

## Silence, Dissent, and Affective Relations in the Juvenile Diaries of Eva Knatchbull-Hugessen (1861–1895)

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The elite families of Victorian Britain were assiduous archivists of their own past.<sup>1</sup> However, as Arianne Baggerman has noted, ‘the family archive is not a neutral place [...] but a paper bulwark, built and rebuilt by generations, with a specific function: to preserve and protect a common family identity.’<sup>2</sup> This emphasis upon the conscious assemblage of family papers is a key insight upon which this article will seek to build, for archives are not necessarily monolithic in their meaning and purpose, and practices of retention can be more arbitrary than Baggerman here suggests. Through examining the juvenile diaries of Eva Knatchbull-Hugessen (1861–1895) in comparison with those of her father Edward Knatchbull-Hugessen (1829–1893), this article will consider how young people participated in the shaping of family archives, leading to the curation of more dissonant histories. In Eva’s case this involved writing in tandem with, but also in counterpoint to, the journals of her father. Edward’s diaries expressed his close intimacies with a number of young men and provide glimpses of his wife’s distressed responses. Through examining two of Eva’s diaries, one covering the years 1873 to 1875, and another from 1877 to 1879, in conjunction with those of her father from the same period, we will evaluate how such private family matters might have been obliquely intimated in a child’s diary. When Eva’s accounts are read in conjunction with those of Edward, it is possible to discern more clearly the patriarchal masculinity which shaped Edward’s response to Hellenic discourses of homosocial relations. Furthermore, through the use of comic ‘entertainment narratives’ to plot awkward family moments and the strategic use of silence to register dissent from other aspects of her father’s behaviour, Eva’s diaries provide glimpses into the negotiation of queer relations within a Victorian family. Despite these rare archival traces of a childhood response to adult affective lives, it was difficult for Eva to openly articulate aspects of her own interiority, especially her educational ambitions. A comparative microanalysis of these parallel

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<sup>1</sup> Many thanks to David Kennerley for his assistance in preparing this article. Any errors of course remain my own.

<sup>2</sup> Arianne Baggerman, ‘Autobiography and Family Memory in the Nineteenth Century’, in *Egocuments and History: Autobiographical Writing in its Social Context since the Middle Ages*, ed. by Rudolf Dekker (Hilversum: Verloren, 2002), pp. 161–73.

documents, from daughter and father, allows us to explore the multiple layers of silences and self-censorship within the family archive.

Ostensibly, the Knatchbull-Hugessens were a close-knit unit. Eva had two older siblings, Katharine (1859–1926) and Edward ('Ned') (1857–1909), and a younger brother, Cecil (1863–1933), with whom she was close. Her father Edward (later Lord Brabourne) was a Liberal politician for most of his career and also achieved limited success as a writer of children's stories. Her mother Anna ('Annie') (1829–1889), née Southwell, was from a clerical family in Hertfordshire.<sup>3</sup> The family home was in Smeeth, Kent, a county where the Knatchbull-Hugessens had political associations dating back to the seventeenth century.<sup>4</sup> They had a keen sense of their identity as members of the local Kentish elite, with long histories of governance, philanthropic engagement, and literary success; and preserved extensive family papers across the generations.<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, Eva's paternal grandmother was the niece of novelist Jane Austen. Edward inherited his mother's letters from Austen and published the first edition of Austen's letters in 1884.<sup>6</sup> This was a family in which archive keeping, family stories, and the perpetuation of a literary lineage was a key facet of dynastic identity.

The writing of diaries was a common pedagogical practice in this period and girls' diaries were frequently overseen by other family members. This formed part of a wider culture of journal keeping in which diaries were frequently read aloud or shared between kin. As such, many diarists adopted multiple strategies of censorship, ellipsis, and emotional concealment, ranging from subconscious to deliberate acts of self-fashioning. As Jane Hunter has observed of the American context, diaries provided a 'route of mediation' for young girls, a way to release but contain rebellious impulses without rupturing family relations.<sup>7</sup> This meant that diaries had the potential to function as a journal for communal reading or remembrance, as well as a site for the expression of individual subjectivities. The process was especially intricate in the case of Eva. She valued the

<sup>3</sup> For further details on the family, see Margaret Wilson, *Eva: An Aspiring Victorian: The Life of Eva Knatchbull-Hugessen, Great-Great-Niece of Jane Austen* (Tonbridge: the author, 2008); Margaret Wilson, *A Kent Girl-Graduate* (Tonbridge: the author, 1994).

<sup>4</sup> Sir Hughe Knatchbull-Hugessen, *Kentish Family* (London: Methuen, 1960).

<sup>5</sup> See the online catalogues at the Kent History and Library Centre, <[https://www.kentarchives.org.uk/collections/getrecord/GB51\\_U951\\_3\\_2\\_30](https://www.kentarchives.org.uk/collections/getrecord/GB51_U951_3_2_30)>; <[https://www.kentarchives.org.uk/collections/getrecord/GB51\\_U951\\_3\\_2\\_25\\_1\\_45](https://www.kentarchives.org.uk/collections/getrecord/GB51_U951_3_2_25_1_45)> [accessed 24 September 2018]. Quotations from the Knatchbull-Hugessen archive have been reproduced courtesy of Kent History and Library Centre, Maidstone. On the first citation of each diary the full archival reference will be given, thereafter the date only will be cited parenthetically.

<sup>6</sup> Deirdre Le Faye, 'Lord Brabourne's Edition of Jane Austen's Letters', *Review of English Studies*, n.s., 52 (2001), 91–102.

<sup>7</sup> Jane H. Hunter, 'Inscribing the Self in the Heart of the Family: Diaries and Girlhood in Late-Victorian America', *American Quarterly*, 44 (1992), 51–81.

kinship identity valorizing the Knatchbull-Hugessen status and lineage, but manifested distinctive, sometimes rebellious responses to the girlhood norms of her class.

Over a period of three years, Eva occasionally wrote in a Renshaw's diary pre-printed for 1873. This spasmodically kept volume, penned in a frequently careless hand, included copies of poems, random entries (often acerbic comments about her governess), some torn-out pages, and a few more regularized entries from 1876.<sup>8</sup> The reasons for preserving documents in family collections are opaque. Their survival is thanks to varying considerations of sentimentality, chance, and inclusive or neglectful practices of curation. Other texts composed by Eva during this period appear to have been designed more distinctly for their effect upon an imagined audience. In common with many Victorian girls she acted as a curator of her father's papers, collecting cuttings of his parliamentary and local activities and pasting them into a large scrapbook, which Edward subsequently indexed.<sup>9</sup> Eva therefore had an explicit consciousness of her role in keeping a family archive. In a second, far more carefully compiled diary from the mid-1870s, Eva took the trouble to provide a retrospective index (*Fig. 1*). Eva and her family, like many Victorians, sat together and read old family papers, many of them girlhood letters and diaries.<sup>10</sup> The nature of this diary, with its indices and colourful illustrations, suggests that she may have composed this text with a knowledge, perhaps even an aspiration, that it would be cherished for family consumption.

