

= Mary Martha Sherwood =

Mary Martha Sherwood (née Butt ; 6 May 1775 ? 22 September 1851) was a prolific and influential writer of children 's literature in 19th @-@ century Britain . She composed over 400 books , tracts , magazine articles , and chapbooks . Among her best known works are *The History of Little Henry and his Bearer* (1814) , *The History of Henry Milner* (1822 ? 37) , and *The History of the Fairchild Family* (1818 ? 47) . While Sherwood is known primarily for the strong evangelicalism that coloured her early writings , her later works are characterized by common Victorian themes , such as domesticity .

Sherwood 's childhood was uneventful , although she recalled it as the happiest part of her life . After she married Captain Henry Sherwood and moved to India , she converted to evangelical Christianity and began to write for children . Although her books were initially intended only for the children of the military encampments in India , the British public also received them enthusiastically . The Sherwoods returned to England after a decade in India and , building upon her popularity , Sherwood opened a boarding school and published scores of texts for children and the poor .

Many of Sherwood 's books were bestsellers and she has been described as " one of the most significant authors of children 's literature of the nineteenth century " . Her depictions of domesticity and Britain 's relationship with India may have played a part in shaping the opinions of many young British readers . However , her works fell from favor as a different style of children 's literature came into fashion during the late nineteenth century , one exemplified by Lewis Carroll 's playful and nonsensical *Alice 's Adventures in Wonderland* .

= = Early life = =

Sherwood was born on 6 May 1775 , in Stanford @-@ on @-@ Teme , Worcestershire , as the eldest daughter and second child of Martha Butt and Reverend George Butt , the chaplain in ordinary to George III . In her autobiography , Sherwood describes herself as an imaginative and playful child . She composed stories in her head before she could write and begged her mother to copy them down . Sherwood remembered her childhood as a delightful time filled with exciting " adventures " undertaken with her brother . She even makes the best of the " stocks " that she was forced to stand in while she did her lessons :

It was the fashion then for children to wear iron collars round the neck , with back @-@ boards strapped over the shoulders . To one of these I was subjected from my sixth to my thirteenth year . I generally did all my lessons standing in stocks , with this same collar round my neck ; it was put on in the morning , and seldom taken off till late in the evening . . . And yet I was a very happy child , and when relieved from my collars I not unseldom manifested my delight by starting from our hall @-@ door and taking a run for half a mile through the woods .

Sherwood and her sister , Lucy Lyttelton 's education was wide @-@ ranging for girls during the late eighteenth century : Sherwood learned Latin and Greek and was permitted to read freely in her father 's library .

Sherwood states in her autobiography that she was tall and ungainly for her age and that she hid in the woods with her doll to escape visitors . But she seems to have enjoyed attending Madame St. Quentin 's School for Girls at Reading Abbey , which was run by French émigrés and was the same school Jane Austen had attended . Sherwood seems to have had a generally happy childhood , marred only by the intrusion of the French Revolution and the upheavals it caused throughout Europe .

Sherwood spent some of her teenage years in Lichfield , where she enjoyed the company of the eminent naturalist Erasmus Darwin , the educational reformer Richard Lovell Edgeworth , his daughter Maria Edgeworth ? who later became a famous writer in her own right ? and the celebrated poet Anna Seward . Although she was intellectually stimulated by this group of gifted writers , she was distressed by their lack of faith and later described Richard Edgeworth as an " infidel . " She also criticized Seward 's persona of the female author , writing in her autobiography that she would never model herself after a woman who wore a wig and accumulated male flatterers . Despite what

she viewed as the pitfalls of fame , she was determined to become a writer and when she was seventeen her father , who encouraged her writing , helped her publish her first story , Traditions (1795) .

When Sherwood 's father died in 1795 , her family retired from its active social life , since her mother preferred seclusion , and moved to Bridgnorth , Shropshire . At Bridgnorth Sherwood began writing sentimental novels ; in 1802 she sold Margarita for £ 40 to Mr. Hazard of Bath , and The History of Susan Grey , a Pamela @-@ like novel , for £ 10 . During this time she also taught at a local Sunday school .

