continued importance of family conversation, home education, and familial intellectual traditions in her education.

From the seventeenth century onwards, European educational philosophy had represented the home as the ideal site of education. The instructive and morally improving conversations of a mother with her young children served as a model of early education for Swiss educational philosopher Johann Pestalozzi (1747–1827) and one of his collaborators, the German Friedrich Fröebel (1782–1852). Their approaches provided a new theoretical underpinning for long-standing traditions of home education.<sup>17</sup> Print production boomed in the early nineteenth century, so that educational treatises and books for home education popularized the idea of family conversation as a powerful pedagogical tool.<sup>18</sup> The give-and-take of family conversation was thought to foster the rational independent selfhood that was the ideal product of an enlightened education. The books recommended content deemed particularly engaging for young readers. First and foremost was natural history, which claimed to appeal to children’s affinity for nature, and formed the basis of the familial conversations represented in books by Maria Edgeworth, Maria Hack, and Priscilla Wakefield. Parents were to take cues from these books and draw their children into the habits of rational discussion, independent thinking, and accurate observation of the world exhibited in Anna’s essay.<sup>19</sup> Scholars frequently present this pedagogy as child-centered, as freeing the young writer to articulate their own perspectives and observation in contrast with rote-learning adult-authored books or responding to religious indoctrination.<sup>20</sup> It was also a two-way process, as instead of children passively receiving parental dictates, both children and parents honed rational and independent habits of mind through family conversation.<sup>21</sup>

The educational experiences of the four British learners in this chapter suggest the wide reach of these ideas. In 1875, for instance, thirteen-year-old Frank Bunting took on an important role as a librarian at the Croydon Friends' School.<sup>22</sup> The school library was packed with books of rational and improving conversations by authors such as Edgeworth, Hack, and Wakefield or organizations such as the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge.<sup>23</sup> In this period, the more traditional, overtly religious and didactic texts were superseded by books on factual and improving subjects.<sup>24</sup> While these publications boomed in Britain, the veneration of home education was influenced as much by European educational philosophers such as Pestalozzi, Fröbel, and Rousseau, as it was by British philosopher John Locke.<sup>25</sup> In Britain, however, the pedagogies held a special appeal for dissenting communities such as the Quaker community surrounding the Croydon Friends' School. Observation and rational recreation harmonized with the religious beliefs of dissenting authors such as Edgeworth, Hack, and Wakefield, and organizations campaigning for secular and democratic education.<sup>26</sup>

Studies have emphasized the uneven nature of the books' appeal. Like the dissenting communities in Britain, the books struck a chord with particular communities in Europe, the British Empire, and other areas of the world. A study of Spain suggests that pedagogies of home education were popular due to Catholic beliefs about the susceptibility of children's minds to sensory information and the potentially dangerous influence of strangers or other children.<sup>27</sup> The books also held a particular importance in colonial regions. There was a significant demand for books on home education among white settler families such as those in rural Australia, where access to schools was limited.<sup>28</sup> However, circulation was not constrained to imperial networks. Studies have traced the circulation of popular works beyond Britain and the British Empire to Spanish America and the United States.<sup>29</sup> This form of home education is striking in its wide and enduring appeal in this period, but instead of an even diffusion, it is important to consider how it was configured and understood by different families across vast geographical spaces.

Books on home education by Wakefield, Edgeworth, and Hack remained in the Croydon Friends' School in the 1870s, unaffected by the shift toward institutional education or the new trade in fictional children's books and periodicals from the 1860s onwards. In fact, consumption of such texts increased as the books were reprinted and recirculated in cheaper editions targeting new markets of working-class children and adult learners.<sup>30</sup> Beyond Britain, books from earlier periods were reprinted and repurposed into the twentieth century.<sup>31</sup> Moreover, rational and instructive books did not overtake more catechistic or religious children's books in all areas. Duff shows how the evangelicalism of some Cape Colony communities fueled a flurry of child-rearing books by the Dutch Reformed Church, which sold well across Europe and America, as they addressed a gap in the global market for evangelical literature.<sup>32</sup>

Likewise, home education was not neatly displaced by the rise of institutional education but endured into the twentieth century.<sup>33</sup> For instance, when Anna Legge started at Dollar Academy in Scotland in 1872 at age seven, census records for 1871 show she had previously studied under a governess.<sup>34</sup> For the majority of middle-class British school-goers like Anna, early education—learning to read and write—still happened at home.<sup>35</sup> Noting the gradual introduction of elementary education in England, historians argue that working-class British children too learnt some reading and writing at home throughout the nineteenth century.<sup>36</sup> Across the British Empire, early education remained a family activity where parents, older siblings, and other relatives could be involved in teaching.<sup>37</sup> Studies of white families in Australia and South Africa note that the lack of schools in rural areas meant home education by literate parents was often the only option.<sup>38</sup> While the numbers entering schools increased, home education remained a common feature of many children's lives and a commonplace function of the family.

