## Ghostly Objects and the Horrors of Ghastly Ancestors in the Ghost Stories of Louisa Baldwin

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Abstract

This article examines the late Victorian ghost stories of Louisa Baldwin. Looking at several stories from her 1895 collection *The Shadow on the Blind*, we argue that, although her work is a part of the ongoing tradition of women’s ghost stories in the nineteenth century, they differ from most by the weight of emphasis given to family, ancestry, and the importance of material, inherited objects. We argue that Louisa cannot be separated out from her family, who included sisters married to Edward Poynter, and Edward Burne-Jones; her nephew Rudyard Kipling, and her son Prime Minister (to be) Stanley Baldwin. There is a material *weight* of family evident in her work that haunts her characters through ancestry and heritage. The ghost stories discussed here display a sense of fatality; of destiny, of inescapability, and finally of a dwindling and the dying out of the ancestral line. Tracing some sort of autobiographical criticism of over-bearing families, this article explores both real, and spectral “ghastly ancestors”.

Key words: Family, Ancestry, Materiality, Haunted Objects, Ghosts

In the “Introduction” to the Ash-Tree Press’s edition of Louisa Baldwin’s collection of ghost stories, *The Shadow on the Blind* (1895), John Pelan and Richard Dolby assert that, “Louisa Baldwin figures mostly as a footnote in the biographies of her more famous son Stanley Baldwin [...] and nephew Rudyard Kipling”.[[1]](#endnote-1) Louisa was daughter of the Minister George Macdonald, wife to the very rich industrialist Alfred Baldwin, sister to Georgiana (married to Edward Burne-Jones) and Agnes (who married Edward Poynter) , aunt to Rudyard Kipling and mother to Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin, so perhaps it is not surprising she gets lost. There are no commentaries that mention Louisa without reference to her family; usually she is the last listed member, and very often she loses her first name, being more commonly known as Mrs Alfred Baldwin. It is for this reason, that in this article, we have chosen to call her “Louisa” rather than “Baldwin”. We will argue that this family background is telling and that her ghost stories evidence a hitherto unnoticed rebellion against the weight of “family” and “ancestry”. We suggest that Louisa takes full advantage of Diana Wallace’s (much later) claim that “the ghost story as a form has allowed women writers special kinds of freedom, not merely to include the fantastic and supernatural, but also to offer critiques of male power and sexuality which are often more radical than those in more realistic genres”.[[2]](#endnote-2) But more than this, we argue that a re-reading of Louisa’s ghost stories is warranted for their interesting observations not only on the trauma of the domestic space for women, but that trauma is magnified when embedded in cultural and material manifestations of the burdens of family inheritance and the horror of history and heritage. Louisa’s tales echo with popular and political modes of framing history, and as a correlative to this, some of our concerns here include the ways that Louisa herself has been rendered little more than ghost-like in subsequent narratives of the Macdonald family.

This article will examine four tales from *The Shadow on the Blind: And Other Ghost Stories*: “Sir Nigel Otterburne’s Case”, “The Weird of the Walfords”, “The Empty Picture Frame”, and the title story, “The Shadow on the Blind”. Each tale provides evidence of serious critique of patriarchal family structures. While this is quite a common trope in women’s ghost stories written in the nineteenth century, Louisa’s tales emphasise the horrors associated with some really ghastly ancestors, and the weight and oppression of inherited objects that carry family history and heritage in dark materiality. Each story is about family, inheritance, ancestry, genealogy, and legacy. All of them document what Sophie Gilmartin has noted of the nineteenth century as a particular emphasis on questions of historical pedigree, and of the manner of the telling of family origins “as partly defining them, and therefore as influencing their life’s tendency or narrative”.[[3]](#endnote-3) Family and ancestry are not seen as a stabilizing influence conferring status and an idea of longevity and structure, but as stifling, oppressive, madness-inducing, and absolutely inescapable. In these stories, however far one might run in distance or time, a return to the family is seen as inexorable . Family fuses and confuses the past, the present, and the future. Ancestors come to “claim” their relations, and the family and its history negate individuality. There are questions of fate versus free will, the weight of history and ancestry, blood ties, reproduction, fertility, and the demise of the family line. In the ghost stories of Louisa Baldwin, the family manifest as the return of the repressed, and a return of truly ghastly ancestors.

**The Ghostly Histories of Things**

Ben Cowell explains “heritage”, in highlighting the idea of inheritance, in which there is “an emphasis on the passing down from one generation to another of physical property, lineage or ancestral traditions”.[[4]](#endnote-4) It is “a way of seeing or appreciating the past in the present, in the interests of both the present and the future”.[[5]](#endnote-5) Importantly, for our argument, he notes that “the idea of heritage involves value judgements and decisions about heritage therefore involve making choices between competing value systems”.[[6]](#endnote-6) Louisa’s narratives reveal the conflicting nature of such choices arising when personal experiences of familial inheritance intersect with wider social and cultural representations and notions of history and heritage. They highlight how insistence on prioritising “family” and all that this entails comes at a cost, particularly for the women of the house. But these ghost stories also consider the power of family and history in concrete material form, when the physical world bears down as a malevolent force on the human subject, as artefacts and houses that represent family history are animated and menace that family to destruction.

Simon Hay notes of ghost stories that they reveal history “as what hurts, what haunts, what sets limits to what we can and cannot do, what exceeds our ability to control”.[[7]](#endnote-7) This resembles, in our troublesome and troubling attempts to know and thus explain the past and its artefacts, how Bill Brown identifies the distinction, for him, between “object” and “thing”.[[8]](#endnote-8) He argues that “we look through objects (to see what they disclose about history, society, nature or culture - above all, what they disclose about us), but we only catch a glimpse of things”.[[9]](#endnote-9) As such, things serve “to index a certain limit or liminality to hover over the threshold between the nameable and unnameable, the figurable and unfigurable, the identifiable and the unidentifiable”.[[10]](#endnote-10) Hay’s point that history, even if thought to be behind us, escapes containment in the form of the ghost can be seen in Louisa’s stories that articulate how things, themselves uncontrollable and having a supernatural presence, serve their own purposes in perpetuating narratives of family history. Alex Preda, developing Brown’s approach, states that things are “active social entities”.[[11]](#endnote-11) This is demonstrated in both “The Empty Picture Frame” and “The Weird of the Walfords”, where a family portrait and an ancient bed become animate forces that exceed understanding and control, with tragic consequences.