Scholars have often emphasized the formlessness of diaries. Felicity Nussbaum has written of diaries' 'resistance to closure and form', and Rebecca Hogan of their 'cyclical, repetitive and cumulative structure'.<sup>11</sup> Yet Eva's diary for 1873–75 was a carefully constructed text, highly cognizant of narrative form. It did not purport to be a diurnal account of events, but often functioned rather as a narrative of selected highlights from the period. However, despite the highly feminized presentation, with her self-portrait in a stylish dress and the inclusion of pressed flowers later in the diary, the incidents Eva chose to index were often moments of subversion, mishaps, or instances of minor rebellion. Whereas girlhood diaries were

<sup>8</sup> Diary of Eva Knatchbull-Hugessen, 1873–76, Maidstone, Kent History and Library Centre, U951/C116.

<sup>9</sup> See, for example, Diary of Eva Knatchbull-Hugessen, 27 January, 10 February, 17 February, 10 March, 24 March, 31 March, 5 May 1878, Kent History and Library Centre, U951/F30/3; Scrapbooks of Edward Knatchbull-Hugessen, U1963/F1–7, Diary of Edward, 1878, U951/F25/30.

<sup>10</sup> For references to the reading of family girlhood papers, see Diary of Eva Knatchbull-Hugessen, 15 February, 4 November 1878; Diary of Eva Knatchbull-Hugessen, 21 May, 26–28 May 1883, Kent History and Library Centre, U951/F30/5.

<sup>11</sup> Felicity A. Nussbaum, 'Toward Conceptualizing Diary', in *Studies in Autobiography*, ed. by James Olney (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), pp. 128–40; Rebecca Hogan, 'Engendered Autobiographies: The Diary as a Feminine Form', *Prose Studies*, 14.2 (1991), 95–107 (p. 98).

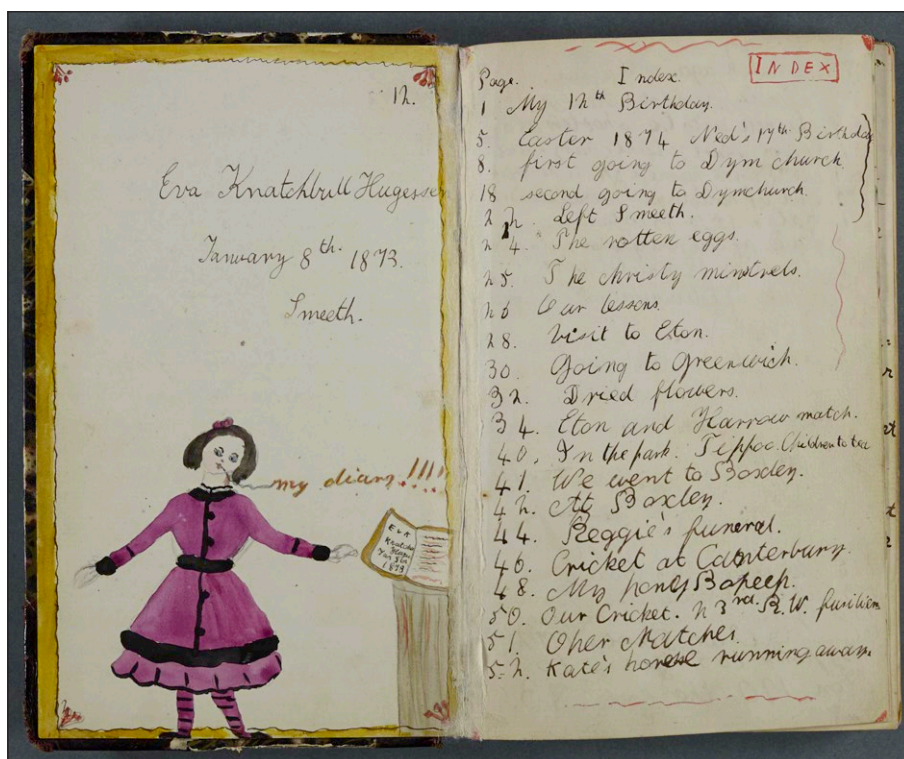


Fig. 1: Diary of Eva Knatchbull-Hugessen, 1873–75, U951/F30/1. Courtesy of Kent History and Library Centre, Maidstone.

circulated to wider kinship networks to serve as points of discussion in the socialization of young girls,<sup>12</sup> Eva resisted many dominant notions of respectable juvenile femininity. The reference to “The rotten eggs” on page 24 recounted an incident in which she and her brother pelted passers-by with rotten eggs and the subsequent complaint from neighbours (30 April 1874).<sup>13</sup> Her use of the diary form provided a means of creating an alternative leitmotif within the family memory to the dominant one of respectable public service she collated in her father’s scrapbooks. Moreover, at this time, Eva was also writing a manuscript novel, “The Netherpont Tragedy”,

<sup>12</sup> The diary of Louisa Gurney, for example, was circulated to later generations of girls in her kinship network including her niece Priscilla Gurney, and great-niece Laura Troubridge. See *Extracts from Priscilla Johnston’s Journal; and Letters*, coll. by E. MacInnes (Carlisle: Thurnam, 1862), p. 1; Laura Troubridge, *Life amongst the Troubridges: Journals of a Young Victorian 1873–1884*, ed. by Jacqueline Hope-Nicholson (London: Tite Street, 1999), p. 6.

<sup>13</sup> As an adult, Eva subsequently published a reworking of the incident in which the young female protagonist sought to make amends for her actions, in Eva Knatchbull-Hugessen, ‘A Dramatic Effect’, *Blackwood’s Edinburgh Magazine*, December 1887, pp. 753–72.

along with a range of poems, ballads, and stories.<sup>14</sup> Copies of these works were circulated to family members. It thus formed part of the literary genealogy of Eva's kinship network. One copy of 'The Netherpont Tragedy' still exists in the ancestral family home into which Eva's sister Katharine married.<sup>15</sup> Eva's juvenile cultural practices thus had wider significance for the ways in which the family chose to remember and represent itself. This included providing a space for Eva to gently satirize aspects of her family story. Thus, the villain in 'Jenks the Would-Be Poet' (begun in 1875 and completed early in 1876), a bullying 'sharp boy' named 'Sprattson', was identified as a supporter of William Gladstone. This was a knowing reference given that her father had been a member of Gladstone's cabinet.<sup>16</sup> The preservation of material such as this, with these comic references, indicates a richer, multidimensional family archive.