= = Marriage and India = =

On 30 June 1803 , Sherwood became an army wife by marrying her cousin , Captain Henry Sherwood (1776 ? 1849) (cousin marriage was a common practice before the twentieth century) . For several years , she accompanied her husband and his regiment , the 53rd Foot , on numerous postings throughout Britain . In 1804 , Capt. Sherwood was promoted to paymaster , which slightly improved the couple 's finances . In 1805 the regiment was ordered to India and the Sherwoods were forced to leave their first child , Mary Henrietta , with Sherwood 's mother and sister in England .

Sherwood 's four @-@ month sea voyage to India was difficult ; she was again pregnant and the regiment 's ship was attacked by French warships . The Sherwoods stayed in India for eleven years , moving with the army and an ever @-@ increasing family from Calcutta (Kolkata) to Dinapore (Danapur) to Berhampore (Baharampur) to Cawnpore (Kanpur) to Meerut (Meerut) . They had six children in India : Henry (1805 ? 1807) , Lucy Martha (1807 ? 1808) , Lucy Elizabeth (1809 ? 1835) , Emily (1811 ? 1833) , Henry Martyn (1813 ? ?) , and Sophia (1815 ? ?) . The deaths of the infants Henry and Lucy Martha and later of young Emily and Lucy Elizabeth affected Sherwood deeply ; she frequently named the heroes and heroines of her books (many of whom die) after her late children .

Following the agonizing death of her second child , Henry , of whooping cough , Sherwood began to consider converting to evangelical Christianity . The famous missionary Henry Martyn (for whom she named her sixth child) finally convinced her ; but it was the chaplain to the company , Mr. Parson , who first made her aware of her " human depravity " and her need for redemption . After her conversion , she was anxious to pursue evangelical missionary work in India , but she first had to persuade the East India Company that its policy of religious neutrality was ill @-@ conceived . Because there was social and political support for missionary programs in Britain , the Company eventually approved her endeavors . Sherwood established schools for both the children of army officers and the local Indian children attached to the camp . The children were often taught in her home , as no buildings were available . The first school began with 13 children and grew to over 40 , with pupils ranging from the very young to adolescents ; uneducated soldiers also attended at times . Sherwood discovered that traditional British teaching materials did not appeal to children raised in India , and therefore wrote her own Indian- and army @-@ themed stories , such as The History of Little Henry and his Bearer (1814) and The Memoirs of Sergeant Dale , his Daughter and the Orphan Mary (1815) .

Sherwood also adopted neglected or orphaned children from the camp . In 1807 she adopted Annie Child , a three @-@ year @-@ old who had been given too much medicinal gin and in 1808 a malnourished two @-@ year @-@ old Sally Pownal . She found homes for those she could not adopt and founded an orphanage . In 1816 , on the advice of doctors , she and her family returned to Britain ; in her autobiography Sherwood relates that she was continually ill in India and it was believed at the time that neither she nor any of her children could survive in a tropical climate .

= = Return to Britain and death = =

When the Sherwoods returned to Britain , they were financially strapped . Captain Sherwood , having been put on half @-@ pay , opened a school in Henwick , Worcestershire . Relying on her

fame as an author and her teaching experience in India , Sherwood also decided to establish a boarding school for girls in Wick ; it remained in operation for eight years . She taught English , French , astronomy , history , geography , grammar , writing and arithmetic . At the same time , she wrote hundreds of tracts , novels and other works for children and the poor , increasing her popularity in both the United States and Britain . The History of Henry Milner (1822) was one of Sherwood 's most successful books ; children sent her fan mail , begging her to write a sequel ? one sent her " ornamental pens " with which to do so . Babies were named after the hero . Sherwood published much of what she wrote in The Youth 's Magazine , a children 's periodical that she edited for over two decades .

By the 1830s , the Sherwoods had become more prosperous and the family decided to travel to the continent . The texts that Sherwood wrote following this trip reflect her exposure to French culture in particular . She also embarked on a large and complex Old Testament project at this time , for which she learned Hebrew . To assist her , her husband assembled , over the course of ten years , a large Hebrew @-@ English concordance . Unfortunately , Sherwood 's autobiography provides scant details regarding the last forty @-@ odd years of her life . However , we do know that even in her seventies , Sherwood wrote for four or five hours a day ; many of these books were co @-@ authored with Sherwood 's daughter , Sophia . According to M. Nancy Cutt , a Sherwood scholar , this joint authorship led to a " watery sentimentality " not evident in Sherwood 's earlier works as well as a greater emphasis on issues of class .