The material force of history, which also embodies the more nebulous but equally powerful effects of religion and morality, underpins the ethos of the artists and artisans of the Arts and Crafts, and an allied organisation, the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB). The Macdonald sisters were, throughout their lives, in close contact with various figures who were proponents of the Arts and Crafts and art practice more widely, and not only through marriage. John Ruskin, who actively promoted medieval crafts and architecture as a heritage to be preserved, and William Morris, who developed many of Ruskin’s ideas, were family visitors and frequent correspondents, and Louisa herself spoke with Morris about her wood engraving and writing.[[12]](#endnote-12) The sisters, to varying degrees, made items in the Arts and Crafts style,[[13]](#endnote-13) and they purchased furniture from Morris, Marshall, Faulkner & Company.[[14]](#endnote-14) Morris was instrumental in establishing SPAB in 1877, as the result of vigorous public arguments around conflicting notions of how to think about, display, demonstrate and commemorate history. These debates, familial and beyond, were contemporary with Louisa’s writing.

It is instructive to consider the SPAB Manifesto for how it situates the continuing physical existence of historic buildings as intrinsically linked to regarding history, and its preservation, in the “right” way. SPAB promoted “Protection” over “Restoration”. Restoration involved actions of removal and addition to decaying or ruined historic buildings. Protection meant allowing only minimal construction that was demonstrably modern work and clearly signalled as repair. The SPAB Manifesto explicitly refers to the “life” of a building and its history, recalling Preda’s point on agency ascribed to things. Restoration or damage leaves behind a “feeble and lifeless forgery”,[[15]](#endnote-15) but in Louisa’s writing even prior to any physical destruction of a house and its contents, the life of the family is already fatally weakened. In both “Sir Nigel Otterburne’s Case” and “The Empty Picture Frame” the line is sickening, collapsing into madness or unable to reproduce. Humphrey Walford burns down the haunted Grange in “The Weird of the Walfords” as a desperate act of defiance but he is, as all that remains of the family line, already the living dead. We are not suggesting that the stories form a direct intervention in the debates of the Arts and Crafts or SPAB, but they are certainly informed by such concerns, and reveal Louisa’s evident, if complex, anxieties about family and inheritance.

**The Weight of Ancestors**

*The Shadow on the Blind* was published by Dent and Co. in 1895 and is Louisa’s only collection of ghost stories. It came out in late November, and *Punch* aligned it with the ghost stories for Christmas tradition:

Who is for Ghost Stories, all gathered about the glowing fire, with just enough light for someone to read them out aloud, the Shadows coming out of the dark corners, and hovering over you, intent on listening to what will make them thrill with goblinesque delight, and cause you to huddle closer together in fearful enjoyment? To such, if any there be in these matter-of-fact days, I say, get *The Shadow on the Blind, and other Stories*, written by Mrs. Alfred Baldwin.[[16]](#endnote-16)

The collection was generally well received. It consists of nine stories, most of which are relatively conventional ghost stories, with returning lovers, haunted houses, and arrogant young men learning the error of their ways through ghostly encounters. Yet there are some interesting nuances that we will attempt to tease out in this article. In *The Female Thermometer*, Terry Castle suggests that during the Enlightenment there was an

internalization of the spectral – the gradual reinterpretation of ghosts and apparitions as *hallucinations*, or projections of the mind [that] introduced a new uncanniness into human consciousness itself. The mind became a “world of phantoms” and thinking itself an act of ghost-seeing.[[17]](#endnote-17)

In “Sir Nigel Otterburne’s Case”, Sir Nigel is dying and the doctor who is summoned finds everyone hopeless although this should be a quite straightforward case. Sir Nigel and his daughter are waiting for something and Sir Nigel whispers, “Are they come?”[[18]](#endnote-18) While Miss Otterburne cryptically tells the doctor, “they will come soon.”[[19]](#endnote-19) And they do. At the moment Sir Nigel dies, she cries out that “they have come!”[[20]](#endnote-20) and the doctor and Miss Otterburne stand at the window:

In the courtyard beneath, directly opposite to the window, was a strange, silent crowd of men, women, and children, looking up at us in the faint morning light with faces of the dead. And though they pressed and thronged each other on the gravel path, not a sound was heard.

I am not a superstitious man, and in those days my nerves were of iron, but I reeled as I stood, and the blood rushed to my head with a singing sound. It was the dead of centuries ago, and the dead of yesterday, grey-bearded men who fought in the civil wars, young men and maidens who never were contemporaries in this life. […] Miss Otterburne spoke again as one speaks in nightmare, with deadly effort and oppression. “I know them. I saw them when they came to fetch my grandfather, and when they fetched my mother.[[21]](#endnote-21)

The massing throng of ancestral dead have come to take Sir Nigel. In a moment of horror, Miss Otterburne recognises her brother among the dead and finds out the next day he died abroad of cholera. As she reads the letter, “Miss Otterburne laughed, the cackling laugh of insanity.”[[22]](#endnote-22) She lives for twenty years more “in a state of hopeless insanity”, refusing to leave the house because “they would not know where to find me […] I want the merry, white-faced folk to come for me.”[[23]](#endnote-23) She is left alone, psychologically damaged, and the last of her ancestral family line. In *A History of the Modern Ghost Story*, Simon Hay says that very many eighteenth and nineteenth century ghost stories were concerned with, “A declining aristocracy, insistently troubled with failed or interrupted inheritance”.[[24]](#endnote-24) This is certainly the case in these tales, however, where he states that “[i]t is notable how often ghost stories [engineer] an aristocratic restoration.”[[25]](#endnote-25) In contrast to this, Louisa’s stories detail a complete collapse of the aristocratic line, albeit that the ghosts that she writes in this story (and others) appear to be bringers and enforcers of identity, history, and belonging. Brown, Burdett, and Thurschwell argue that ghosts “eventually […] lodge themselves as psychological projections: fears and desires that are anchored in the past and are the basis of our inner selves”.[[26]](#endnote-26) Bearing this in mind, it is possible to argue that the ghosts that Louisa writes are indeed projections, pointing to inescapable, over-bearing family ancestry and overwhelming patriarchal family structures.

**The Materiality of the Past**

This sense of the weight of ancestry is also very evident in the tale “The Weird of the Walfords”. The story opens with Humphrey Walford stating that he “did a deed for which I should have been disinherited by my father and disowned by my ancestors. I laid sacrilegious hands on the old carved oak four-post family bedstead and destroyed it”.[[27]](#endnote-27) Constructed of oaks from their estate, the bed is a family tree built of family trees, and Walford describes it as having “a history to me so unspeakably melancholy” and producing a “nightmare-like feeling”.[[28]](#endnote-28) With the assistance of a carpenter, Gillam, the bed is reduced to kindling. Gillam, however, is allowed to save its carved panels, which he remodels into a cradle This cradle is bought by Walford’s new wife, Grace, for their infant son, but the boy inexplicably dies in it, followed by the wasting death of Grace herself and only Humphrey Walford is left, the future extinguished.

