

Family vs. Kin: Is Spirit Thicker Than Blood?

Holly Pike
hpik@swgc.mun.ca

According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, when the word family was first used in English, its primary meaning was "the servants of a house or establishment; the household," a meaning which is now practically obsolete. The earliest use of "family" to mean "parents and children, whether living together or not," is dated 1667. So, when "family" was first used in English in the fifteenth century, adapted from Latin, it served a different purpose than the native English "kin", which throughout its history has referred to blood connection, or descent from a common ancestor. "Kin" also developed the sense "Related in character or qualities", parallel to "kindred," which since the sixteenth century has meant "Affinity in respect of qualities; resemblance, agreement." Both family (the shared household) and kin (the connection through blood or affinity) are important in many of L.M. Montgomery's works because plot and characterization in her works suggest that while heredity determines behaviour, it is not blood connection that determines who your family is. That is, blood kinship will cause one to behave like one's ancestors, but spiritual kinship is the proper grounding of family (household) life.

We can see the distinction between kin and family--blood relations and household companions, or spiritual kin and relatives--in Montgomery's most famous work, *Anne of Green Gables*¹. Anne wants to call Marilla "aunt Marilla" because, she says, "I've never had an aunt or any relation at all--not even a grandmother. It would make me feel as if I really belonged to you" (AGG 54). That is, she wants to feel that she is connected to the family as if by blood. Marilla refuses to pretend that such a connection exists, but the lack of it does not prevent Anne becoming "dearer to her than anything on earth" (AGG 186). Anne also wants "[a] bosom friend-- . . . a really kindred spirit to whom I can confide my inmost soul" (AGG 57). Anne's concern with finding kindred spirits is important throughout the Anne books, but is most marked in *Anne of Green Gables*, in which Matthew, Diana, Miss Barry, Mrs. Allan, and Miss Stacey are all explicitly identified by Anne as kindred spirits. In *Anne's House of Dreams* the phrase is supplemented with "the

¹ When citing Montgomery's works, I will use the following abbreviations: *Anne of Green Gables*, AGG; *Anne's House of Dreams*, AHD; *Anne of Windy Poplars*, AWP; *Anne of Ingleside*, AI; *Kilmeny of the Orchard*, KO; *Emily of New Moon*, ENM; *Jane of Lantern Hill*, JLH; *Rainbow Valley*, RV; *Akin to Anne*, Akin.

race that knows Joseph", which designates the same kind of sympathetic understanding and shared point of view. For instance, when Anne first meets Cornelia Bryant, "with her old instinctive quickness to discern kindred spirits she knew she was going to like Miss Cornelia" (AHD 44). Miss Cornelia in turn tells Anne, "You belong to the race that knows Joseph," to which Anne responds "with the smile that only they of the household or the faith ever saw" (AHD 51), a phrasing which emphasizes the connection that is assumed to exist between sharers of a household or sharers of a belief system: that is, between family in the earlier meaning of the word.

The importance of finding spiritual kin is highlighted in the 'Anne' novels because the communities depicted have a strong belief in inherited traits coming out, no matter what environment a person is raised in, and therefore whole families may be eliminated *a priori* as unsympathetic companions. For instance, when Marilla is first contemplating keeping Anne instead of sending her back to the asylum, she thinks, "And there's nothing rude or slangy in what she does say. She's ladylike. It's likely her people were nice folks," attributing Anne's behaviour to heredity rather than training (AGG 41). The same concept of inborn character is revealed in Mrs. Lynde's warning to Marilla when she hears that the Cuthberts are considering adoption: "You're bringing a strange child into your house and home and you don't know a single thing about him nor what his disposition is like nor what sort of parents he had nor how he's likely to turn out" (AGG 7). The assumption underlying this tirade is that if one knows a child's antecedents, then one knows how he or she is likely to behave. Marilla is not wholly wedded to the notion of heredity as an absolute determinant of character, since she says in reply, "There's risks in people having children of their own if it comes to that--they don't always turn out well" (AGG 7). As well, the community identifies certain traits with certain families, and explains the behaviour of individual members of these families by referring to the family name, as when Marilla says, "Josie is a Pye, . . . so she can't help being disagreeable" (AGG 299), or when Cornelia Bryant says, "Mrs. Roderick was a Milgrave, and the Milgraves never had much sense" (AHD 47). Similarly, Franklin Westcott in *Anne of Windy Poplars* engineers the marriage of his daughter according to his knowledge of the family into which he wants her to marry:

"Why, I picked Jarvis Morrow out for Sibyl when they were kids I knew the Morrrows root and branch They're a good family, but the men don't want things they can get easily. And they're determined to get a thing when they're told they can't So I forbade him to come near the place and forbade Sibyl to have a word to say to him." (AWP 225-26)

The doom of heredity is also spelled out when a character says, "I am not doubting that the Drew babies yell all the time Yell at the thought of having to be Drews, I presume" (AI 55-6), and in a saying common in *Four Winds*, the setting of the books dealing with Anne's married life: "From the conceit of the Elliotts, the pride of the MacAllisters and the vain-glory of the Crawfords, good Lord deliver us" (AHD 212).

The fullest account of heredity as a factor in development occurs in *Kilmeny of the Orchard*, a brief romantic novel Montgomery published after the first two 'Anne' books.

In this story, the beautiful, musically gifted heroine, Kilmeny Gordon, is dumb, apparently as a result of her mother's stubborn refusal to speak a word of forgiveness to her dying father. As her aunt says, "Kilmeny can't speak because her mother wouldn't" (KO 113). It is not a case of physical heredity, but, she says, "the Good Book is right when it says the sins of the parents are visited on the children" (KO 109). Early in the novel, the hero, Eric, is warned by his cousin, a doctor, to be careful in choosing a wife, because heredity is so important:

If people worried a little more about their unborn children--at least, to the extent of providing a proper heritage, physically, mentally, and morally, for them--and then stopped worrying about them after they *are* born, this world would be a very much pleasanter place to live in, and the human race would make more progress in a generation than it has done in recorded history. (KO 7)

All aspects of human behaviour, that is, are seen as part of a heritage, not as factors controlled by environment or companions. The lack of influence of environment is demonstrated in the novel through the example of Neil Gordon, the child of Italian peddlers abandoned at the Gordon home as a newborn infant and raised as one of the family. Despite having the family name and being baptised, schooled and trained in every way to fit into the rural community, Neil is a bit of an outsider, and is seen as dangerous (KO 23-4). As one of the neighbours says, "Some folks think [the Gordons] made too much of him. It doesn't always do with that kind, for 'what's bred in the bone is mighty apt to come out in flesh,' if 'taint kept down pretty well" (KO 24). According to this view, it is one's "kind" that determines behaviour, and environment and training can rarely overcome what heredity ordains. As another character says later of Neil, "he's just as much a foreigner as his parents before him--though he *has* been brought up on oatmeal and the shorter catechism, as the old saying has it" (KO 74). The truth of this is borne out in Neil's threats to Eric, when "the untamed fury of the Italian peasant" overrides "all the restraint of his training and environment" (KO 83).

While it is clear that Montgomery believes that blood determines behaviour, she does not suggest that it determines family affection. One need only think of the titles of the novels to see how often a household or local designation is used to define the primary relationships of the central character, suggesting that the earlier definition of family-- the inmates of a household whether related by blood or not--governs Montgomery's interpretation of relationships². All of the Anne books have place names (either household or geographical) in their titles. The titles referring to houses are most significant, since those are the novels most specifically about finding or creating a family; *Anne's House of Dreams* recounts the development of the new family unit of Anne, Gilbert, their first children, and their live-in servant, Susan, while *Anne of Ingleside* is about their completed family and the development of their marriage long term. *Emily of New Moon* also recounts the creation of family ties, when Emily is taken in to the home

² Montgomery titles with house or place names include *Anne of Green Gables*, *Anne of Avonlea*, *Anne of the Island*, *Anne of Windy Poplars*, *Anne's House of Dreams*, *Anne of Ingleside*, *Rilla of Ingleside*, *Emily of New Moon*, *The Blue Castle*, *Pat of Silver Bush*, *Jane of Lantern Hill*.

of her mother's half-sisters, and has to learn to fit in there. Significantly, both of her aunts recognize traits in Emily that link her to their genetic inheritance and govern how they respond to her. Aunt Laura sees the smile that she remembers from her young half-sister (ENM 27, 29) and is drawn to Emily because of it, while Aunt Elizabeth recognizes the commanding "Murray look" of her father, and resents Emily because of it (ENM 107). For her part, Emily is immediately captivated by the house and Murray traditions and is happy to belong there, although she does not immediately feel affection for all her relatives.