For British pupils, education could implicitly signify their privileged imperial and global position. In her essay on “Women in China,” Anna Legge lamented the “general degradation” of the stereotypical Chinese girl.<sup>39</sup> The sentiment stood in implicit contrast with the family background and education that enabled her to write and publish her essay. Enlightenment notions of educability, rationality, and independence were constructed around the domination and exclusion of those “others” encountered through globalization, enslavement, and colonization.<sup>40</sup> This was not necessarily a subtle or implicit contrast. Enlightenment educational texts and children's textbooks were laden with references to the “primitive” others who lacked the supposedly civilizing influence of the British middle-class home and were therefore depicted as innately ineducable.<sup>41</sup> At school, Frank Bunting had access to a wide range of books by white colonists and missionaries observing the landscape while also promoting the conversion of enslaved, Indigenous, and Native peoples, such as Robert Moffat's *Missionary Labours and Scenes in Southern Africa* (1842), and J.J. Gurney's *A Winter in the West Indies* (1844).

In this context, Anna's remarks on Chinese girls form part of a common feature of factual and instructive books, in situating British readers as agents in colonial spaces. Girls, in particular, benefited through what Alison Twells terms a “missionary domesticity,” which carved out a female space in global and colonial politics by emphasizing their abilities to spread family life and education throughout the British Empire.<sup>42</sup> Indeed, Anna had spent her early years in the missionary circles of Hong Kong. For child readers and writers in white settlements, family and home education naturalized and justified their presence in colonial or indigenous landscapes. Australian and Canadian books represented white children as rational and knowledgeable observers and

affectionate curators of the land, while insinuating Indigenous communities lacked these qualities.<sup>43</sup>

Globalization and colonization forced some of these communities to negotiate ideals of family and education which pivoted on their exclusion. As Erin Millions has shown, white settler men who married Indigenous women in nineteenth-century Canada strategized to educate their children away from home. This was often motivated by concerns that their children's claim to respectability and status was weakened by a home life with their Indigenous mothers.<sup>44</sup> These decisions suggest the implicit racial taxonomies in Enlightenment notions of independence and rationality. However, concepts such as family and education were fluid enough to be widely adopted and adapted. Banerjee, for example, argues that middle-class families in colonial India adapted the ideal of the European mother who imparted a rational "enlightened" education to her children by combining it with the virtues of the Hindu woman.<sup>45</sup>

In other cases, these ideals were used to push back against and criticize colonization. Roldán Vera shows that children's books and textbooks imported from France and Britain had a special appeal in Spanish American countries recently freed from Spain, as they legitimated the independence, rationality, and modernity of the new nation-states.<sup>46</sup> Children too could mobilize ideals of family as a criticism of their treatment by colonial government. Lee's brief study of children's letters in interwar Nyasaland explains that multiracial boys wrote to the colonial government to demand financial support for their education from the white fathers who had abandoned them.<sup>47</sup> While from a British perspective, many families across the British Empire, and the world, lacked the European family seen as necessary for home education, there was a far from uniform response from readers in different geographical locations, who could adapt or mobilize this concept to their own ends.

While family shaped educational books and pedagogy, education shaped family bonds and relationships. A future schoolmate of Anna Legge, Violet Bonner, had contributed "The Scornful Monkey" to the mainstream periodical *Little Folks* as a small girl when learning to read and write at home.<sup>48</sup> Of course, writings such as this served an educational purpose as a practical application of children's literacy and an outlet for self-improving discussion between isolated home-educated children. Pooley<sup>49</sup> demonstrates that working-class families also wrote collaboratively, as the cheap availability of print brought contributing to mainstream periodicals in the reach of working-class children.<sup>50</sup> However, studies of British families show that such writing was equally important in consolidating the bonds between family members.<sup>51</sup> Some children took charge of writing round robins or family newspapers, which circulated via post around the extended family.<sup>52</sup> Studies of America and Germany also highlight how the process of learning to read

and write was intertwined with tasks such as letter-writing and diary-keeping, thus consolidating the bonds between family members.<sup>53</sup> The affective value of literacy practice increased for families separated by colonial employment. Education sustained the family as a “transnational institution,” as children wrote letters to relatives in Britain and the colonies.<sup>54</sup>