Walford violently disavows the heritage of the bed and all it represents of decay and death, as for three centuries it was “the cradle and the grave” of ten generations of his family.[[29]](#endnote-29) However, once the bed is destroyed, Walford continues to live on in the Grange and seeks a wife partly because he “did not mean to let an ancient race die out”,[[30]](#endnote-30) and he is convinced that by destroying the bed, the horrors of the past have been averted.

For Bill Brown things are “what is excessive in objects, as what exceeds their mere materialization as objects or their mere utilization as objects - their force as a sensuous presence or as a metaphysical presence, the magic by which objects become values, fetishes, idols, and totems”.[[31]](#endnote-31) The bed can be viewed in this way. For the family and their servants, the bed has a totemic force, the power that it exerts generating different responses from them.[[32]](#endnote-32)

The housekeeper, Mrs Barrett, tearfully objects to the destruction. She recalls the deaths of previous family members, saying “I’d hoped to ha’ seen you laid in it, like your poor father before you”.[[33]](#endnote-33) The bed, like a family Bible, is a material embodiment of the history of the Walford family, collecting, archiving and memorialising them in a denial of individual experience and identity. Mrs Barrett’s anticipation that it will hold the narrator’s corpse aligns the present with the future and the past simultaneously, much as Ben Cowell explains the power of heritage. Her view of the bed as something essential to the Walford family also finds an echo in David Lowenthal’s discussion of heritage, that “pride inheres no less in precedence than in perpetuity – unbroken connections, permanent traits and institutions”.[[34]](#endnote-34) For him, heritage “is not testable or even a reasonably plausible account of the past, but a *declaration of faith* in that past” [[35]](#endnote-35): Mrs Barrett has such a faith, disturbingly manifest in her belief that family members die in the bed as the right conclusion of family membership.

For Gillam, the bed signals his alliance, in an artisanal brotherhood, with the man who carved its panels some three hundred years previously, again linking past, present and future. He states that he “sides with the chap as made the bedstead”,[[36]](#endnote-36) arguing that such work should be expected to outlive those who produce or own it, which ties him to the Ruskinian view on medieval crafts. Gillian Naylor argues that Ruskin particularly emphasised “individuality rather than standardization, men rather than machines”,[[37]](#endnote-37) and the challenge that Louisa’s narrative makes to what can be seen as the mechanical reproduction of the force of “family” can be seen in this light. But, simultaneously, Ruskin’s ideal of the positive force of the past is shown as a deadly power when the remnants of the bed return to the family.

Gillam suggests, attempting to save it, that Walford sell the bed “to them as knows nothing of its ways”,[[38]](#endnote-38) simultaneously shifting what should be a non-commodified thing, that is craft skill and appreciation, into a commodity, but also acknowledging that even Gillam views the bed as having agency, in “its ways”. Elizabeth Cumming and Wendy Kaplan note that Arts and Crafts interior design allowed for the “compromise of buying furnishings”.[[39]](#endnote-39) As such, they identify “a new professional, the antique dealer”,[[40]](#endnote-40) and Gillam’s later role as antiques seller suggests that history can be bought and sold, and that buying up the past is a legitimate activity and undercutting the SPAB ideal that history is sacrosanct. Grace’s action in purchasing the body parts of the bed as the cradle (and deathbed), is a further reminder that the past is inescapable, in whatever form it returns.

Grace is made to bear the burden of Walford’s efforts at modernising, of improving his life in rescuing him from loneliness and re-energising the family. He finds her “in a log house in the far west of America”.[[41]](#endnote-41) She is figured as New World youth, modernity, and the future, but his assumption of escaping the past is confounded when Grace is described as having “a most romantic conception of the land of her forefathers” with the “belief that every village in England contained a church, vast and venerable as Westminster Abbey, and was engirt with hills crowned by frowning fortresses”.[[42]](#endnote-42) As Emma Liggins indicates “haunting is conjured up by an over-investment in the oldness of old places”.[[43]](#endnote-43) So, Grace’s delight in a particular room, seen in a photograph, for its situation and view is a warning.[[44]](#endnote-44) When she is brought back to the Grange, Grace’s determination to see the room, which once contained the ancestral bed, causes an estrangement with Walford. She sees the bed through the keyhole, describing it accurately, even though he knows this is impossible. Continually refers to her as his “little wife”, he insists that she is at the mercy of “absurd imaginations”.[[45]](#endnote-45) This is despite Walford’s own horrified emotional response to the bed and his paradoxical, and hypocritical, justification for refusing to open the room as a superstitious feeling.[[46]](#endnote-46)

Walford insists that Grace do his bidding, saying “Don’t let my Eve spoil our paradise”.[[47]](#endnote-47) But her independent shopping trip that brings the bed back into the house in the form of the cradle, suggests that efforts at feminine choice and freedom merely hasten the inevitable tragedy. Grace suffers lingering months of grief, “weak in mind and body”,[[48]](#endnote-48) and eventually dies in the bedroom despite refurnishing it with “tawdry chips of furniture, chairs made of gilded match-sticks tied together with ribbons that must sink into feeble ruins”.[[49]](#endnote-49) Liggins notes how the domestic space is not comfortable for women, and Grace’s efforts at domesticating the Grange according to her preferences have fatal consequences because it can never be her own. As Louisa demonstrates, neither men nor women have power against the force of family and inheritance, however, in Louisa’s writing it is women who suffer the most.