That sharing a household does not guarantee love and emotional kinship any more than blood relationship does is shown in *Jane of Lantern Hill*, which opens with Jane Victoria Stuart, an unhappy, insecure child, living in Toronto with her mother and grandmother, believing for most of her life that her father is dead. The household atmosphere is poisoned by Jane's grandmother, who is very angry, for instance, when she finds a newspaper picture of columnist Kenneth Howard, which Jane has kept because she likes the face:

she felt as if it were the picture of someone she knew very well and liked very much She liked. . . the slightly stern look in the eyes which yet had such jolly wrinkles at the corners . . . the square, cleft chin which reminded Jane so strongly of something, she couldn't remember just what She knew, right off, that if she had loved her father instead of hating him she would have wanted him to look like Kenneth Howard (JLH 34).

Jane's liking is based both on the feeling of physical familiarity--an instinctive recognition of the blood tie--and on the visual clues to shared character traits, which may also be hereditary. Shortly after the picture incident, Jane's father makes contact and asks to have Jane for a summer in Prince Edward Island. Although she is unwilling to go, when Jane meets her father, she finds that he in fact is the man whose picture she had clipped from the paper, and is immediately comfortable with him, finding that they understand each other perfectly: "She felt at once the call of that mysterious kinship of soul which has nothing to do with the relationships of flesh and blood" (JLH 61). Furthermore, her experience of comfort and happiness with her father helps her develop numerous useful skills, and she becomes a self-confident and competent person, much to her jealous grandmother's chagrin. Finding spiritual kin therefore allows a character to develop talents that might otherwise be wasted, as is also shown in other stories by Montgomery. The assumption that blood connection does not guarantee love is also shown through grandmother Kennedy's relationship with her children from her first marriage. She is jealously possessive only of the child of her second marriage, Jane's mother, and does not seem to love the children of her first marriage (JLH 2-3) or to have loved their father (JLH 206).

Elsewhere, Montgomery shows that family or household attachment can be taken too far. In *Pat of Silver Bush* and *Mistress Pat*, Pat Gardiner feels her ties to her family and home (including the live-in servant, Judy) so strongly that she resists any change and rejects all her suitors rather than leave home. She eventually realizes that she loves her

childhood friend Hilary, and that it was her love for him that prevented her from accepting any of her other suitors, but this does not happen until all her siblings are married and the family home has burned down. The possibility therefore remains that it is an unhealthy attachment to family and kin at least as much as love for Hilary that keeps her from marrying, and that only the destruction of any possibility of retaining the family of her childhood frees her to accept Hilary.

The greatest concentration in Montgomery's works of stories dealing with the finding or creation of families is the collection *Akin to Anne*, consisting of magazine stories involving orphans. These stories were not meant to be read consecutively, so looking at them together makes the repetition of themes and plots clear, and draws attention to the underlying assumptions about family and orphanhood that drive the plotting of both these stories and the accounts of orphans in Montgomery's other works. In "Orphans, Twins, and L.M. Montgomery," Elizabeth Waterston states that "the orphan and the twin are aberrations in the normal family structure" (72), and argues that the frequent appearance of orphans in Montgomery's works is due to Montgomery's own position: "With no parents to protect her, she set out to make her own way in the world, intellectually, morally, and financially" (Waterston 73). This argument leaves Montgomery's kin (her extended family) out of the picture, and also leaves out her family, in the sense of the household she grew up in, shared with her maternal grandparents. Waterston assumes that the lack of the nuclear family is the drawback for an orphan, but this does not seem to have been Montgomery's own way of looking at the issue in fiction. Montgomery shares Waterston's belief that an orphan will find life difficult, much more difficult than her own life ever was, but the difficulties she depicts are caused by lack of love and sympathy rather than lack of blood relatives.