The highly selective nature of Eva's early diary does not mean that difficult or unhappy memories were simply censored; rather, that we need to be attentive to the emotional economy of memory-making within the text. Narrative psychologists have explored the significance of 'entertainment stories' in the construction of individual identity. As Kate McLean and Avril Thorne explain, 'personal narratives that emerge in everyday life, often manifested in entertainment stories, are as crucial to understanding and becoming a person as are narratives of more serious and perhaps more momentous life experiences.' McLean and Thorne observe that the cultural work of 'energizing a valued audience' is critical in understanding the salience of these narratives.<sup>17</sup> Resorting to entertainment stories not only established Eva with a distinctive authorial persona, it also protected her from disclosing more disruptive emotions. For example, on 11 July 1875 Eva mentioned in a brief parenthesis that her cousin Edward Dimsdale had died of rheumatic fever at Marlborough College. The Dimsdales (Edward's mother, Celia, was Annie's sister) were extremely close to the Knatchbull-Hugessens and Eva regularly stayed with them. The lack of any further comment on Edward's death does not indicate a lack of feeling, but rather points to a strategy of emotional containment. Two weeks later her diary index referenced 'Reggie's funeral' (see *Fig. 1*). This was an elaborate mock

<sup>14</sup> Eva Knatchbull-Hugessen, 'The Netherpont Tragedy', Kent Archives and History Centre, U951/F13.

<sup>15</sup> Katharine Knatchbull-Hugessen married Charles Prideaux Brune in 1883. My thanks to Peter and Elisabeth Prideaux Brune for generous access to their family archive, at Prideaux Place, Padstow.

<sup>16</sup> Eva Knatchbull-Hugessen, 'Jenks the Would-Be Poet', bound in 'The Netherpont Tragedy'.

<sup>17</sup> Kate C. McLean and Avril Thorne, 'Identity Light: Entertainment Stories as a Vehicle for Self-Development', in *Identity and Story: Creating Self in Narrative*, ed. by Dan P. McAdams, Ruthellen Josselson, and Amia Lieblich (Washington DC: American Psychological Association, 2006), pp. 111–27 (pp. 112, 116).



funeral staged for a brand-new doll which she named after a paternal uncle (21 July 1875). In recording this event, I would propose the diary functioned as an outlet for marking experiences — in this instance, family loss and bereavement — that could be difficult for a child to address directly. The remainder of this article will consider how Eva deployed these and other narrative strategies to navigate her representations of family life during periods of turbulence in her parents' marriage.

The family appeared to often function well as a unit; there were strong, affectionate bonds between the siblings, and also between the children and their parents. On an occasion when all six members of the nuclear family were together, Edward recorded sentimentally in his diary, 'my Annie and I and our four darlings, God bless them!' (19 January 1878). Edward was an extrovert, emotional, and sometimes domineering character who was highly sensitive to criticism. He had an enhanced belief in his own abilities, and his public roles and reputation were extremely important to him.<sup>18</sup> From 1871 to 1874 he was parliamentary undersecretary for the colonies in Gladstone's first administration, although he claimed that this had been somewhat beneath him: 'I felt [...] that I had claim to higher office than an Under Secretaryship.'<sup>19</sup> While he remained an MP and continued to have a number of other professional commitments, in the years following his loss of office in 1874 other aspects of his elite masculine identity acquired a heightened significance. His investment in the masculine cultures of Eton (which he visited regularly) and the University of Oxford intensified and, in 1879, he wrote a series of articles on these institutions.<sup>20</sup> He emerged as a staunch defender of the homosocial culture at Eton which came under scrutiny following the dismissal of two tutors (William Johnson in 1872 and Oscar Browning in 1875) for their pederastic relationships with pupils. Edward was evidently sympathetic towards both. He became embroiled in Browning's defence, and later both were employed as tutors to Eva.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>18</sup> For a full consideration of Edward Knatchbull-Hugessen's character, see Judith Rowbotham, 'Edward Knatchbull Hugessen, 1st Lord Brabourne, and the British Empire, 1871–1893' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Wales, 1982), chapter 1.

<sup>19</sup> Edward Knatchbull-Hugessen, Political Journal, Kent History and Library Centre, U951/F27/5, p. 13.

<sup>20</sup> Edward Knatchbull-Hugessen attended Eton from 1844 to 1847, and Magdalen College, Oxford from 1847 to 1851. See E. H. Knatchbull-Hugessen, 'An Old Eton School-List', *Time*, August 1879, pp. 527–36; 'My Oxford Days', *Time*, September 1879, pp. 682–93; 'The Oxford Union', *Time*, November 1879, pp. 146–56.

<sup>21</sup> E. H. Knatchbull-Hugessen, 'Our Public Schools and Public Schoolmasters', *Fraser's Magazine*, February 1876, pp. 229–45; diary of Eva Knatchbull-Hugessen, 21 January 1881, Kent History and Library Centre, U951/F30/4; letters from Eva Knatchbull-Hugessen to Oscar Browning, 1881–83, King's College, Cambridge, OB/1/9/918/A.

The revived Hellenism of the mid-Victorian period, to which William Johnson (later Cory) was an influential contributor and Browning a firm advocate, lauded classical Greek models of male friendship. It celebrated the ideal of fraternal bonds, rooted in intellectual, spiritual, and physical closeness.<sup>22</sup> In the Platonic model, tight-knit relationships between older and younger men were encouraged as an ideal of ethical education.<sup>23</sup> Hellenism especially thrived in Oxford from the 1850s. Benjamin Jowett of Balliol College famously sought to embody these ideals of homosocial interaction through the pedagogical medium of the tutorial system.<sup>24</sup> The new Hellenism celebrated the beauty of the young male body, and although Jowett emphasized the chastity of these relationships, others did not. In an essay composed in 1873 (and published in 1883), ‘A Problem in Greek Ethics’, John Addington Symonds, a former student of Jowett and one of the most influential exponents of Hellenism, drew attention to the sexual love enjoyed by men in ancient Greek society.<sup>25</sup>