Steven Connor has argued that the thing retains “the power of resistance or reserve, the power to withdraw or withhold itself from being known”.[[50]](#endnote-50) Everyone believes they know the bed, conceiving of it as an object, but it evades understanding: it is excessive, as Brown suggests, by being much more than a bed. Instead, it is a thing with agency, it has a “greedy maw”, it must “perish”,[[51]](#endnote-51) and as already noted, Gillam considers it as a living entity. Transmitting the intolerable weight and trauma of history, the bed exceeds explanation, and this makes it monstrous. Efforts to “discipline” it through destruction fail, and the bed finally “disciplines” the family in the death of the child and Grace, and even the Grange. The living history venerated by SPAB is burned to the ground as Walford rids himself of the “accursed pile”,[[52]](#endnote-52) that is the burden of family and inheritance. He says “I felt impatient with the changeless aspect of nature and of inanimate things around me” but he knows he is “speaking to the dead”.[[53]](#endnote-53)

**The Last of the Line**

In both “Sir Nigel Otterburne’s Case” and “The Weird of the Walfords”, the weight of history and the pressure of ancestry are destructive forces that lead to the ancestral line being wiped out. This is also true in the next tale we turn to, “The Empty Picture Frame”. In this story, history also appears to materially triumph, but the result is the same barren dwindling of the ancestral line. The tale begins with Katherine Swinford at home. No longer young, “mistress of a large property, and a law unto herself in her own domain”, she is unmarried and will remain so.[[54]](#endnote-54) Miss Swinford is meditating on how the past might have been different when she shakes herself and declares: “this will never do! I shall grow melancholy if I sit by myself in the twilight. It is peopled with ghosts, and with might-have-beens, the worst of all ghosts.”[[55]](#endnote-55) In place of a close family of her own (both her parents are dead and she is the last of generations of Swinfords) she decides to invite her young cousin Joceline to stay. When Joceline arrives, (that same evening, almost as soon as the decision is made), Miss Swinford notes she bears “the most extraordinary resemblance to the portrait of Joceline Swinford”, her ancient ancestor, that hangs in the library.[[56]](#endnote-56) As might be expected in a story with such a title, when Miss Swinford flings the library door open, the picture frame is bare and “where the portrait of Joceline Swinford had been, hung only the empty frame.”[[57]](#endnote-57) They seek in vain for the thief, but none can be found. Joceline behaves more and more peculiarly. Pale, reticent, and speaking in antiquated fashion, the whole household find her strange and Miss Swinford’s maid tells her Joceline walks in her sleep. They follow her that night to an abandoned room in the house where Joceline stops and lifts up her head and cries,

“It was here that he died! On this spot my love died! Here he lay till they bore him to his last resting place, but far from me! I lie alone in my narrow bed!” and Miss Swinford, terrified and convinced that her cousin was either a mad woman or a somnambulist, turned and fled.[[58]](#endnote-58)

Joceline leaves the next night, conveyed away in “a huge coach, drawn by four black horses.”[[59]](#endnote-59) The picture frame is no longer empty, and Miss Swinford receives a letter saying that her cousin Jocelyn had missed the invitation and would come another time.

Miss Swinford believed that she knew who her strange guest had been. But she dared not express her conviction in words. Her friends would have thought her mad. She kept her secret locked in her breast. But she was a changed woman from that time forward, and within twelve months the last of the Swinfords was laid to rest in the family burial place. [[60]](#endnote-60)

Joceline is of course a ghostly ancestor who has stepped out of her own portrait for a melancholy return to where she lost her lover and she herself died. Joceline unwittingly brings with her oppression, madness, death, and destruction. We began this section with Castle’s assertion that in later times, ghosts became internalized, psychological projections. Here, this is both apparent and not. The last of an ancient and revered line, Miss Swinford was musing about what might have been – husband, children – when Joceline arrived, and in this way perhaps her ancestor as ghost figure, can be seen as a projection. In a recent article in *Women’s Writing*, Ian Murphy cites “the motif of the haunted portrait as both a site of dread, and as a canvas on which established philosophies may be scrutinized”.[[61]](#endnote-61) In a similar way, we have been arguing that perhaps the inescapable fate brought on by ghastly ancestry might be a projection of Louisa’s in relation to her own overbearing, patriarchal family.

Murphy looks at haunted portraits in the work of Vernon Lee and E. Nesbitt and he says that,

their subjects exist outside of the parameters of natural and social law. Yet, despite their defiance of these laws, Lee’s and Nesbit’s femmes fatales remain framed in stasis, due endlessly to re-enact their moment of encapsulation on canvas.[[62]](#endnote-62)

However, this is not the case with Joceline Swinford who walks and talks, rides in a carriage, and reminisces about her dead lover. Her return, it seems, is a choice. Indeed the ghosts in all the tales examined in this article, there is a very *substantial* return; a very physical return. This point was picked up by a review in *The Glasgow Herald*, but it was seen as a criticism:

There is nothing vague, nothing of mist and twilight, no tinge of poetry, no haze of romance about her ghosts. They are all terribly substantial, prosaically malignant, forward tormentors of men. They travel in hydraulic lifts, bang about furniture, stamp and fall heavily on the floor, pay visits in chariots, converse and even sit down to dinner with ordinary mortals.[[63]](#endnote-63)

From our point of view of course, the fact that the ghosts are so very present; so substantial, is telling. If Louisa’s ghosts are psychological projections, they are weighty and material ones.

**Modernisation and the Failure to erase the past**

In a brief, but nonetheless telling, moment in “The Empty Picture Frame” Katherine Swinford remembers how her uncle, Sir Piers Hammersley, father of the invited Joceline, acquired the “Hammersley” name, when the shared name is Swinford. Their ancestor, Adam Swinford married an heiress, Anne Hammersley, his access to her inheritance made conditional, at her insistence, on his adoption of her family name. It is a rare example of women’s power in Louisa’s writings, although of course such power here is directly related to status conferred by wealth. It gestures to Louisa’s seemingly ambiguous feelings about the Macdonald family. On the one hand she was proud of her ancestral Macdonald line and is said to have been unhappy that her maiden name was now “hidden under the lesser name of Baldwin”.[[64]](#endnote-64) On the other, she also saw her family as a “bugbear”. Overall, Louisa’s ghost stories generate questions, and a sense of unease, about how women are expected to locate themselves with respect to notions of family history, and she interrogates assumptions about the worth of the past and whether living in a present free of the past is ever possible.

 The title story, “The Shadow on the Blind” takes a slightly different tack to the idea of the ever-present past, although the end result is similar. This tale situates family in concerns about saving the buildings and artefacts of the past juxtaposed with understanding what it might mean to be modern. Louisa’s family connections with the Arts and Crafts movement sets her beside their debates about respecting or abandoning the past in the form of the houses and furnishings, and is indicated in the ways that her characters engage with that environment. In the contemporary press “the relation between tradition and innovation” and between “conservation and design”[[65]](#endnote-65) was at the heart of how nineteenth century England was a site of struggle over the ethical and moral questions of how to live (politically, physically) in a rapidly changing world.

Louisa’s ghost stories highlight the oppressive forces of the inheritance of family as a force that overwhelms individuals even to their death, suggestive of the link that Cowell makes between past, present, and future. As Cowell also notes, the conception of “heritage” tends to prioritise places and objects,[[66]](#endnote-66) and this is evident in the way that Harbeldon Hall is figured in “The Shadow on the Blind” and in the monstrosity of the bed, a family heirloom, in “The Weird of the Walfords”. In both cases, efforts at modernising, either by introducing modern technology or by jettisoning old, heirloom furniture, are ineffectual against the combined weight of family heritage and inheritance.