For instance, if one looks at the opening chapters of *Anne of Green Gables*, it is obvious that the role assigned to any orphan in this society is work. When Matthew and Marilla decide to get a child from the asylum, they want a boy to help Matthew because of the difficulty of getting hired help: "We decided [ten or eleven] would be the best age-old enough to be of some use in doing chores right off and young enough to be trained up proper. We mean to give him a good home and schooling" (AGG 6). The schooling is mentioned secondarily to the work, because it is primarily a worker the Cuthberts are seeking.³ The same is clear in Anne's account of her life before she is sent to the asylum. In the first household she lived in after her parents' death, Anne says she "helped look after the Thomas children--there were four of them younger than me--and I can tell you they took a lot of looking after," then she was taken by Mrs. Hammond, because she was "handy with children" (AGG 40). The practice of taking orphans as "menials" rather than as "foster children" (Rooke and Schnell 152) is further exemplified in the Anne series in the case of Mary Vance in *Rainbow Valley*, who was taken from the asylum by Mrs. Wiley, who, she says, "worked me to death and wouldn't give me half enough to eat, and

³ This view of orphans is, incidentally, confirmed in *Discarding the Asylum: From Child Rescue to the Welfare State in English-Canada 1800-1950*, where the authors argue that adoption was frequently "a cloak for using [orphans] as cheap labour" (Rooke and Schnell 146) and note that *Anne of Green Gables* reflects "the typical attitudes and practices of the day" (147).

she used to larrup me 'most every day" (RV 31). Even the child who persuades Mrs. Elliott to adopt Mary when it is learned that Mrs. Wiley is dead presents the case in terms of the work Mary could do (RV 60), although when the Elliotts decide to take her, they treat her as the Cuthberts treated Anne, Mrs. Elliott saying, "I'm going to do my duty by her" (RV 63), just as Marilla says that "It seems a sort of duty" to save Anne from another home where she is valued only for her labour (AGG 47). Despite work being the original purpose for which the Cuthberts want an orphan, Marilla realizes the cruelty of the life Anne has led to this point; she thinks, "What a starved, unloved life she had had-- a life of drudgery and poverty and neglect" (AGG 41). Marilla chooses to keep Anne partly to save her from Mrs. Blewett, "[a] terrible worker and driver" who is looking for a little girl to help her (AGG 44). Whatever the adults may want, Anne wants kin, as is shown by her desire to address Marilla as "aunt" (AGG 53). That Anne comes to regard the Cuthberts as family, although there is no indication that she is legally adopted, is shown when she does her "duty" and gives up her college plans to stay with Marilla after Matthew's death (AGG 302). Anne does this to preserve the household, since without Anne's presence and income, Marilla would have to sell Green Gables.

A tale similar to Anne's found in *Akin to Anne* is "Freda's Adopted Grave", in which Freda, like the orphans referred to in the 'Anne' books, has been taken from the asylum not to form part of a family, but to "be worked to death and treated like a slave" (Akin 58). Freda feels left out of community life because she has no family grave to attend to on "graveyard day," so, finding a neglected grave, that of a thief, Freda begins to care for it the way the other girls care for family graves. This endears her to the sister of the thief, who has returned for a visit, and Freda goes with Mrs. Halliday at the end of the summer "to be her own little girl for always" and call her "Aunty" (Akin 62). Of the stories in *Akin to Anne*, only one, "Charlotte's Ladies", actually refers to asylum life, which is bounded by rules and regulations, although the children seem sociable and carefully tended (Akin 239). The children in the asylum assume that only the pretty children are ever adopted (Akin 242), and that "orphans should be very thankful to have any place to live in" (Akin 243), showing that they are taught to expect nothing from the world. Looking out through the asylum fence, Charlotte makes friends with two women (not knowing that they are estranged sisters), of whom she wants one for a mother (Akin 240), and the other for an aunt (Akin 241), but fears that because of her "mousy hair and freckles" no one will want her (Akin 242). As it happens, however, the woman she calls the Pretty Lady once had a daughter with mousy hair and freckles, and therefore wants Charlotte for her resemblance to the lost daughter. The 'Tall Lady,' on the other hand, wants Charlotte for her intelligence ("her usual astuteness" [Akin 249]). That is, each of the two estranged sisters individually finds something in Charlotte that suits her. When they all meet in the Matron's office when the two women come independently of each other to adopt Charlotte, the sisters are reconciled so that the three can live together, reconstituting the family and adding to it a person suitable to the household both physically and mentally.