According to Donald Yacovone, relationships of fraternal love could be more important to masculine subjectivity than ‘traditional manly virtues’ (p. 197). The potential of such relationships to enhance a sense of masculine identity and pride seems apposite for understanding aspects of Edward Knatchbull-Hugessen’s selfhood during this period of altered professional ambitions. Alongside a ‘Political Journal’, retrospectively documenting what he perceived as his public achievements, Edward also kept a Letts diary into which he commonly managed to squeeze thirty to forty lines on each page (*Fig. 2*). Here, the minuteness of his writing constituted a form of modified censorship, whether designedly or not, constraining the casual reading of others. It reveals that from 1874 Edward forged close bonds with a number of young Etonians: Algernon Haskett-Smith (‘Algy’), a keen young cricketer (b.1856); Edmund D’Eyncourt (b.1855); Australian-born Stuart Donaldson (b.1854); and Arthur Todd (b.1854).<sup>26</sup>

<sup>22</sup> Donald Yacovone, ‘“Surpassing the Love of Women”: Victorian Manhood and the Language of Fraternal Love’, in *A Shared Experience: Men, Women, and the History of Gender*, ed. by Laura McCall and Donald Yacovone (New York: New York University Press, 1998), pp. 195–221 (p. 196).

<sup>23</sup> Morris B. Kaplan, *Sodom on the Thames: Sex, Love, and Scandal in Wilde Times* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005), esp. pp. 110–12; Thomas K. Hubbard, ‘Athenian Pederasty and the Construction of Masculinity’, in *What is Masculinity?: Historical Dynamics from Antiquity to the Contemporary World*, ed. by John H. Arnold and Sean Brady (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), pp. 189–225.

<sup>24</sup> Linda C. Dowling, *Hellenism and Homosexuality in Victorian Oxford* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994), pp. 35–36.

<sup>25</sup> Sean Brady, *Masculinity and Male Homosexuality in Britain, 1861–1913* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), pp. 157–209; Emily Rutherford, ‘Impossible Love and Victorian Values: J. A. Symonds and the Intellectual History of Homosexuality’, *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 75 (2014), 605–27.

<sup>26</sup> Haskett-Smith trained as a lawyer but died of a domestic gunshot wound in 1887. See ‘In Memoriam’, *Eton College Chronicle*, 15 December 1887, p. 172; ‘Melancholy

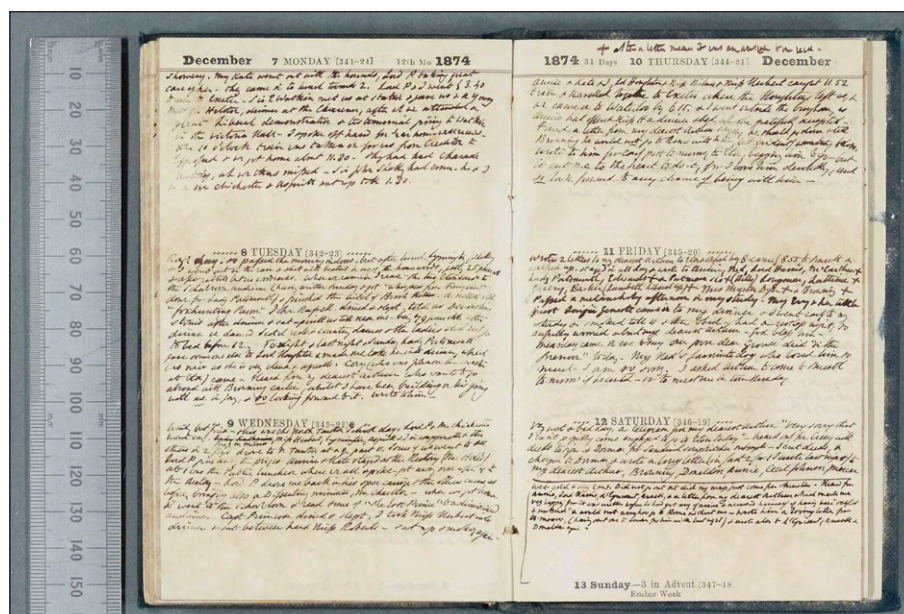


Fig. 2: Diary of Edward Knatchbull-Hugessen, December 1874, U951/F25/1-45. Courtesy of Kent History and Library Centre, Maidstone.

Edward's diary recorded the regularity of his letters to these youths (often daily in the case of Arthur Todd), and chronicled their responses to him. It appears that a significant attraction of these exchanges was that they bolstered his own sense of self. He sent them photographs of himself and copies of books he had written, and clearly enjoyed acting as a patron (14 September 1874, 29 December 1874). As he recorded on 20 October 1874, 'I had a charming letter from Edward D'Eyncourt – very grateful for my last, of advice &c on his going to Oxford'; similarly, on 9 January 1878, he reported that Donaldson had come to seek his advice over the offer of a mastership at Eton. In emphasizing his role as mentor Edward could situate these encounters within a hierarchical Hellenic norm. The material culture of these friendships also demonstrates the influence of this model. In his will Edward bequeathed to Arthur Todd, who became his frequent companion, a bronze replica of 'The Faun of the Capitol', which Todd had purchased for him during an extended vacation they took to Rome together in 1875. It was a copy of a famous sculpture by the Greek artist Praxiteles (4th century BC), and was hailed to embody the beauty of the youthful male form.<sup>27</sup> Despite the seeming frankness of many diary

Accident', *Morning Post*, 24 November 1887, p. 3. Donaldson was Australian, his father was Sir Stuart Donaldson, the first Premier of New South Wales. He became an assistant master at Eton in 1878 and later went on to become master of Magdalen. See 'In Memoriam', *Eton College Chronicle*, 4 November 1915, pp. 905–06.

<sup>27</sup> James Dallaway, *Of Statuary and Sculpture among the Antients* (London: Murray, 1816), p. 316n.



entries, Edward did withhold aspects of his private life. The phrase ‘had my hair cut’, in a larger, emphasized hand, appears regularly. The bizarre presentation of the phrase, with its contrast to other entries, suggests that this was an experience he wished to encode, possibly a form of (commercial?) sexual activity.<sup>28</sup> However, Hellenic discourse provided a conduit for the acceptable expression of his associations with young men.