Education at home was not limited to literacy practice, however. Frank’s mother, Lydia Ann Bunting, began helping her mother with the family drapery business at age twelve, and when her husband died in 1866, it was this early training that helped her maintain herself and her son.<sup>55</sup> In this period, institutions began to prolong the time spent in education by many British children, but examining individual families highlights the uneven nature of this development. Lower-middle-class children continued to leave school for apprenticeships or work at fourteen or fifteen years old, and indeed fourteen was the official leaving age at the Croydon Friends’ School. While scholars note the decline of formal traditions of apprenticeship across Europe in the nineteenth century,<sup>56</sup> England in 1868 still had enough schools with a leaving age of fourteen or fifteen that they comprised one of the three classes identified by the Schools Inquiry Commission.<sup>57</sup> For many, the family continued to be a source of informal occupational training. Thus, while Lydia’s son Frank left school at fourteen for an apprenticeship, his education and apprenticeship did not interrupt longer-standing traditions, as he later took over his mother’s drapery business.<sup>58</sup>

Education remained a varied collective strategy to maintain a family’s prosperity, which might involve schooling, but could also involve the informal transmission of trade or business skills.<sup>59</sup> With the priority on the family unit, children within one family did not necessarily receive the same education. Parents might give one child a longer stint in schooling, apprentice another to the family business, but send others to acquire new skills and techniques through apprenticeships elsewhere, thus ensuring a strong and varied set of skills and training for the family as a whole.<sup>60</sup> Generally, middle-class families in this period were becoming more reliant on institutions to mediate access to the national examinations and formal qualifications increasingly necessary to enter the circles of public and professional life.<sup>61</sup> Sydney Frankenburg, the son of a Manchester rubber manufacturer, attended the Manchester Grammar School with his brother Leonard. While attending the school enabled Sydney’s brother Leonard to do national examinations and go on to Cambridge University, this was not the case for Sydney, who joined the family firm.<sup>62</sup> While Frank, Anna, and Sydney all benefited from the expansion of educational institutions, their educational experiences cannot be reduced to school attendance. Instead, their lives are a reminder of the messier and more varied nature of educational experience, as home education and informal training were valued and commonplace parts of education across this period.

## INSTITUTIONS

In a textbook in use at Frank Bunting's school, the teacher was advised to "place fifteen or twenty familiar objects on a desk or table before the class, and request the pupils to [...] writ[e] on the spot the names of the articles."<sup>63</sup> This is an example of the object lesson. In this pedagogical approach, the teacher drew pupils into conversation about the appearance and production processes of objects such as glass and india rubber, and pupils then wrote down the descriptions. This conversational format suggests that Frank's schooling, far from diverging from home life, was shaped by the ideals, factual and instructive pedagogies, and educational practices associated with the middle-class family.

Like the two-way conversations of the middle-class family, the object lesson has been presented as child-centered for freeing the young learner to articulate their own perspectives and observations, in contrast with the rote-learning format of many other textbooks.<sup>64</sup> And indeed, a study of a middle-class Pestalozzian school suggests teachers experimented with a varied and engaging syllabus.<sup>65</sup> However, transplanting these conversations into the school frequently operated as a criticism of the families from lower social strata. The middle-class veneration for family and home education was not extended to other communities across Britain, or to all the families they encountered through their imperial and global connections. In Britain, working-class families were often represented as incapable of providing the environment and conversational stimulus required for home education, as their lives were defined by manual or monotonous labor and pressing material concerns. Learners were to be detached from the home and educated in institutions such as charity schools, elementary schools, and mechanics' institutes.<sup>66</sup>

Frank Bunting's education was typical of lower-middle-class children, focusing on literacy and practical skills, with no Latin or Greek. While children from better-off families were expected to receive a classical and literary education, other children were expected to learn through the more material and sensory processes deemed within the grasp of their limited social and cultural experiences.<sup>67</sup> After all, Johann Pestalozzi and Friedrich Fröbel had initially developed their lessons for impoverished and working-class children. In their schools, the middle-class teacher re-created the rational conversation and practical lessons of the middle-class home, curtailed to fit the children's supposedly limited social and cultural experiences. Middle-class educational campaigners objected that too abstract or literary a syllabus would put working-class children out of step with their "natural" pace of intellectual development.<sup>68</sup> As state elementary schooling expanded in 1870s England, pedagogies based on bestsellers such as Elizabeth Mayo's *Lessons on Objects* (1839) provided reassurance that education for working-class children would be confined to appropriately material and practical concerns. The popularity of the object lesson



was connected to global developments in education, as Britain began to fear the economic and technological competition from better-educated nations.<sup>69</sup> Girls' learning was curtailed even more, with subjects such as needlework taking up a large part of the school day, as they reassuringly linked girls' education with the ideal of a thrifty, clean, and orderly working class.<sup>70</sup>