The above-mentioned story contains many of the themes that run throughout the *Akin to Anne*. Most strikingly, the separation of families is accepted as a fact of life in the stories, reflecting the actual conditions of nineteenth and early-twentieth century Canada,

when the remarriage of a widowed parent frequently led to half- and step-siblings, from whom one might be separated on the death of a parent or step-parent. Given the relative difficulty of long-distance communication a hundred years ago (most of the stories in *Akin to Anne* were written between 1900 and 1910 (Akin 251-52), it is easy to see how a half-sibling might be lost, even without the animosity that sometimes develops among both blood relations and families connected by marriage. The separations of the families in these stories occur for all the above reasons. In "An Invitation Given on Impulse," "Millicent's Double," "Penelope's Party Waist," "Margaret's Patient," and "Why Not Ask Miss Price?" siblings or half-siblings are separated when the death of a parent leads to the children being divided up between the two sides of the family. In "Charlotte's Quest," "The Fraser Scholarship," "Margaret's Patient," and "Charlotte's Ladies" bad feeling between or within families is given as a reason for loss of contact, while in "Her Own People" the central character has no family because her mother ran away from home to an unhappy marriage. While the stories often involve reconciliation with or finding of lost family members, the primary relationship established is not necessarily between blood relations, showing that families need not be related by blood ties. As well, the central characters usually find something familiar or attractive about each other before a connection is established. The phrase used in the stories is that a character "reminds" another of someone, or a character thinks he or she would like to have another character for a relative. This sense of familiarity with the hitherto unknown person indicates his or her fitness to become a member of the "family" in the sense that includes all members of a household, whether connected by blood or not. The stories illustrate that blood ties do not guarantee compatibility or liking, and that a feeling of familiarity is more important than a blood relationship. Furthermore, the instant recognition of compatible companions suggests that it is not always true, as Susan Drain argues of *Anne of Green Gables*, that "adoption . . . means adaptation" (15). In these stories, it is the lack of any need to adapt when one finds one's true family that is emphasized.

For instance, In "Charlotte's Quest", the central character is unhappy living with her father's relatives, whom she does not resemble either physically or mentally. Although they are blood relations, in Montgomery's depiction this is not enough to create family love and happiness, so Charlotte seeks the help of a reputed witch to find a mother. Witch Penny recognizes Charlotte's physical and mental resemblance to her maternal grandmother, whom Charlotte does not know, and determines to send Charlotte to her home on her quest. She tells Charlotte, "But there's a chanct, there's a chanct . . . seeing as ye've got your grandmother's mouth" (Akin 22), suggesting that the grandmother's recognition of the resemblance will be a factor in determining the outcome. Following the witch's directions and reaching the house, where she is forced to stay by bad weather, Charlotte finds the place familiar and attractive, thinking that she remembers it from a dream. However, she learns that it is not a dream, but a memory of being there with her mother that makes the place attractive (Akin 30). At the end of the story, she has found a familiar place and a person she resembles and is comfortable with, and will be happier there than she would be with her equally close relatives from her father's side of the family.