Annie, however, was appalled. While it was not until the advent of sexology in the 1880s that discussion of same-sex relationships became more widespread, newspaper reporting of trials for sodomy was one indication of ‘a pervasive and tacit awareness of sex between men’ across the period (Brady, p. 132). Certainly, the tenor of Annie’s response seems to indicate that she rejected the categorization of these friendships as chaste. Edward’s long-standing commitment to Arthur Todd (routinely referred to as ‘My dearest Arthur’ in the diary), endured for many years and caused particular friction. The liaison seemed to gather in intensity during a prolonged house visit from the 19-year-old in June 1874. Edward cherished their moments of privacy together, waking him to go on secluded walks early in the morning (22 June 1874). ‘Alas! our last day together’, he lamented on the departure of Todd, ‘I parted with this, the dearest friend I have ever known’ (23 June 1874). By the end of the summer his fondness for Todd was sparking furious marital arguments. Annie wished Todd to occupy a bedroom in a more remote part of the house on his visits and, according to Edward, she was ‘speaking to me in the most insulting manner’ (11 September 1874). A temporary peace did not last long. By the end of the year, Edward was making plans for Todd to accompany him to Italy for an extended vacation. He explained, ‘I love him devotedly, and so look forward to any chance of being with him’ (10 December 1874). Edward successfully secured permission from the master of University College, Oxford, where Todd was then a student, that he might miss a term of study to accompany him on the trip. Annie was horrified. As Edward recorded on New Year’s Eve, ‘Not a happy day to end the old year, my wife being so angry at my going abroad with Todd’ (31 December 1874).

In the event, Edward and Todd’s holiday to Italy lasted for two months and marital relations on his return remained fraught. Edward added a retrospective note, dated 7 June, to a long account of the problems he had penned on New Year’s Day, complaining, ‘alas that things should be no better! My best, my dearest friend is kept from coming to see me at my home by my wife’s insane dislike of him. She says she will leave the house if he comes there!’.<sup>29</sup> Two days later, they had another row about

<sup>28</sup> For indicative examples, see Edward’s diary entries for 2 July 1874, 19 March 1878, 7 March 1879, Kent History and Library Centre, U951/F25/31.

<sup>29</sup> Entry dated 7 June, added as a postscript to entry for 1 January 1875, Kent History and Library Centre, U951/F25/27.

Todd, towards whom Edward claimed his wife was ‘behaving disgracefully’ (9 June 1875). Annie remained outraged by his intimacy with Todd, regarding whom Edward reported in the summer of 1878, ‘she still detests and behaves so shamefully to me about him’ (30 July 1878).

Annie clearly interpreted the relationship with Todd as disreputable and threatening to the integrity of their marriage. The Hellenic defence of the ethics of male friendship could enable Edward to assume a position of moral outrage at these suspicions. However, it was also his wife’s refusal to submit to his position per se which enraged him. On 1 January 1875, relating the row over his imminent trip to Rome, he had concluded:

The manner in which she has behaved to me about it, & the language she has used about Todd [...] is such that I cannot alter my plans without loss of self-respect & of any hope of ever having any authority in my own house again.

His claim that he was now compelled to go to Rome with Todd in order to uphold his ascendancy as the head of the household indicates that Edward’s specific response to the culture of mid-Victorian neo-Hellenism was closely entangled with his own patriarchal masculinity. It was possible for Victorian men who did not conform to conventional heterosexuality to maintain supportive relationships with their spouses, as did John Addington Symonds, for example (Brady, pp. 174–76, 184–85). However, in Edward’s case, his tendency to egocentrism, his altered status following his loss of office, and his intellectual belief in male supremacy, meant that this aspect of his self was embedded within a particular formulation of elite masculinity. As such, his insistence that his wife condone his affective liaisons (and his indignation when she refused to do so) was enmeshed with his exercise of patriarchal authority.

In what follows we will consider the extent to which it was possible for his daughter to voice these sensitive emotional matters in a diary which had the potential to be shared by others. The delicate sensibilities involved are compounded by the fact that the relationship between Edward and Eva was warm. He routinely referred to her as ‘my Darling Evy’; Eva was deeply attached to her father and proud of him and of his high status. The sanctioning of male romantic friendship in Hellenic discourse was associated with the elite male world of Oxbridge colleges, and was not a perspective necessarily available to women, especially one such as Annie who lacked classical education, much less a young girl like Eva. Psychological studies of girlhood have pointed to the discursive silence around themes such as sexuality which inhibits girls from expressing desire or knowledge.<sup>30</sup> How far then, is it possible to trace the implications of hidden queer

<sup>30</sup> Caitlin E. Welles, ‘Breaking the Silence Surrounding Female Adolescent Sexual Desire’, *Women and Therapy*, 28.2 (2005), 31–45.

histories through the study of juvenile archives? Could a child articulate the inexpressible?

In fact, Eva's first reference to her father's heterodox relationship with Todd appeared five pages into the diary. In a lively account of her brother Ned's birthday, 5 April 1874, Eva abruptly interrupted her own narrative to interject, 'I must just say that Todd, — one of papa's ducky-darlings — is here, that's to say one of the boys papa has taken up, though he is nineteen.' This 12-year-old girl had devised her own vocabulary — 'ducky-darling' — for expressing what she clearly perceived as the peculiarity of her father's friendship with Todd. We cannot know if Eva was aware of the strife the relationship caused her parents, and she does not express the reasons for her own uneasiness with it. However, she went on to articulate her discomfort through the prism of a comic 'entertainment narrative', explaining her mother's orchestration of who would partner who into a celebratory meal to mark Ned's birthday. Eva recounted how Annie requested that an old family friend hand Katharine in to dinner. 'He did, and then!!', Eva continued, making liberal use of exclamation marks to heighten the drama,

I had been calculating to myself before, and I had come to the conclusion that Cecil will take me in 'so my dear diary, you may imagine my horror! Disappointment! And disgust! when mama said mildly: 'Mr Todd, will you take Evy in?' He advanced towards me but I said boldly, 'I'd rather not!' Todd said 'Oh! Pray don't force her!' and I went in alone. (Easter 1874)

Eva was an accomplished cultural agent and was able to articulate an arch representation of the affective atmosphere the encounter occasioned. This vivid account, while alluding to Eva's visceral distaste for Todd, made comic use of diary convention: 'my dear diary'. The entry did not communicate the reasons for Eva's dislike of Todd, but it did ensure that this awkward moment remained enshrined in family memory.