Indigenous and Native family life was seen as an even greater hindrance to children's moral and intellectual development, and so British observers, missionaries and educators recommended children be detached and educated in institutions.<sup>71</sup> The object lesson was also recommended. Charles and Elizabeth Mayo, for example, had developed the object lesson when involved in the Home and Colonial Infant School Society. As the popularity of European philosophers such as Pestalozzi and Fröbel indicates, this pedagogy was embedded in global and imperial developments in education. German experiments such as kindergartens served as a model of rational secular education in Britain and America from the 1830s onwards.<sup>72</sup> In imperial spaces, the object lesson fit with white missionaries' perceptions of Indigenous and Native intellectual inferiority, and was used to acculturate and modernize communities in Ireland, India, Canada, and New Zealand.<sup>73</sup> As the nineteenth century progressed, white educators, philanthropists, and members of colonial governments were informed by increasingly rigid ideas about the relationship between race and educational ability.<sup>74</sup>

It was the institution rather than the family that was prioritized by many colonial administrators and missionaries. Colonial administrators in India promoted sending elite Indian sons to school, as their homes were thought to lack the social and cultural environment to cultivate masculine independence.<sup>75</sup> However, global studies emphasize that European educational experiments were adapted as they spread. An analysis of the kindergarten and the monitorial system demonstrates how these systems underwent a process of "diffusion and transformation" across the United States, Asia, the Ottoman Empire, South America, and Haiti.<sup>76</sup> While object lessons could be a deliberately rigid and confining form of education, communities and individuals could interpret their education differently. Thirteen-year-old Frank Bunting may have practiced object lessons in the classroom, but he used his literacy skills to write a lecture on the complex topic of "The Human Frame."<sup>77</sup> Children and young people could transcend restrictive pedagogies but also circumvent them. Pupils endured brutal conditions in Indian boarding schools in Canada, where their practical education sought to erase their kinship ties and culture. However, Griffith notes that Indigenous girls sustained their sense of family by using blankets and other everyday items to mimic and remember their grandmothers' language, posture, and gestures.<sup>78</sup>

Scholarship generally represents institutional education, especially school attendance, as a break with the ideals, bonds, and habits of the family. In boarding schools for middle-class boys in England, John Tosh argues that the switch from

vacation to term time meant “home and school [were] always experienced in polarized terms.”<sup>79</sup> Yet tracing the trajectories of individual learners through their education uncovers that home and school repeatedly overlapped. Frank Bunting was born in London, but he started school at a “Friends’ First-day Sch[ool] Cheltenham”—that is, a Quaker Sunday school—where his mother had set up her drapery business. Then he lived away from home by attending “a boys’ school in Witney for 3 years—boarders & day scholars.”<sup>80</sup> After the Croydon Friends’ School, Frank was briefly apprenticed to another business, before returning to work with his mother. His varied experience of Sunday school, private school, boarding school, and apprenticeship was typical of the “mixed economy,” which characterized experiences of education into the twentieth century.<sup>81</sup> Using family as a framework rather than an institution brings to light the mixed nature of individual experiences, in which even a school that diminished contact with family may have been simply a brief interlude in the family’s educational strategy.

Family remained a key influence on education across Britain in the period. Even elite public schools had waned in popularity in the early nineteenth century due to parental frustration about the poor living conditions, low educational standards, and lack of adult supervision.<sup>82</sup> The subsequent restoration of public schools’ reputation in the mid-nineteenth century is frequently linked to Thomas Arnold’s introduction of a more morally serious Christian manliness to Rugby School in the 1830s, which appealed to middle-class ideals of domesticity.<sup>83</sup> Learners too carried these values to school and college, and recreated the comfort and intimacy of family life by using furniture, mementoes, and domestic occasions such as tea parties.<sup>84</sup>

Scholars suggest that girls’ education was hampered by the supposed break of schools from domesticity. Whereas boys’ schools were valued for instilling independence from the home, girls’ schools promoted themselves as home-like and capable of preserving their ties to domesticity.<sup>85</sup> The rise of girls’ education is thus associated with the advancement of women into public life in the second half of the nineteenth century.<sup>86</sup> Yet individual educational trajectories reveal how girls’ and boys’ education continued to be entangled with family life in complex ways. For instance, Frank Bunting lived apart from his mother while attending school at Witney, but census records show he lived with his aunt.<sup>87</sup> Schooling was not necessarily a break from home life. Women educators used motherhood to associate their schools with the benefits of family, creating a female form of authority and expertise that justified women’s entry to the teaching profession.<sup>88</sup> At the same time, educational reforms sought to domesticate the public school in the nineteenth century, with Thomas Arnold introducing “houses” overseen by married teachers at Rugby School, with pupils living alongside the teacher’s wife and children.<sup>89</sup> Small private schools for boys too catered for such families by marketing themselves as “home-like.”<sup>90</sup> Even

for schools with few women, studies note the watchfulness and care parents exerted via letters to ensure their values and habits were sustained by children away at school.<sup>91</sup>