Chester's case in "The Running Away of Chester" also shows that blood relationship is not necessary for a family to exist, since he leaves his father's step-sister and eventually finds a home with his mother's cousin's sister-in-law. The former is a cruel woman who keeps him only for his labour value, will not send him to school (Akin 108), and lends his labour to other people and collects the pay herself (Akin 110). The latter initially hires Chester because he needs a job, not because she needs work done, and because he reminds her of her dead nephew, Johnny (Akin 126). Significantly, Chester is attracted by the appearance of Miss Salome the first time he sees her, the day he runs away, and thinks, "If I was looking for anyone to adopt me I'd pick her" (Akin 114). Although Miss Salome values Chester as a worker, she treats him like family, putting him into her nephew's bedroom and having him take his meals with her. When she decides to keep him, saying "you are my boy now" (Akin 134), she also plans to send him to school, although she uses the terms of a business deal, saying "you shall have your board and clothes for doing odd jobs" (Akin 133). When Chester finally tells the whole story of his past, his blood connection to Johnny is revealed, but that is not enough to warrant Miss Salome keeping him, although her "help", Clemantiny, makes the argument that "you have as much claim on him as Harriet Elwell has. She ain't any real relation to him any more than you are" (Akin 138). Chester can only earn the right to stay with Miss Salome by choosing to return to Aunt Harriet, thus proving that he shares Miss Salome's values, and accepting that running away from Aunt Harriet was wrong. Aunt Harriet refuses to have him back when he offers himself, leaving him free to return with Miss Salome, who now asks to be called "Aunt Salome" (Akin 142). Another instance in which the young boy is under the harsh guardianship of his father's stepsister is "The Softening of Miss Cynthia." Cynthia Henderson does not think of her stepbrother as a relation, and therefore intends to send his orphaned twelve-year-old son Wilbur off to find work (Akin 222-23). The neighbours consider it "mean" that Cynthia "won't even take in her brother's child" (Akin 223) and Cynthia herself feels uncomfortable with her choice to send Wilbur out to work, but is not until he is gravely ill that Cynthia accepts her wrongdoing in not keeping the boy, who had told her, "[Daddy] said you were so good and kind and would love me for his sake" (Akin 224). Then she feels like a "murderess", and urges the doctor to do everything he can to save Wilbur (Akin 227). Miss Cynthia has to accept that her childhood affection for Wilbur's father, with whom she was "brought up together just like brother and sister" (Akin 221) constitutes just as strong a bond and responsibility as blood relationship would.

In some of the stories, there is a physical recognition rather than a sense of emotional kinship. The strength of the physical resemblances in these stories is itself a comment on the primacy of blood ties, since the resemblance constitutes a public pronouncement of kinship to those with the knowledge to read it. Heredity is thus presented as a strong force. In "An Invitation Given on Impulse", for instance, Ruth Mannering sees her mother's half-brother for the first time, and says, "He reminds me of somebody . . . but I can't think who it is" (Akin 51). Her uncle, in turn, is startled into seeking her family history by her resemblance to his lost sister: "you are the living image of what she was when I last saw her" (Akin 52). In "Why Not Ask Miss Price?" Miss Price's resemblance to her mother causes her brother to recognize her when they meet at the Allen's party, despite being separated as small children on their parents' death (Akin 90). Worth Gordon

of "Millicent's Double" finds a home and family through her close resemblance to a stranger's lost half-sister. Ada Cameron, "The Girl Who Drove the Cows", lives with her father's half-sister (Akin 77) and does not seem to be overworked like other orphans, but feels that since her relatives are poor and have children of their own, she must support herself and forgo her wish to study to be a teacher in favour of immediate employment (Akin 79). Ada's finding her family depends on two instances of resemblance. Pauline Palmer notes that Ada reminds her of someone, but cannot say whom (Akin 80), though she later realizes that it is an acquaintance, Mrs. Knowles (Akin 81). Mrs. Knowles sees Pauline's photograph of Ada, identifies her through her appearance as the child her cousin, and "hope[s] to find a daughter in her" (Akin 81). Ada's dream of a college education is fulfilled in her new family, proving their suitability as sympathetic companions (Akin 82).