As the diary progressed, Eva adopted a different tactic for textually navigating her father's behaviour. At the start of 1875, when marital tensions were at their height, Eva's diary was as lively as ever, providing an engaging account of a festive tea party: 'Didn't the children stuff!!! Violet Perry had more than 4 pieces of cake!' (9 January 1875). However, no mention was made of her father's departure to Italy on 15 January. Indeed, there were no further entries at all until February, at which point she provided an extended account of her visit to Brighton with her mother and sister. Here the absence of her father was underlined, though not voiced, by her inclusion of a spirited account of Annie's flirtation with a dashing foreign diplomat. It was a subject she introduced suddenly with the comment, 'Here I must put something' (6 February 1875). This is a strikingly similar formulation to the one she employed for venturing into the subject of her

father's ducky-darlings ('I must just say that'). It was an uncharacteristic turn of phrase for Eva to employ. The narrative disruption she deployed on both occasions seems to symbolize her sense of a deviation from expected parental behaviour.<sup>31</sup> Her ensuing vignette intimates that Annie, while a religiously observant woman, was allowing herself a little latitude with an errant husband abroad in Rome. According to Eva, they first encountered the diplomat on the train journey to Brighton. Annie was seemingly keen to encourage contact, Eva noting that her mother was 'very polite to him and offered him sandwiches'. Eva then comments that 'he evidently could not talk English' (6 February 1875). In fact, the man in question, later named as M. Le Comte de Lancastré, was a Portuguese ambassador who had married a British woman in London two years earlier.<sup>32</sup> Such an individual would doubtless have been proficient in English, indicating that the two adults were probably conversing in French to exclude Annie's daughters from the conversation. They encountered him again during concerts at Brighton where Annie gave him their calling card. He subsequently paid Annie a visit and, as Eva recorded, 'stayed two hours!!'. Her suggestive use of punctuation emphasized how the call exceeded respectable etiquette. She concluded her account: 'he had tea with us, dinner and bed as usual of course he didn't stay for that' (7 February 1875). That Eva was aware of the potential of the visit to transgress polite norms is hinted in her comic syntax and explanation.

Eva soon became poorly and remained unwell until shortly before her father's return from Rome on 9 March, after an absence of nearly two months. During this period, she made no reference to Edward. Although Eva often featured the travel of male family members in her index, and routinely referred to her father's movements in the diary itself, neither her index nor the substantive text made any mention of his trip, nor of his absence or return. On 12 March Edward recorded showing his children photographs of his trip with Todd, although once again Eva chose not to reference this. Indeed, she seems deliberately to erase him from her account at this point, commenting that 'there is not much to put of what I do in London, one day is the same as another'.<sup>33</sup> In this instance the absence of comment was as telling as overt discussion. Silence could express dissent.<sup>34</sup>

By 1878 and 1879 Eva, now aged between sixteen and seventeen years old, had adopted a diurnal diary format. This permits a closer textual comparison with her father's journal. In 1879 Eva made a brief but

<sup>31</sup> See her diary entry in the quotation above for Easter 1874.

<sup>32</sup> *Daily News*, 29 August 1873, p. 4.

<sup>33</sup> Monday, 8 [March] 1875 (a retrospective account covering 8–20 March).

<sup>34</sup> Rodney G. S. Carter, 'Of Things Said and Unsaid: Power, Archival Silences, and Power in Silence', *Archivaria*, 61 (2006), 227–30 <<https://archivaria.ca/archivar/index.php/archivaria/article/view/12541>> [accessed 24 September 2018].



telling comment about Todd, her tone signalling both her disapproval and a dismissive knowingness of the friction he created: ‘Mr Todd came to luncheon and, to my eyes he is a remarkably uninteresting young person’ (10 February 1879). Nonetheless, Eva’s evident sense of loyalty to her father and her subjective investment in upholding an ideal of family life meant that she rarely criticized her father openly or dwelt explicitly on these darker family strains. When Eva referenced disharmony between her parents, she tended to focus upon incidental disagreements and eclipsed the more divisive issues between them. On 27 January 1878, for example, Eva wrote that she ‘walked round the new path [in the family grounds] with Papa who dotes upon it, and is vexed with Mama not thinking it such an improvement as he does’. Edward, with his dominant personality and patriarchal view of domestic relationships, often expressed frustration when he was unable to impose his views on other family members. As such, occasions when his wife or children dissented from him, especially on issues of importance to him, assumed a greater significance. The following day he recorded his disappointment at being unable to secure ‘my dearest Arthur’ a place to listen to a key parliamentary debate on naval spending in response to the Russo-Turkish War (28 January 1878). Eva’s entry included a lengthy appraisal of the household’s differing views on the war. She explained that her mother ‘abuses the Russians roundly’, while her father ‘believes the Russians sincerely meant to help’. She tactfully commented of these conflicting views, ‘I am amused, but do not get much the wiser.’ Yet despite the importance of the issues for her father’s professional persona (he was to publish a letter to his constituents explaining his position on the related question of naval spending), Eva demonstrated her sympathy with her mother’s position: ‘if it will be a bad thing for Russia to get too much power,’ she decides, ‘I wish she may be stopped in time.’<sup>35</sup>

A further source of family dissension at this time was the unwillingness of Eva’s eldest brother, Ned, to take the competitive entrance examination for the army as he wished to accept a nomination to enter the army via the militia. Annie was deeply upset by the proposal, which was widely seen as a weak option for those who had failed, or were unlikely to pass, the competitive exam. Edward was inclined to support his son, and the matter was discussed intensively during February 1878.<sup>36</sup> While Ned eventually decided to take the competitive examination, family relations were tense, for the matter spoke to wider parental disquiet over Ned who, Edward and Annie felt, was often lazy as well as discourteous to them. Edward later

<sup>35</sup> Diary of Eva Knatchbull-Hugessen, 28 January 1878; Edward Knatchbull-Hugessen, *Political Journal*, p. 75.

<sup>36</sup> Gwyn Harries-Jenkins, *The Army in Victorian Society* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1993), pp. 154–55; Diary of Edward Knatchbull-Hugessen, 17–18 February 1878.

acknowledged he believed he was partly to blame as he had ‘not taken pains enough with him when he [Ned] was younger’, but he was angry with his wife for belabouring this point to him (31 January 1879). Edward’s friendships with younger men contributed to these strains. Annie had long felt that Edward’s attachment to young Algy Haskett-Smith in 1874 had led to him neglecting Ned (7 September 1874). While Eva does not reference the arguments occasioned, she signalled the dominance of the topic in their lives by choosing to feature it in the diary index, ‘Ned’s going into the army. Discussions about’ (Fig. 3). She also demonstrated a quiet support for her mother’s view:

Mama has been trying to persuade Ned & Papa to write again to Col. Thompson and refuse this nomination, it certainly would be much better for him to have more time at Oxford where he is working, & getting on with French, & then he would have the year at Sandhurst, which would be good in so many ways, besides as Mama says, when everything is so uncertain about War, it would be a very respectable way of putting off his going into the army. (17 February 1878)

Cumulatively these textual moments convey, without articulating, deeper family discord.