For many middle-class British parents, day schools were a practical strategy to educate their children while maintaining family life. The parents who chose the Manchester Grammar School often thought “home rather than school ought to be the centre of a boy’s life,” a teacher complained in an 1874 issue of the school magazine *Ulula*.<sup>92</sup> Indeed, one of Sydney Frankenberg’s schoolmates at the Manchester Grammar School, Alfred Frederick Hertz, recalled asking his parents to be sent to Rugby School as a boarder instead of his local grammar school, but his parents “would not consider the possibility of allowing me to be away from ‘home influence’.”<sup>93</sup>

The rise of the institution provided new educational opportunities for families across Britain, but despite commonalities, schools in different parts of Britain were not homogenous. Day schools were particularly subject to family influence. Although the Oxford High School was governed by a committee, many of the schoolgirls came from a group of university families, including the Legges, who were involved in setting up the school and acted as its governors or shareholders.<sup>94</sup> Manchester Grammar School was a day school located in the north of England, where parents persistently demanded grammar schools be repurposed to provide the modern education of benefit to local commercial and industrial families.<sup>95</sup> Pupils like Sydney and Leonard Frankenburg attended the school for its science stream, established in the 1870s in response to these demands for a modern German-style science education.<sup>96</sup> Manchester public figures were particularly proud of the school for creating a local educational trajectory, which meant boys could move from higher grade schools into further education through scholarships to the Mechanics’ Institute and Owens College, or to Oxford and Cambridge universities via the grammar school.<sup>97</sup> We need to know more about how the broader institutional developments of the period played out in different communities, possibly creating, as in Manchester, a new educational life cycle uniquely benefiting local families. For instance, Tamson Pietsch has demonstrated colonial institutions such as universities and schools drew learners from the community nearby rather than relying on boarders, and thus like Manchester Grammar School prioritized the ideals of local colonial elites.<sup>98</sup> Even elementary schools, which had initially sought to create a “little artificial world” detaching working-class children from the home environment, gradually ceded to their families’ worldview, with teachers and government inspectors accepting that using learners’ dialect and expressions would make lessons more meaningful.<sup>99</sup>

Transnational families were integral in shaping education in Britain. William Barron was a Catholic pupil at the Jesuit Stonyhurst College in Lancashire, and published a school magazine *El Curioso* in Spanish and English with a

friend from Gibraltar, John Recano. William was likely one of the generations of the Barron family whose children were sent from Mexico or California to receive a gentleman's education in England.<sup>100</sup> Elite families such as the Barrons did not have to confine their educational strategies within national bounds but could use their transnational social networks to seek an education in line with their values and culture. The strategies of these imperial families could shape institutions in Britain, with Stonyhurst College largely relying on a transnational Catholic elite drawn from the Americas, Europe, and Ireland, as well as Britain. Other British schools catered for international students, such as white children sent from colonial India. Their parents were striking a balance, determined to lessen the effects of their children being brought up in domestic intimacy with Indian servants, but at the same time relying on occasional letters to remind their children of family bonds, Indian words and phrases, and the patterns of colonial domestic life.<sup>101</sup> Some British schools received Indigenous children sent from Canada. While their white fathers were often concerned to separate them from Indigenous kin, their Indigenous mothers sustained family bonds through letters of advice and censure, at times mobilizing other family members to write on their behalf if their own literacy was limited.<sup>102</sup> As these cases suggest, there were complex geographies of imperial education even within Britain, created by the imperial and global networks in which many families were embedded.

Studies of global and transnational education have demonstrated that European-influenced pedagogies and educational institutions varied at a local level, suggesting the impact of family on patterns of global education.<sup>103</sup> Children followed what O'Neill terms a "horseshoe pattern" as they moved along educational and family networks for an education overseas, then returned home with a prestigious education, which shored up their family's status. Daughters with a French education could signal a family's status, with the added benefit of gaining Catholic girls a place in a transnational Catholic elite.<sup>104</sup> An Irish elite was formed as families selected schools and universities, such as Stonyhurst College, which were located in England, on the Continent, or in the Americas.<sup>105</sup> The white families in Cape Colony studied by Duff relied on family and educational connections in Scotland and the Netherlands when sending their children away to school.<sup>106</sup> As a lens on education, family sheds light on complex educational trajectories that passed through a range of locations, crossed national boundaries, and generated a global demand for new institutions.

Beyond these transnational elites, families across the British Empire and other areas of the world intervened and reconfigured the education on offer in institutions. The popularity of housewifery as a subject in elementary schools was not wholly down to middle-class interventions but at least partly influenced by the strategies of working-class parents to secure the family's well-being.<sup>107</sup> In imperial spaces, parents varied considerably in their response to colonial schools. Some responded positively, such as the parents in Gaitskill's study of

girls' missionary schools in colonial South Africa, which suggests some parents saw the domestic ethos as beneficial for family life.<sup>108</sup> In other cases, such as the schools set up in Natal, African parents distrusted the motives of missionary schools and had more trust in those organized by the government.<sup>109</sup> In cases where Indigenous families were systematically broken up by institutions, such as the Indian boarding schools in Canada studied by Griffith, Indigenous parents actively strategized to ameliorate their children's living conditions, in some instances by reporting abuses to the local press.<sup>110</sup> Children too could alter the educational practices of their families. In one such study, Duff examines the piteous appeals written by white middle-class children from school in Scotland and the Netherlands to their parents in the Cape Colony. The letters speeded up plans to construct a school nearer home and the development of a system of Dutch Reformed Church schools in the Cape.<sup>111</sup> It is important to consider the extent to which the rise of institutions was not solely shaped by emulating elite or European models of education but was also embedded in the expectations and educational trajectories of individual families.