In these stories, a character's physical resemblance to a long-lost relative is not as important as finding the family or home he or she has longed for. In a twist on the recognition plot, Penelope of "Penelope's Party Waist" connects with her grandmother's lost half-sister when the backing of a family quilt, made from a dress cherished by her grandmother, is recognized. Penelope is studying to be a teacher and her sister Doris is a typist, but their talents for music and housekeeping respectively cannot be cultivated because of their poverty. Again, Penelope feels a kinship to her great-aunt before the relationship is known, thinking, "I'd love to have a grandmother like her," and feeling that the woman looks like Doris (Akin 162). Because Doris has no false pride about using the old fabric, the sisters are granted their wishes and get a "dear, sweet aunty" (Akin 164). Similarly, the title "Her Own People" suggests just what Constance needs to find, and she is put in the position of doing so by the kindness of a fellow teacher who is sorry for the lonely woman. When Constance is forced by bad weather into a cottage that has "a strange attraction for her" (Akin 193), she finds herself "strangely attracted" to the elderly couple living there (Akin 194) and discovers that they are really her great-aunt and great-uncle. Again, the unknown family members find something familiar in each other before the relationship is known, Constance feeling "as if she had known them all her life" (Akin 194) and Aunt Flora saying that Constance reminds her of her runaway niece, Jeannie (Akin 195). As well as finding someone to love, she has learned about her mother, hitherto unknown to her, and, most importantly to her, God (Akin 196), experiencing a rebirth as a member of a family and a person (Akin 197). Like Constance, the elderly Miss Sally of "Miss Sally's Company" (who can hardly be considered an orphan, because of her age) wants contact with her cousins, because "[n]obody can quite take the place of one's own, you know" (208). The Seymour girls, who become her friends and bring their friends to meet her, also engineer her meeting with her nouveau-riche cousins, who benefit from contact with her "sincerity and honest kindness of heart" (209) and thereby earn entry into the upper-class society of the Seymours, where they have been longing for admission (208). Another character looking for relatives is Margeret Campbell of "Margaret's Patient," an orphan who had a hard childhood and five years as paid companion to an old lady "infirm of health and temper" (Akin 231), has inherited a small house and an income from her late employer, and now only lacks "somebody of my very own to love and care for, a mother, a sister, even a cousin" (Akin 232). Through choosing to perform the generous action of nursing a young teacher, Freda, rather than going on a

pleasure trip, Margaret finds they are cousins when she discovers her mother's name in a letter in Freda's desk.

Just as finding kin is the wish of the characters mentioned above, in "Ted's Afternoon Off," "The Little Black Doll," and "Jane Lavinia" the characters want loving relationships even more than they want to cultivate their inborn artistic talents. Ted Melvin of "Ted's Afternoon Off" is an orphan put to work who has not had any time off in the four years he has lived with the Jacksons. However, he generously gives up his first half-holiday to spend the afternoon caring for a lame boy and entertaining him by playing his fiddle. This generous act is rewarded when Ted's playing for Jimmy is overheard by a famous violinist who offers to give him lessons, and finally asks him to "live with me--be my boy", which Ted is happy to do, not, as he says, "because of the music--it's because I love you" (Akin 71). The kinship is formed through the recognition on Mr. Milford's part of Ted's musical gift, so there is a similarity between them to draw them together. In the case of "Jane Lavinia", no change of abode or family occurs, but Jane chooses to stay with her aunt rather than move to New York with the family of an artist who has recognized and encouraged her talent. In New York, she would be housemaid part time, and art student part time, and there is a suggestion that she is wanted most as a maid, when her aunt says, "You needn't let Mrs. Stephens work you to death either" (Akin 101), and the narrator states that "Perhaps [Mrs. Stephens'] thoughts were less of the loss to the world of art than of the difficulty of hunting up another housemaid" (Akin 103). However, Jane Lavinia is content to stay with her aunt once she learns that her aunt loves her and appreciates her artistic talent, because "Jane Lavinia would have given love for love unstintedly, but she never supposed that Aunt Rebecca loved her" (Akin 101), showing that it is the spiritual rather than the physical kinship that matters. In "The Little Black Doll," as in "Jane Lavinia," receiving love outweighs all other considerations. Little Joyce lives with her grandmother, who does not love her because she is plain and awkward (Akin 167). Joyce will do anything for Denise, a servant who has always been a member of the household and whom she describes as "the only person in the world" who loves her (Akin 172), so she unselfishly offers her beloved doll to a famous singer if she will come and sing for Denise. Through this encounter, Joyce's own musical gift becomes known to her grandmother, who commits herself to developing Joyce's talent, but more importantly from Joyce's point of view, also starts to show affection for her (Akin 175). This story shows both that love can be shared within the broader family, the household, without existing between blood relations, and that even between blood relations, a spiritual understanding and appreciation of each other may be necessary for love to develop.