Simon Hay, from a socio-historical perspective, argues that ghost stories of the nineteenth century represent “failed modernity narrative[s]”.[[67]](#endnote-67) As such, ghost stories are, he says, “an undoing of the present in favor [sic] of the past, rather than either the continuation of the current order or the development of something new”[[68]](#endnote-68) and that “the whole point of the ghost story is that the present *cannot* wrench free of the past and so has not become fully modern”.[[69]](#endnote-69) Emma Liggins notes of ghost stories authored by women between the 1850s and 1940s, that “[d]espite or perhaps because of the drive towards modernisation, the buried stories of previous occupants cannot be exorcised”.[[70]](#endnote-70) Nonetheless, she suggests that “oppositions between tradition and modernity, past and present, are always open for interrogation, and an embracing of the new shadowed by the lure of the old”.[[71]](#endnote-71) Liggins” focus is on the representation of “gendered space in a transitional period, when the modernisation of the home, the growth of tourism and the veneration for the past as figured through the “old house” all seemed to call up the ghosts”.[[72]](#endnote-72) The arguments we present here about Louisa’s ghost stories support this but are developed to reveal what she suggests are the particularly crushing effects of having to live in houses haunted by ideas of family. The stories may take different routes into this question and lay different emphases on the question of the existence, or not, of ghosts, but throughout all of them the past, however it manifests, is inescapable.

“The Shadow on the Blind” introduces the empty Harbledon Hall through a series of details that indicate that it fulfils the usual tropes of the haunted house, but Louisa complicates readings of the place: the house may be decaying, yet the disordered gardens suggest a landscape where “the fairy prince might seek the sleeping beauty”.[[73]](#endnote-73) The desire of the new tenant, Mr Stackpoole, to restore and renovate the place has a similar drive to do battle against abandonment and bring a slumbering but seemingly innocent and lovely past back to life.

The story indicates competing perspectives on the past as it manifests in the present. Mr Stackpoole and his wife initially regard the house as a once “happy household”[[74]](#endnote-74) but requiring the bringing of order and transformation, returned to life and modernised by installing electric lighting. Stackpoole dismisses explanations of the hurried departure of the last tenants, Sir Roland Shawe and his family, as evidence of ghosts, insisting that the introduction of electric light “was the best cure for such preposterous folly, and in its illumination Mr Stackpoole felt that he should be more than a match for the powers of darkness”.[[75]](#endnote-75) Nonetheless, Mrs Stackpoole has some reservations, feeling a “chill” about the Hall.[[76]](#endnote-76) The possibility is raised that there is a fundamental problem with the house that may not be so easily resolved by the introduction of modern technologies and attitudes.

Stackpoole is an habitual improver of old houses, acquiring and renovating but soon moving on, a repetitive process that Mrs Stackpoole, a “frail-looking elderly lady,”[[77]](#endnote-77) is forced to patiently endure. But she is uncomfortable with Harbledon Hall as his latest project, telling him of “a sort of depressed foreboding feeling that I have never had before in any of the houses that you and I have been over together, and their name is legion”.[[78]](#endnote-78) For the Victorian reader her statement has a dual meaning, being both the simple assertion that they have viewed a considerable quantity of houses but also, because of contemporary understanding of the Bible, that these places have a dark aspect, even if no ghosts have been mentioned. The New Testament books of Mark and Luke tell of Jesus meeting a man possessed by demons, who announce their name as Legion, “for we are many”.[[79]](#endnote-79) The implication is that, potentially, all old houses are possessed by something from the past, and that the past is dangerous, even demonic. There is no suggestion that any of the previous houses seen or occupied by the Stackpooles have been haunted, but her comment nonetheless introduces Louisa’s view that traces of the past reverberate in the present, and rarely as a positive presence. This also has an echo in Stackpoole’s insistence that electric light will banish the “powers of darkness”, the phrase doubling as both the absence of light and the more disturbing notion of evil this evokes, for all that Stackpoole himself resists superstitions.

But Harbledon Hall is haunted: a brutal patricide committed some hundred and fifty years before is replayed, observed by three members of the Stackpoole family, the same manifestation experienced by the Shawes. Stackpoole is told that they were “rational beings”,[[80]](#endnote-80), much as he views himself. Haunting is therefore a cross-class experience, the veracity of the event observed by clear-thinking members of both the gentry and the middle class Stackpooles. Of note, too, is that neither the murderer nor the murdered are to be thought of in positive terms: the father is described as “an uncommonly bad lot”,[[81]](#endnote-81) and the son who kills him as “an evil-looking fellow”.[[82]](#endnote-82) The past, and the family in the past, is shown as far from innocent.

Modernity no match for history, as Hay indicates, and even the sceptical Mr Stackpoole abandons the Hall, pretending to his wife that this is motivated by his own capriciousness.[[83]](#endnote-83) But the final words belong to Mrs Stackpoole, as she chides her husband with “if I did not know better, I should be forced to believe you too had seen the ghost”.[[84]](#endnote-84) She neither fully believes his reasons for leaving nor that she was unaware of the haunting attributed to the house, evidently not the weak and nervous woman that Stackpoole considers her. The greatest trial in her life is, instead, the man she married, so that she is, indeed, a “much enduring lady”.[[85]](#endnote-85)

Liggins notes that ghost stories remodel “domestic space into a place of terror that threatens marital relations and women’s lives and sanity”,[[86]](#endnote-86) and both ”The Shadow on the Blind” and ”The Weird of the Walfords”, support this argument. If Mrs Stackpoole is not, herself, threatened by or observes ghosts or haunting, she is certainly at the mercy of the whims of an obsessive over-protective husband: she is described as shedding “tears of present disappointment and prospective fatigue”.[[87]](#endnote-87) Mr Stackpoole is no villain, but he is thoughtless of the consequences of his actions, underscoring the powers of a husband and father, to the detriment of the women in his life.