## COMMUNITY

The encouragement of rational conversation between parents and children was a part of wider ideals of self-culture and mutual improvement in middle-class and working-class communities. Frank Bunting's lecture of "The Human Frame" was given before a mutual improvement society at his school, and in 1874 he had also won a prize for his careful fretwork as a member of a second society at the school.<sup>113</sup> Alongside the pedagogies of the home and classroom were a range of improving leisure activities that were equally valued for nurturing intellectual independence and a sense of public duty.

A key characteristic of nineteenth- and twentieth-century institutions in Britain was the growth in clubs and societies. Like Frank, Anna Legge was a member of the Oxford High School Guild of Charity, Sydney Frankenburg and his brother Leonard were active in the debating societies of the Manchester Grammar School, while William Barron participated in making a school magazine. The rise of a cohesive British middle class in this period is often connected to the rise of institutions with a strong associational and corporate life, capable of inculcating ideals of public duty and independence.<sup>114</sup> Associational life enabled participants to fashion themselves as rational and independent members of a wider community, particularly important when the social makeup of the student body began to include lower-middle-class young people, girls and women, and colonial students.<sup>115</sup> School rebuilding in rural areas is argued to have consolidated this sense of belonging to a cohesive community by adding shared spaces such as chapels, quadrangles, play spaces, gyms, and dining halls.<sup>116</sup> The isolated location meant children were separated from their

religiously and politically divided middle-class communities, and united through collective events and group activities on school grounds.<sup>117</sup> The focus on elite institutions means that a community ethos has been assumed to have trickled down from the authority figures of elite institutions, with increasingly pale and less powerful imitations created in schools further down the social hierarchy.<sup>118</sup>

Yet moving beyond the small circle of elite public schools, the division of school from town and family was not always so stark. It is only more recently that historians have begun to explore societies and clubs as part of families' collective strategies of education. Frank's active involvement in school societies was a continuation of his home life. His mother Lydia was active in the local Quaker Meeting, the temperance movement, and the Missionary Helpers' Union, a Quaker organization that supported missionary work in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East and published material to engage younger members.<sup>119</sup> Associational life at the school received strong support from parents, and Frank Bunting's classmate and fellow society member Frank Farrington's father donated money and supplies to the school's mutual improvement societies.<sup>120</sup> Habits of collective activity at school or college would seldom have been learners' first experience of working as a cohesive community, with many arriving well versed in processes of meetings, minute-taking, and voting.

Scholarship on family life shows that from the early nineteenth century, children and youths were drawn into the orbit of the associational activities of their families by attending societies, public meetings, and lectures together.<sup>121</sup> The clubs and societies for mutual improvement, which enriched family life in the nineteenth century, gained new life in the twentieth century as they created a route to evening classes and training courses with more formal qualifications.<sup>122</sup> Moreover, family meant that individuals attending the same school or college had varied experiences of clubs and societies. While Frank was immersed in the temperance and missionary activities of the Quaker community in Britain, Manchester Grammar School pupil Sydney Frankenburg came from a family active in the associational life of Manchester's Jewish community. His father Isidor was involved in the Jewish Board of Guardians, the Great Synagogue, and the establishment of lads' clubs for Jewish boys, activities that Sydney himself was to support as an adult.<sup>123</sup> Learners had access to the same clubs and societies at their institution, but they carried with them the varied attitudes and knowledge of associational life gained from their family background.

Late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century associational life was characterized by its spread across national borders, from the temperance movement, philanthropic societies, and youth groups, to educational organizations.<sup>124</sup> Yet the communities and values created by these societies was often contingent on the networks of interconnected families who supported them in particular locations. While Cohen examines how clubs in colonial India purported to emulate the independence and masculine sociability of

British associational life, in practice they reproduced the complex and shifting dynamics of Indian society. Cohen notes that white men were sometimes the only members permitted, but regulations were fluid and contested, and as associational life took hold, new clubs emerged for men and women, different religions, and different races, with admissions ages sometimes set as low as twelve years old.<sup>125</sup> Beyond the British Empire, kinship also drew individuals into clubs and societies. Mary P. Ryan's study of nineteenth-century New York points to the same surnames repeating in lists of temperance and missionary societies.<sup>126</sup> School and college associational life was not a separate development, but suggests the ways in which for learners of all ages attending lectures and talks was already an everyday part of their social and cultural worlds.