In these stories the family needs the assistance of an outsider to see the value of the child, just as in the other stories the kind act of someone outside the family puts the separated relatives in a position to recognize each other. Pauline in "The Girl Who Drove the Cows" initially seeks Ada's friendship because she thinks Ada looks "nice and jolly" despite her apparent status as a servant and therefore she wants to know her better (Akin 75). In "An Invitation Given on Impulse" Carol's generosity, prompted by her conscience, in asking the neglected Ruth rather than popular Maud to visit over the holidays causes the meeting of uncle and niece. The generous invitation of a shy outsider to a party also

leads to recognition in "Why Not Ask Miss Price?", again after a statement that, "She reminded me so much of somebody I've seen" (88). Worth Gordon earns her adoption by the confession of her part in a harmless prank, showing her moral values. In these stories, the kind or honourable act of one character makes possible the recognition that leads to the formation of new families, suggesting that there are social forces that work against the union of kin, and that only the efforts of well-intentioned outsiders can restore kin to each other after the damage done by time and separation. Just as heredity is shown to be insufficient to guarantee love, blood ties alone are not enough to keep families together or to bring them back together.

In three of the stories, good behaviour is rewarded by connection with a family without any spiritual kinship or blood connection being discovered. In "Marcella's Reward", Marcella, who works in a store, and her twelve-year-old sister live with their father's unsympathetic half-sister, until Marcella's exemplary patience with a difficult customer attracts the attention of another customer, whose face shows "a mingling of common sense and kindness" (Akin 40). This woman turns out to be the childhood friend of Marcella's mother, and she brings the two girls to live with her, asking that they call her "Aunt Josephine" (Akin 43). Similarly, Grace, in "The Story of an Invitation", is adopted by the aunt of a friend rather than a blood relation, and, as in "An Invitation Given on Impulse" and "Why not Ask Miss Price?" the meeting of the two parties is the result of a generous act. Both parties find the family they want, Grace getting an "Aunt Meg" (Akin 216), and Aunt Meg getting "a daughter of my own" (Akin 217). Elliott Hanselpakker Campbell is another orphan, like Marcella, whose decency earns him a home, love, and security when his birth name is recognized by his mother's half-sister, who wants him to be "my boy forever" (Akin 185). In this case there is no recognition of familiar appearance or sympathetic character traits beyond the description of Mrs. Fraser as "motherly-looking" (Akin 184), just as in "Marcella's Reward" and "The Story of an Invitation" there is nothing to prompt an interest in the orphan except personal qualities. The families created are therefore formed entirely on the basis of esteem, even Mrs. Fraser in "The Fraser Scholarship" finding out Elliott's original surname through the interest she feels on account of his integrity.

The stories in *Akin to Anne* and the novels, when viewed together in this way, seem to present a view of family that goes against dominant twentieth century western views of the primary and crucial family unit being the "nuclear" family of parents and children. While such families exist in Montgomery's works, they do not dominate, and may be, as is suggested regarding Pat Gardiner, unhealthy. While some characters do find long-lost blood relatives, the emphasis in the stories and novels is not on the blood relationship, which is just a device that allows recognition to occur, but on the creation of congenial households. Kinshipaffinity of spiritoutweighs blood, and family is found in a sympathetic household rather than in descent from a common ancestor..

Sir Wilfred Grenfell College

Works Cited

Drain, Susan. "Community and the Individual in *Anne of Green Gables*: The Meaning Belonging." *Children's Literature Association Quarterly* 11 (1986): 15-19.

Montgomery, L.M. *Akin to Anne*. 1988. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1992.

---. *Anne of Green Gables*. 1908. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1983.

---. *Anne of Ingleside*. 1939. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1983.

---. *Anne of Windy Poplars*. 1936. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1983.

---. *Anne's House of Dreams*. 1917. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1983.

---. *Emily of New Moon*. 1923. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1985.

---. *Jane of Lantern Hill*. 1937. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1988.

---. *Kilmeny of the Orchard*. 1910. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1987.

---. *Rainbow Valley*. 1919. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1988.

Rooke, Patricia T. and R.L. Schnell. *Discarding the Asylum: From Child Rescue to the Welfare State in English Canada (1800-1950)*. New York: University Press of America, 1983.

Waterston, Elizabeth. "Orphans, Twins, and L.M. Montgomery." *Family Fictions in Canadian Literature*. Ed. Peter Hinchcliffe. Waterloo, ON: U of Waterloo, 1988. 68-76.