

British Family Life, 1780–1914

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The family was central to Victorian ideology, and yet the long nineteenth century saw considerable change in the family unit. The onset of industrialization and the expansion of the British Empire meant that there were demands and opportunities away from the home. This led to changes in traditional ways of life and the ways in which people lived together as 'families'.

The volumes in this collection focus on various aspects of family life. The experience of childhood is addressed not just from an adult perspective, but also using sources written by children and adolescents. The roles of the husband and father, frequently portrayed as emotionally distant disciplinarian or as a drunken abuser, are explored, as are the roles of wife and mother. Documents are selected to focus on exceptions, as well as the norm. Finally, the extended family and the substitute family are looked at. These include not only kin-based family groups, but also servants, lodgers, foster care, adoption and variations of social welfare.



Queen Victoria's children at Coburg (1865)
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- Provides a voice to the neglected areas of family life
- Sources provide a broad coverage across social classes
- Twenty texts are transcribed from manuscript sources
- Editorial apparatus includes a general introduction, volume introductions, headnotes and endnotes
- An index appears in the final volume



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