Discussing school and college societies solely in the context of isolated rural boarding schools obscures the equally important connections between institutions and the broader educational practices of towns and cities. While most schools had a debating society, the one attended by the Frankenburg brothers at the Manchester Grammar School was called the Philosophical Society, echoing the name of Manchester's famous Lit & Phil. The name presented pupils as participants in Manchester's vibrant associational life. Early nineteenth-century clubs and societies are regarded as instrumental in creating a sense of values and interests in middle-class communities in Britain.<sup>127</sup> There is a rich historiography on civic associational life, but historians have only begun to explore the important role played by juvenile associations, for instance in the missionary and temperance movements.<sup>128</sup> Even a brief examination of society names shows a rich two-way influence between schools and towns, with "Dorcas" societies sewing for the poor, debating societies, natural history societies, and team sports commonly featuring in towns and schools in Britain and across the empire. Participation in institutional clubs and societies was not necessarily just an expression of corporate pride but could articulate a more local identity, expressing a sense of civic pride and duty.

Historians note the impact of family and community has been obscured by the "great man" approach to understanding reforms in British education.<sup>129</sup> At Sydney Frankenburg's school, the Manchester Grammar School, pupils wrote to the school magazine to demand a school cap and colors.<sup>130</sup> The letter captures the contemporary concept of self-government, where learners themselves organized and supervised leisure activities, clubs and societies, as well as maintaining discipline and creating and sustaining new values and habits.<sup>131</sup> Across this period, a sense of community was engendered by simple and cheap stratagems such as caps and team colors, badges and pins; songs and sports chants; school magazines; and communal events such as prayers, team games, and society meetings, all of which became part of the everyday life of most institutions, particularly those that could not afford expensive rebuilding projects.<sup>132</sup> Indeed, historians note this associational life did not originate in

elite institutions such as the English public schools or Oxford and Cambridge universities but newly established institutions seeking to establish a sense of community.<sup>133</sup> Associational life enabled populations new to institutional education such as women and middle-class men to redraw this notion of an educational community in ways that included and empowered themselves.<sup>134</sup>

This sense of community did not evolve in isolation in Britain but was underwritten by Europe-wide fears of white degeneration and the perceived need to build a healthier fitter white community.<sup>135</sup> In 1898, Manchester Grammar School held an event where pupil Arnold Meyer (“Max”) Aronovich won praise for his performance of Shylock.<sup>136</sup> Arnold was Romanian-born and his family were among the Jewish refugees seen as a threat to Britain when they arrived in the 1880s and 1890s, fleeing persecution in eastern Europe.<sup>137</sup> His participation in a Shakespeare play could be read as the successful assimilation of a migrant youth into British culture.

The presence of migrant and colonial learners is a key yet under-theorized aspect of the impact of globalization and colonization on education in Britain.<sup>138</sup> The Oxford and Cambridge student community frequently emphasized itself as a white, male, and elite enclave, which was in part a response to the social and imperial shifts, which brought in a growing number of non-Anglican Christian, non-Christian, foreign, and women students.<sup>139</sup> Other responses to Britain’s increasingly imperial and global population included planning “efficient” infant schools and elementary school buildings with ventilation, light, and space to nurture a healthy future population.<sup>140</sup> In Manchester, new associations were set up to acculturate and assimilate colonial and migrant families. Established Jewish families like the Frankenburgs sought to deflect rising anti-Semitism through assimilative associations such as the Jewish Lads’ Brigade.<sup>141</sup>

Historians are only beginning to explore the betrayal and confusion experienced by learners as they navigated organizations and institutions designed to tackle their supposed racial inferiority.<sup>142</sup> We cannot know what Arnold felt, for instance, when reading praise in the school magazine for his performance of Shylock, and “the power and Irving-like style with which he ‘craved the law and due penalties of his bond’.”<sup>143</sup> Some pupils like Arnold were active in school life, but as the gestures toward his Jewishness suggest, they were negotiating a community that was seeking to assimilate, marginalize, or exclude them. As more students came to Britain from its colonies for education, these young people managed their trying circumstances by setting up associations of their own. These associations were looked upon favorably by colonial government as a way to create a sense of loyalty and duty toward Britain. However, scholars note that students’ associational life contributed toward the creation of nationalist communities with coherent ideals and identities of their own.<sup>144</sup> West African student groups in Britain deployed the language and motifs of a self-governing educational community to demand independence from the



scrutiny and oversight of colonial government.<sup>145</sup> The rise of associational life did not only reflect the rise of a homogeneous conformity in British education but was entangled in the complex national identities and collective strategies of its increasingly diverse institutional communities.