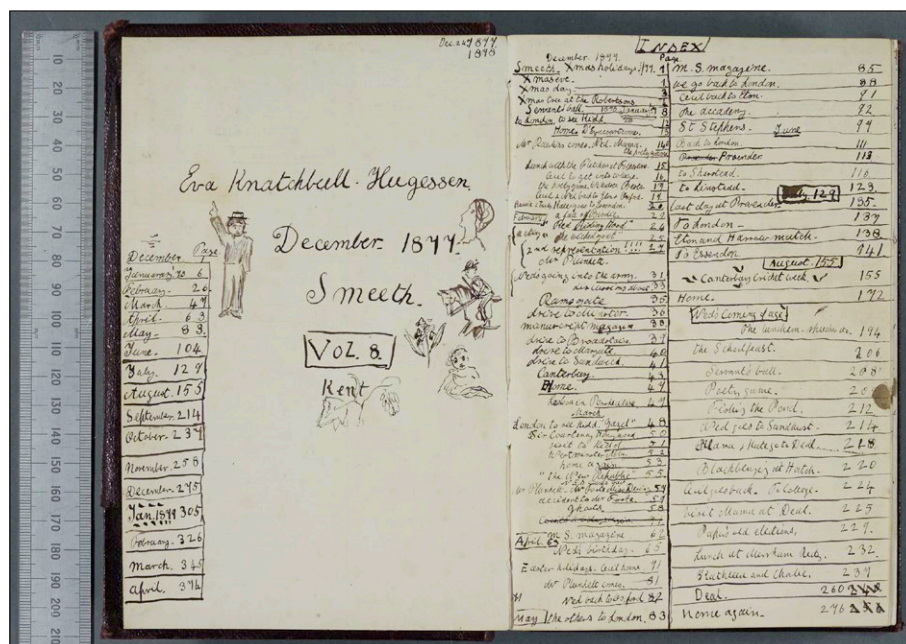


Fig. 3: Index to Diary of Eva Knatchbull-Hugessen, 1877–79, U951/F30/3. Courtesy of Kent History and Library Centre, Maidstone.

It is clear from other archival documents that Eva was adept at using diary forms to protest against male pride. When her father arranged a prestigious cricket match at Smeeth in 1875, some of the country's leading cricketers participated.<sup>37</sup> It was a coup for Edward but Eva produced a beautifully presented yet uproarious 'cricket chronicle', which mocked the teams for missing catches and for their pathetic appearance when rain stopped play.<sup>38</sup> By 1878–79 Eva was more mature, and although she was evidently fond of her father, she found gentler ways to sometimes infer his egoism. When Eva and Edward spent the day in the same location, there was striking uniformity in their diary entries, suggesting a shared narrative consciousness, and perhaps discussion, as to what they deemed significant to record from the day's activities: the weather, social visits, books shared, and games played. As a result, it is necessary to probe the small points of friction, the little evasions, and acts of self-censorship, which distinguish their accounts from one another. Despite Edward's seeming frankness over his homosocial attachments and his wife's censure of them, his diary deployed a quotidian process of 'impression management', in which a particular self-image was sustained. This was of himself as an assured social and political actor, someone deserving of high regard. He suppressed from the record small embarrassments or petty failures which threatened to destabilize his confident and authoritative persona. In contrast, Eva, while reticent about chronicling sensitive family problems, was quick to draw attention to her father's foibles, especially if they had humorous potential. For example, on 5 March 1878 Edward recorded, as was his custom, a list of the letters he had sent. This included a letter to Lady Honeywood, although no further details were given. Eva's account reveals that this was a letter of condolence Edward had written, having heard that Lady Honeywood's husband had died. In fact, it was a false rumour, as Eva explained: 'it was all a mistake and Sir Courtenay alive and rather better.' Honeywood, the seventh baronet, was a senior member of the extended family network and this was, as Eva put it, a 'rather awkward' faux pas for Edward to have made — one which he excised from his account (5 March 1878). Eva, on the other hand, chose to draw attention to the incident by featuring it in her diary index (see *Fig. 3*). Narrative psychologist Kate McLean has found that imparting such 'mishap stories' can be a strategy to communicate aspects of the self without risking 'more personal self-disclosure'.<sup>39</sup> Eva's savouring of such an anecdote could function as a micro-act of cheerful subversion, a small form of release which pointed to the fallibility of the dominant head of the household.

<sup>37</sup> 'Cricket', *Sporting Gazette*, 4 September 1875, p. 889.

<sup>38</sup> Eva Knatchbull-Hugessen, *Smeeth Cricket Chronicles*, Kent History and Library Centre, U951/C 232/1–3.

<sup>39</sup> Kate C. McLean, 'Late Adolescent Identity Development: Narrative Meaning Making and Memory Telling', *Development Psychology*, 41 (2005), 683–91 (p. 688).

A recurrent concern in Edward's diaries was the delivery of public speeches and their reception. He often included self-congratulatory references to his performances and details of any compliments paid to him. For example, on 4 May 1874, he reported that his wife and eldest daughter were in the speaker's gallery to hear him give a speech on the Gold Coast. He claimed he had 'something of a success', going on to explain that 'W. E. Forster said it was the best speech he had heard me deliver [...] & many others complimented' (4 May 1874). In contrast, Eva's diary recorded the work Edward had to undertake to execute his speeches and included more information about negative press coverage. On the eve of delivering a speech on colonial policy to his constituents in Deal, we find subtly divergent emphases in descriptions of a walk they took together. Edward simply notes, 'In afternoon Evy and I walked to Hatch and saw Wyndham' (27 October 1878). Eva's diary hints at a somewhat tiresome excursion, with Edward using the opportunity to rehearse: 'papa said his speech to me all the way there and back' (27 October 1878).<sup>40</sup> Two days later, Eva made a reference to the fact that 'Mama read us a very bad report of papa's speech in the morning post' (29 October 1878).