**A Victorian Lady’s Malaise**

It has been recognised that women wrote some of the most successful, radical, and progressive tales.[[88]](#endnote-88) For many women the act of writing ghost stories was liberating. In the case of Louisa Baldwin, this is just as well, because if we listen to modern critics she really was in need of it. From “settling” for a boring, staid, pious marriage, to her writing, and her health, Louisa is condemned, judged, and disparaged in contemporary criticism to a quite surprising extent. Negative judgements abound in a way that is unusual in biographies of Victorian women writers. In the more usual biographies there is sympathy for seemingly incongruous marriage choices, for ill health, and for the seeming oppression of women by their families and circumstances. This is not the case with Louisa Baldwin. Beginning with criticism about her marriage choice the negative comments continue from several different quarters, commenting on most of her life. Louisa was a professional writer, yet her writing is treated lightly by critics. Pelan and Dalby dismiss most of it as “little more than vanity publications” and claim that her work “does not hold up well”.[[89]](#endnote-89) A biography of the Macdonald sisters written in 1960 by a descendent of Louisa’s, A. W. Baldwin, Earl of Bewdly, calls her forays into literature “disappointing”, and states that her poetry was “worthless”.[[90]](#endnote-90) Yet Louisa wrote several novels as well as publishing many short stories which appeared for example in the *Cornhill Magazine* and *Longman’s Magazine*.[[91]](#endnote-91) *The Shadow on the Blind* was in fact quite successful and is dedicated to “My Friend and Kinsman, Rudyard Kipling”.

If Louisa’s writing is dismissed and disparaged, the most strident criticisms and the most assumptions are made about her health. Louisa became very ill after the birth of Stanley and her health fluctuated throughout her life, but much of the time she was an invalid. Unwell, fainting, and hysterical women are well documented in the Victorian era, but it seems that these representations, assumptions, and judgements are still alive and well in much more modern commentaries. In 2001, in the “Introduction” to the ghost stories considered here, after noting that Louisa’s husband Alfred was “among the most important industrialists in Britain”, this is what Pelan and Dalby have to say:

Louisa sought to strive for her husband’s attention. Some six weeks after Stanley’s birth on 3 August 1867, she began to complain of a mysterious illness which was to plague her for the rest of her life. While two of her sisters enjoyed the stimulation of the London art scene, and a third (Alice) went to India with her husband […] Louisa took to her bed at the Baldwin home at Bewdley in Worcestershire, venturing forth primarily to visit spas or take one unusual remedy after another.

Whether her infirmity was actual or psychosomatic is a matter for conjecture.[[92]](#endnote-92)

Just why this illness might be conjectured to be “psychosomatic” is unclear. The assumption that this might even be a possibility seems to come more from stereotypes about Victorian “ladies” than any hard evidence. It seems that commentaries about Louisa are themselves, in a quite peculiar way, indulging in the traditional Victorian stereotypes and tropes about hysterical, nervous women’s health disorders.

It is not just Pelan and Dalby who doubt the reality of Louisa’s illness. Ina Taylor in her biography of the Macdonald sisters states definitively of Louisa’s illness, “It was a method of seeking attention and compensation for a marriage and way of life she found disappointing,”[[93]](#endnote-93) claiming that in feigning illness, Louisa ‘sought to gain the attention and sympathy of her workaholic husband”.[[94]](#endnote-94) In fact, Taylor bluntly calls Louisa’s health problems “hypochondria”.[[95]](#endnote-95) Again, Louisa’s illness is seen as psychosomatic and a bid for attention. These are damning, un-provable, and gendered judgements.

These discussions about Louisa’s health (or not) centre entirely around the idea of “family”. Louisa is never mentioned without reference to her family. Our argument is that Louisa’s own overwhelming family life (and members) inflected the tales she chose to write, and the supernatural subject matter that she deals with. If indeed she was “faded” and ignored and unwell, it seems as if there may have been a weight of Macdonalds, Baldwins, Poynters, Burne-Jones’s, and Kiplings pressing down in a mantle of expectations, and high-achieving lives to live up to. It has been acknowledged that writing ghost stories allowed Victorian women some agency and a space for themselves and it appears that this is something Louisa may have needed. Never forgetting, as Jennifer Uglow claims, that “the woman’s supernatural tale can take its own, ghostly, revenge”.[[96]](#endnote-96)

**Conclusion**

The resolution of these ghost stories in the destruction of the family demonstrates how Louisa highlights that far from being a positive force, the reliance on family is ultimately self-defeating. Walford Grange is gone, Harbledon Hall lives on to haunt future occupants, the ghostly, ghastly ancestors have consumed Sir Nigel, and Katherine Swinford dies alone. Old houses and their contents are not inanimate, not the “dead” that Walford believes them to be but are in their own terrible way alive, a half-life motivated by an insistence on the idea of the heritage of family. But even more than this, as Louisa demonstrates, when the past reaches into the present this is particularly traumatic and fatal for women. Grace reports seeing something that cannot be there, and if she misunderstands the bed as a positive image of the past, it is because she has entered the family that she thought would keep her safe. Just as for Mrs Stackpoole, marriage is not a blessed future, and family is a curse.

 In *The Ghost in the Noontide*, Vanessa Dickerson argues, are like Victorian women whose position was “ambiguous, marginal, ghostly,” adding “that the ghost is a figure of indeterminacy, of imperilled identity, of substance and insubstantiality.”[[97]](#endnote-97) In Louisa’s work however, this reflects somewhat differently. We have been arguing that she was a “ghostly” figure in her own life, which corresponds to Dickerson’s view of the powerlessness and invisibility for Victorian women. However, the ghosts themselves are substantial, material, determined, and make certain they *enforce* family identity and lineage. If we look at Louisa’s life; often bed-bound, eclipsed by the glittering lives of her sisters, overwhelmed by a large and perhaps intrusive family, perhaps we can re-turn to the idea of the phantom as psychological projection. The familiar trope of the haunted house becomes a more disturbing manifestation of the haunted family: one that never leaves and which will always come back to claim their own. In the stories family and ancestry are not seen as a stabilizing influence conferring status and an idea of longevity, but as stifling, oppressive, madness-inducing, and absolutely inescapable.

 It is worth noting however, that Louisa was completely cured in 1883 and her sister Georgie wrote to Alfred after she had seen her that, “She looked to me like a *healthy* woman again, and I trust and believe she will come back to you and her beloved home able to delight in and give delight to everyone within the walls.”[[98]](#endnote-98)  When Louisa was seventy nine, after Alfred had died and Stanley was prime minister, Kipling’s son Ruddy writes, after seeing her that, “Louie is about as utterly happy as any woman can be”.[[99]](#endnote-99) This is quoted from a letter in A. W. Baldwin’s biography. He calls Louisa’s happiness “surprising” and can only surmise that Louisa must have been “in a state of negative felicity” and that her happiness “may have been due to the knowledge that her long watch was very nearly over”.[[100]](#endnote-100) Baldwin suggests that Louisa is happy as she is just about to die. There may, of course, be other explanations. In her ghost stories Louisa Baldwin represents the inability to escape one’s family and its past as unremittingly dreadful. That which is usually seen as something to be treasured: aristocratic ancestry, family ties and history becomes in the final reckoning an engulfing horror. Louisa unleashes the monstrous spectre of the all-consuming ancestral family. But perhaps, for herself, near the end, the ties that bind had been loosened to the extent that she could finally find herself free and happy.