From the perspective of those born in Britain, associational life was inaccessible to children born elsewhere in the British Empire and the world. In her essay in the *Oxford High School Magazine*, Anna lamented the typical Chinese girl's supposed lack of institutional education and outside friendships which meant she "does not hold her proper place in society [...] owing to the fact that she has never been taught its duties nor has exercised its privileges."<sup>146</sup> Children across the British Empire were assumed to lack the values and duties instilled by the associational life of British families, communities, and institutions. Thus, buildings and activities attempted to enforce adherence to European work and leisure rhythms by housing children in a regimented space that severed them from their families, as noted in studies of institutions in New Zealand and America.<sup>147</sup> In a study of Canadian schools, Mona Gleason notes the significance of school photographs in presenting the community as ordered and cohesive.<sup>148</sup> Indeed, a perceived lack of community caused anxiety about white settler populations of the British Empire such as Ireland and South Africa, where modern school buildings were seen as a way to develop citizenship.<sup>149</sup>

At the end of the nineteenth century, associational life became increasingly prominent in a transnational educational culture. In 1915, a former pupil of Dollar Academy in Scotland in 1915 wrote to the school magazine about his recent visit to Hong Kong. He had met an old schoolmate Wei Yuk who "has dozens of old photos, boys and girls, that woke up very pleasant memories of those days."<sup>150</sup> Wei Yuk was a Chinese boy brought to Britain by James Legge as part of his missionary work and educated alongside Anna and her siblings at Dollar Academy.<sup>151</sup> The letter suggests that in adulthood, the school photograph was an object that continued to evoke a meaningful sense of belonging to a privileged global educational community.

The adoption of caps, colors, photographs, and other emblems in schools across Britain and the British Empire represented their membership of a transnational educational community. Institutions remained important in their development, as clubs such as the Girl Guides often took places in community focal points such as churches, libraries, and schools, which had space and resources.<sup>152</sup> Far from capitulating to British or European ideals, associational life created a sense of community that enabled people in a range of locations to articulate and pursue their own agendas. Kristine Alexander emphasizes that transnational organizations such as the Girl Guides were far from homogenous but instead characterized by conflicting ideals and practices. In India, the establishment of all-white Girl Guide companies led to Indian girls turning to missionary organizations to help them set up their own groups. Indian

girls' autonomous groups unsettled British authorities enough for the British Scouting Guide headquarters to change the rules and admit Indian girls and boys.<sup>153</sup> Indigenous learners in colonial spaces also used associations to claim a place for themselves in a wider transnational community.<sup>154</sup> The implicit racial ideologies in imperial and global networks could be simply sidestepped or ignored. While Empire Day connoted British racial superiority to white learners, educators, and officials in Britain, for black African and Caribbean learners it was sometimes celebrated as a marker of their belonging and status in a British community.<sup>155</sup>

Associational life was both multiethnic and transnational, but gives insight into how clubs and societies were adapted to the shifting values and strategies of families in different geographical locations. As an adult, Wei Yuk and other parents petitioned the colonial government in Hong Kong to support new schools for their children. The families demanded schools with the “public spirit” that would enable their children to position themselves as the new Chinese elite.<sup>156</sup> Anna’s description of “Women in China” may have reinforced the superiority of English over Chinese girls, but her former schoolmate Wei Yuk deployed these ideals to the advancement and advantage of his own community in Hong Kong. Learners across the world used membership of transnational organizations to gain a sense of privilege and status. The Girl Guides may have proclaimed equality, but Wu’s detailed study of Malayan girls explains that some joined not as an assertion of equality but for the social mobility offered by interacting with European girls.<sup>157</sup> Through membership of transnational associations, young people could display the modern ideals and elite status of their families.

## CONCLUSION

The purpose of this chapter has been to explore the multiple links between family and education in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The family—as an influence on ideals, pedagogies, books, institutions, and associational life—has rarely been considered a framework for understanding the development of education at local, national, imperial, and global levels. However, by introducing four learners—Frank, Anna, Sydney, and William—this chapter has shown educational experiences in this period to be impacted as much by family strategies and educational practices as by institutional reforms and state policies. Moreover, home education, books in the familiar format, object lessons, and associational life were not shaped within national bounds but gained currency through conversations and borrowings within Europe, the British Empire, and on a global scale.

Education in nineteenth-century Britain is often seen in terms of cohesive, isolated, and racially and culturally homogenous institutions. However,

we should be attentive to the complex and messy educational trajectories of individuals across the life cycle, as much as to the values of particular institutions. For Frank, Anna, Sydney, and William, their educational trajectories brought them into contact with learners, society members, or family in California, Mexico, Hong Kong, Gibraltar, and Romania. This biographical approach enables us to connect the messier and more contingent strategies and aspirations of individual families to the broader narratives of imperial and global education.