Telling differences are also discernible in how the two diarists conveyed the family's literary culture. A regular feature of their cultural life was for Edward to read aloud his compositions to his wife and children. Eva's diary reveals that while they might listen, they were not necessarily a dotting audience. In April 1878 Edward read part of a novel he had started to write, 'The Middletons of the Priory'. Eva seemed underwhelmed and queried her father's ability to complete the project: 'it is rather amusing, but he has never tried one before & I doubt his finishing it' (25 April 1878). She was right, and Edward's diary entry for this day, while noting a number of domestic activities, does not mention the reading. Had he sensed that it had fallen rather flat? Later that year he referred to sharing a new children's tale with Eva but did not mention her reaction (29 September 1878). Eva reported, 'Papa finished reading "Kimmelina & the Dwarfs", not such a good story as usual.' Her diary entry for this day was far more engaged with providing details of a story she was writing (and which she subsequently published in a children's journal) (29 September 1878).<sup>41</sup> Indeed, during this period Eva detailed sharing her own compositions with various family members and friends (although she appears not to have chosen to do so in front of her father). Whereas her reports of her father's readings were somewhat desultory in 1878 and 1879, those of her own she conveyed as lively, successful occasions. 'It is the best I have written', she confidently

<sup>40</sup> See also, 'This Evening's News', *Pall Mall Gazette*, 29 October 1878, p. 7.

<sup>41</sup> 'Judy; or, Light Blue', in *Little Wide Awake*, ed. by Mrs Sale Barker (London: Routledge, 1882), pp. 248–55, 282–86, 311–18, 340–45.



concluded of her story ‘Jenks’, which a family friend read to Annie, Ned, D’Eyncourt, and Eva, on a journey to Folkestone (16 January 1878).

Eva provided many such details of her writing during these two years. This included contributing to an amateur, manuscript magazine.<sup>42</sup> Although this endeavour is mentioned in her diary index (see *Fig. 3*, reference to p. 62), her own cultural activities were given less prominence in the index than were her brothers’ movements to and from college and school. Repeated diary entries referred to her brothers’ academic pursuits and her attempts to persuade Cecil to work well on his return to Eton.<sup>43</sup> As a result, a larger lacuna looms across Eva’s diary: the silence over her own ambitions. By 1880 she was making concerted educational preparations which were to equip her to take the local Cambridge examination, and to apply successfully to study at Cambridge. These ambitions were not mentioned in the 1877–79 diary, but she did begin to record in code her efforts to study Latin and Greek.<sup>44</sup> Although Edward was supportive of Eva’s cultural and literary activities, he was mocking of female higher education and fiercely opposed to women’s suffrage. During the tense family Christmas of 1874 his gift to Eva was a copy of his latest children’s story collection which featured a tale entitled ‘The Pig-Faced Queen’ — a vicious satire on the supposed evils of female political power.<sup>45</sup> In such a climate it would have been hard for a teenage girl to voice openly her aspirations. Instead, Eva and Cecil drew up a secret agreement, not mentioned in the diary, that Cecil would assist her in attaining competency in Latin.<sup>46</sup> Eva’s study of the Classics was, however, known to her parents. Therefore, her use of code to document this activity evinces a desire to delineate a private cultural subjectivity. For all her forthright self-expression and confident deployment of entertainment narratives, the broader gendered landscape in which Eva was situated created fractured subjectivities in which she too silenced many aspects of selfhood.

Cultures of silence are intricate and multilayered in any society.<sup>47</sup> Some silences can be an expression of power, for privileged groups need not voice taken-for-granted facets of experience. Other silences can protect

<sup>42</sup> See Kathryn Gleadle, ‘Magazine Culture, Girlhood Communities and Educational Reform in Late Victorian Britain’, *English Historical Review* (forthcoming, 2019).

<sup>43</sup> See Eva’s diary entries for 8 February 1878, 17 February 1878, 3 January 1879, 23 January 1879.

<sup>44</sup> For example, diary entries for 14 April, 16 April, 2 May, 7 May, 12 May, 19 May, 20 May, 25 May 1878. My thanks to Colin Rogerson for deciphering Eva’s code.

<sup>45</sup> Edward Knatchbull-Hugessen, ‘The Pig-Faced Queen’, in *Queer Folk* (London: Macmillan, 1874), pp. 143–203.

<sup>46</sup> Agreement between Cecil Knatchbull-Hugessen and Eva Knatchbull-Hugessen, Kent History and Library Centre, U951/C228.

<sup>47</sup> Dennis Kurzon, ‘Towards a Typology of Silence’, *Journal of Pragmatics*, 39 (2007), 1673–688.

the self from directly rehearsing painful subjects, such as bereavement, or contribute to processes of impression management. There are forms of censorship, like Eva's use of code, which appear to be born out of a desire to cherish more fragile aspects of interiority, or which enabled diarists to chart private aspects of the body. (The asterisks which generally appear in Eva's diary every twenty-eight or twenty-nine days were presumably a way of recording the first day of her menstrual cycle.) Some aspects of social and cultural experience simply lacked discursive norms, but Eva's need to deploy a neologism, 'ducky-darling', signalled, without addressing, the curious familiarity she discerned in her father's male friendships, and the uneasy disruption they occasioned in her familial world.

With the rise of the new history of childhood, a growing cohort of scholars have turned their attention to the analysis of juvenilia to consider the significance of the 'child as the creator of culture'.<sup>48</sup> This article argues for the importance of considering quotidian practices of juvenile creativity. Through juxtaposing the narratives deployed by these two diarists, it is possible to plot the varying practices of evasion, obliqueness, and self-censorship that they deployed. Tracing these moments through comparative analysis enables us to excavate how Eva's diary created moments of subtle resistance to dominant family narratives. Recent scholarship has begun to explore the fractured presence of queer relationships within archival collections.<sup>49</sup> In this instance, it is the voice of the heterosexual wife that happens to be absent. However, it has been possible to use Eva's childhood diary to intimate how a patriarchal masculinity was woven into Edward's specific conception of his romantic friendships and to tease out some of the implications for family dynamics. Young people could be subversive curators of the family memory, creating, sometimes knowingly, diverse versions of family experiences and histories. Archives do not simply reflect regimes of power.<sup>50</sup> Exploring juvenile life writing requires a new archival hermeneutics in which the meanings of archives and their construction can reveal hidden dynamics. This includes pointing to the cultural agency of young diarists, while recognizing the fraught subjectivities their extant manuscripts reveal.

<sup>48</sup> Christine Alexander and Juliet McMaster, 'Introduction', in *The Child Writer from Austen to Woolf*, ed. by Christine Alexander and Juliet McMaster, Cambridge Studies in Nineteenth-Century Literature and Culture, 47 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), pp. 1–10 (p. 1).

<sup>49</sup> *Out of the Closet, Into the Archives: Researching Sexual Histories*, ed. by Amy L. Stone and Jaime Cantrell (New York: SUNY Press, 2015).

<sup>50</sup> See Joan M. Schwartz and Terry Cook, 'Archives, Records, and Power: The Making of Modern Memory', *Archival Science*, 2 (2002), 1–19.