 Ina Taylor notes almost in passing that Louisa’s (non-ghost) story “The Macdonald Bratton” humorously suggested an ancestry traced back to the Loch Ness Monster,[[101]](#endnote-101) but misses the conclusion that evidently she was fully prepared to laugh at the ludicrousness of overvaluing family history and inheritance. Nonetheless, Colin MacInnes, the novelist and great-grand nephew of Louisa says of the family that “They were, in fact, the sort of family that one would perhaps rather read about than belong to”.[[102]](#endnote-102) This, we would suggest, is a sentiment that runs through Louisa’s ghost stories: that family is something of a mixed blessing, an attraction but one best held at a distance. Family might be enticing and seductive, but it is, finally, the source of horror.

1. John Pelan and Richard Dalby, “Introduction”, *The Shadow on the Blind and Other Ghost Stories*, by Mrs Alfred Baldwin, (Columbia: Ash-Tree Press, [1895], 2001),ix. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. #  Diana Wallace, “Uncanny Stories: The Ghost Story As Female Gothic”, *Gothic Studies*, 6.1 (2004): 57–68; 57.

 [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. Sophie Gilmartin, *Ancestry and Narrative in Nineteenth-Century British Literature: Blood Relations from Edgeworth to Hardy*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 22. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. Ben Cowell, *The Heritage Obsession: The Battle for England’s Past*, (Stroud: Tempus, 2008), 9. [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. Cowell, *The Heritage Obsession*, 10. [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. Cowell, *The Heritage Obsession*, 10. [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. Simon Hay, *A History of the Modern Ghost Story*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 54. [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
8. Bill Brown, “Thing Theory”, *Critical Inquiry*, Vol.28:1 (Autumn 2001), 4. [↑](#endnote-ref-8)
9. Brown, “Thing Theory”, 4 (emphasis in original). [↑](#endnote-ref-9)
10. Brown, “Thing Theory”, 4–5. [↑](#endnote-ref-10)
11. Alex Preda, “The Turn to Things”, *The Sociological Quarterly*, Vol.40, No.2, (Spring, 1999), 349 (emphasis in original). [↑](#endnote-ref-11)
12. Judith Flanders, *A Circle of Sisters: Alice Kipling, Georgiana Burne-Jones, Agnes Poynter and Louisa Baldwin*, (London: Penguin Books, 2001), 106, 138. [↑](#endnote-ref-12)
13. Ina Taylor, *Victorian Sisters: The Remarkable Macdonalds and the Four Great Men They Inspired,* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1987), 73. [↑](#endnote-ref-13)
14. Taylor, *Victorian Sisters*, 75, 99. [↑](#endnote-ref-14)
15. Earl, “Appendix 2”, Building Conservation Policy, 157. [↑](#endnote-ref-15)
16. *Punch, Or the London Charivari*, December 14, 1895, 288. [↑](#endnote-ref-16)
17. Terry Castle, *The Female Thermometer: Eighteenth-Century Culture and the Invention of the Uncanny*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 7. [↑](#endnote-ref-17)
18. “Sir Nigel Otterburne’s Case”, 124. [↑](#endnote-ref-18)
19. “Sir Nigel Otterburne’s Case”, 128. [↑](#endnote-ref-19)
20. “Sir Nigel Otterburne’s Case”, 129. [↑](#endnote-ref-20)
21. “Sir Nigel Otterburne’s Case”, 129–130. [↑](#endnote-ref-21)
22. “Sir Nigel Otterburne’s Case”, 133. [↑](#endnote-ref-22)
23. “Sir Nigel Otterburne’s Case”, 133. [↑](#endnote-ref-23)
24. Simon Hay, *A History of the Modern Ghost Story*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave McMillan 2011), 5. [↑](#endnote-ref-24)
25. Hay, *A History of the Modern Ghost Story*, 9. [↑](#endnote-ref-25)
26. Nicola Brown, Carolyn Burdett, and Pamela Thurschwell, *The Victorian Supernatural*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 11. [↑](#endnote-ref-26)
27. “The Weird of the Walfords”, in *The Shadow on the Blind and Other Ghost Stories*, (London, J. M. Dent & Co., 1895), 51–89. [↑](#endnote-ref-27)
28. “The Weird of the Walfords”, 52. [↑](#endnote-ref-28)
29. “The Weird of the Walfords”, 52. [↑](#endnote-ref-29)
30. “The Weird of the Walfords”, 64. [↑](#endnote-ref-30)
31. Brown, “Thing Theory”, 5. [↑](#endnote-ref-31)
32. Other scholars have worked on this idea including Melissa Edmundson in "Buyer Beware: Haunted Objects in the Supernatural Tales of Margery Lawrence," *The Female Fantastic*, (London: Routledge, 2018), 50–64, and much earlier, M. R. James in his wonderful short essay, “The Malice of Inanimate Objects”. *Complete Ghost Stories of M. R. James*, (London: Macmillan Collector’s Library, 2017), 565–570. [↑](#endnote-ref-32)
33. “The Weird of the Walfords”, 59. [↑](#endnote-ref-33)
34. David Lowenthal, *Possessed by the Past: The Heritage Crusade and the Spoils of History*, (New York and London: The Free Press, 1996), 184. [↑](#endnote-ref-34)
35. Lowenthal, *Possessed by the Past*, 121 (emphasis in original). [↑](#endnote-ref-35)
36. “The Weird of the Walfords”, 61. [↑](#endnote-ref-36)
37. Gillian Naylor, *The Arts and Crafts Movement: a study of its sources, ideals and influence on design theory*, (London: Trefoil Publications, 1990), 28. [↑](#endnote-ref-37)
38. “The Weird of the Walfords”, 60. [↑](#endnote-ref-38)
39. Elizabeth Cumming and Wendy Kaplan, *The Arts and Crafts Movement*, (London: Thames and Hudson, 1991), 51. [↑](#endnote-ref-39)
40. Cumming and Kaplan, *The Arts and Crafts Movement*, 51. [↑](#endnote-ref-40)
41. “The Weird of the Walfords”, 65. [↑](#endnote-ref-41)
42. “The Weird of the Walfords”, 65–66. [↑](#endnote-ref-42)
43. Emma Liggins, *The Haunted House in Women’s Ghost Stories: Gender, Space and Modernity, 1850-1945*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020), 25. [↑](#endnote-ref-43)
44. “The Weird of the Walfords”, 66. [↑](#endnote-ref-44)
45. “The Weird of the Walfords”, 73. [↑](#endnote-ref-45)
46. “The Weird of the Walfords”, 73. [↑](#endnote-ref-46)
47. “The Weird of the Walfords”, 74. [↑](#endnote-ref-47)
48. “The Weird of the Walfords”, 83. [↑](#endnote-ref-48)
49. “The Weird of the Walfords”, 84. [↑](#endnote-ref-49)
50. Steven Connor, “Thinking Things”, *Textual Practice*, 24:1, (2010), 2. [↑](#endnote-ref-50)
51. “The Weird of the Walfords”, 59. [↑](#endnote-ref-51)
52. “The Weird of the Walfords”, 88. [↑](#endnote-ref-52)
53. “The Weird of the Walfords”, 86. [↑](#endnote-ref-53)
54. “The Empty Picture Frame” in *The Shadow on the Blind and Other Ghost Stories*, (Columbia, Ash Tree Press, 2001), 105–118. [↑](#endnote-ref-54)
55. “The Empty Picture Frame”, 106. [↑](#endnote-ref-55)
56. “The Empty Picture Frame”, 108. [↑](#endnote-ref-56)
57. “The Empty Picture Frame”, 110. [↑](#endnote-ref-57)
58. “The Empty Picture Frame”, 14. [↑](#endnote-ref-58)
59. “The Empty Picture Frame”, 115. [↑](#endnote-ref-59)
60. “The Empty Picture Frame”, 118. [↑](#endnote-ref-60)
61. Ian Murphy, “Painted Portraits and Androgynous Apparitions in the Haunted-Portrait Narratives of Vernon Lee and E. Nesbit”, WOMEN'S WRITING, 2021, VOL. 28, NO. 4, 589-604. [↑](#endnote-ref-61)
62. Ian Murphy, “Painted Portraits’. [↑](#endnote-ref-62)
63. *The Glasgow Herald*, December 18, 1895. [↑](#endnote-ref-63)
64. A. W. Baldwin, *The MacDonald Sisters*, 183. [↑](#endnote-ref-64)
65. Christopher Miele, ed., *From William Morris: building conservation and the arts and crafts cult of authenticity, 1877-1939*, (New Haven, Conn. and London: Yale University Press, 2005), x. [↑](#endnote-ref-65)
66. Cowell, *The Heritage Obsession*, 12. [↑](#endnote-ref-66)
67. Hay, *A History of the Modern British Ghost Story*, 15. [↑](#endnote-ref-67)
68. Hay, *A History of the Modern British Ghost Story*, 4. [↑](#endnote-ref-68)
69. Hay, *A History of the Modern British Ghost Story*, 15, (emphasis in original) [↑](#endnote-ref-69)
70. Liggins, *The Haunted House in Women’s Ghost Stories*, 276. [↑](#endnote-ref-70)
71. Liggins, *The Haunted House in Women’s Ghost Stories*, 22. [↑](#endnote-ref-71)
72. Liggins, *The Haunted House in Women’s Ghost Stories*, 4. [↑](#endnote-ref-72)
73. “The Shadow on the Blind”, in *The Shadow on the Blind and Other Ghost Stories*, (London, J. M. Dent & Co., 1895), 1-49. [↑](#endnote-ref-73)
74. “The Shadow on the Blind”, 3. [↑](#endnote-ref-74)
75. “The Shadow on the Blind”, 22. [↑](#endnote-ref-75)
76. “The Shadow on the Blind”, 13. [↑](#endnote-ref-76)
77. “The Shadow on the Blind”, 5. [↑](#endnote-ref-77)
78. “The Shadow on the Blind”, 13. [↑](#endnote-ref-78)
79. *The New Testament*, Mark 5:9, Luke 8:30. [↑](#endnote-ref-79)
80. “The Shadow on the Blind”, 44. [↑](#endnote-ref-80)
81. “The Shadow on the Blind”, 43. [↑](#endnote-ref-81)
82. “The Shadow on the Blind”, 44. [↑](#endnote-ref-82)
83. “The Shadow on the Blind”, 48. [↑](#endnote-ref-83)
84. “The Shadow on the Blind”, 49. [↑](#endnote-ref-84)
85. “The Shadow on the Blind”, 49. [↑](#endnote-ref-85)
86. Liggins, *The Haunted House in Women’s Ghost Stories*, 2. [↑](#endnote-ref-86)
87. “The Shadow on the Blind”, 49. [↑](#endnote-ref-87)
88. See for example the discussion in Jennifer Uglow’s excellent “Introduction” to *The Virago Book of Victorian Ghost Stories*, (London: Virago Press, 1992), ix–xvii. [↑](#endnote-ref-88)
89. Pelan and Dalby, “Introduction”, xv. [↑](#endnote-ref-89)
90. A. W. Baldwin, Earl of Bewdley, *The MacDonald Sisters*, (Surrey: The Windmill Press, 1960), 197. [↑](#endnote-ref-90)
91. Pelan and Dalby, “Introduction”, xv. [↑](#endnote-ref-91)
92. Pelan and Dalby, “Introduction”, xiii. [↑](#endnote-ref-92)
93. Ina Taylor, *Victorian* Sisters, xviii. [↑](#endnote-ref-93)
94. Taylor, *Victorian Sisters,* 108. [↑](#endnote-ref-94)
95. Taylor, *Victorian Sisters,* 154. [↑](#endnote-ref-95)
96. Jennifer Uglow, “Introduction”, in Richard Dalby (ed.) *The Virago Book of Victorian Ghost Stories*, (London: Virago Press, 1992), ix–xvii; xvii. [↑](#endnote-ref-96)
97. Vanessa Dickerson, *Victorian Ghosts in the Noontide: Women Writers and the Supernatural*, (Missouri: University of Missouri Press, 1996), 5. [↑](#endnote-ref-97)
98. A. W. Baldwin, *The MacDonald Sisters*, 199. [↑](#endnote-ref-98)
99. A. W. Baldwin, *The MacDonald Sisters*, 205. [↑](#endnote-ref-99)
100. A. W. Baldwin, *The MacDonald Sisters*, 205. [↑](#endnote-ref-100)
101. Taylor, Victorian Sisters, 1. [↑](#endnote-ref-101)
102. Flanders, A Circle of Sisters, 329. [↑](#endnote-ref-102)