In 1849 , the Sherwoods moved to Twickenham , Middlesex , and in December of that year Captain Sherwood died . Sherwood herself died almost two years later on 20 September 1851 .

= = Literary analysis = =

Sherwood scholar M. Nancy Cutt has argued that Sherwood 's career can be usefully divided into three periods : (1) her romantic period (1795 ? 1805) , during which she wrote a few sentimental novels ; (2) her evangelical period (1810 ? c . 1830) , during which she produced her most popular and influential works ; and (3) her post @-@ evangelical period (c . 1830 ? 1851) . Several underlying themes pervade most of Sherwood 's works throughout these periods : " her conviction of inherent human corruption " ; her belief that literature " had a catechetical utility " for every rank of society ; her belief that " the dynamics of family life " should reflect central Christian principles ; and her " virulent " anti @-@ Catholicism .

= = = Early writings : sentimental novels = = =

Sherwood 's earliest works are the sentimental novels Traditions (1795) and Margarita (1795) ; although both are more worldly than her later works , neither received much recognition . By contrast , The History of Susan Gray , which was written for the girls of her Sunday school class in Bridgnorth , made Sherwood a famous author . Like Hannah More 's tracts , the novel is designed to teach middle @-@ class morality to the poor . This novel ? which Patricia Demers , a children 's literature scholar , describes as a " purified Pamela " ? tells the story of Susan , an orphaned servant girl , who " resists the advances of a philandering soldier ; though trembling with emotion at the man 's declaration of love and promise of marriage . " The reader is regularly reminded of the " wages of sin " since Susan 's story is told from her deathbed . A separate narrator , seemingly Sherwood , often interrupts the tale to warn readers against particular actions , such as becoming a " bad woman . " Despite a didactic tone that is often distasteful to modern readers , Susan Gray was so popular at the time of its release that it was pirated by multiple publishers . In 1816 , Sherwood published a revised and " improved " version , which Sarah Trimmer positively reviewed in The Guardian of Education . Sherwood wrote a companion story , The History of Lucy Clare , which was published in 1810 .

= = = French literary influences = = =

Although Sherwood disagreed with the principles espoused by French revolutionaries, her own works are modeled on French children's literature, much of which is infused with Rousseauvian ideals. For example, in *The History of Henry Milner*, Part I (1822) and *The History of the Fairchild Family*, Part I (1818) Sherwood adopts Arnaud Berquin's "habitual pattern of small domestic situations acted out by children under the eye of parents or fellows." Likewise, *The Lady of the Manor* (1823 ? 29) shares similar themes and structures with Madame de Genlis' *Tales of the Castle* (1785). David Hanson, a scholar of nineteenth-century literature, has questioned this interpretation, however, arguing that the tales told by the maternal figure in *The Lady of the Manor* demonstrate a "distrust of parents," and of mothers in particular, because they illustrate the folly of overly permissive parenting. In these inset stories, only outsiders discipline children correctly.

One of Sherwood's aims in her evangelically themed *The History of Henry Milner* (1822 ? 37) was to challenge what she saw as the irreligion inherent in French pedagogy. *Henry Milner* was written in direct response to Thomas Day's *The History of Sandford and Merton* (1783 ? 89), a novel founded on the philosophy of Rousseau (whose writings Sherwood had lambasted as "the well @-@ spring of infidelity"). Nevertheless, as children's literature scholar Janis Dawson points out, the structure and emphasis of *Henry* greatly resemble Rousseau's own *Emile* (1762): their pedagogies are very similar, even if their underlying assumptions about childhood are diametrically opposed. Both books isolate the child in order to encourage him to learn from the natural world, but Sherwood's *Henry* is naturally depraved while Rousseau's *Emile* is naturally good. As the series progressed, however, Sherwood's views of religion changed (she became a universalist), causing her to place greater emphasis on childhood innocence in the later volumes.

= = = Evangelicalism = = =

The strongest themes in Sherwood's early evangelical writings are the need to recognize one's innate "depravity" and the need to prepare oneself for eternity. For Sherwood, the most important lessons emphasize "faith, resignation, and implicit obedience to the will of God." In her adaptation of John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* (1678) ? *The Infant's Progress* (1821) ? she represents original sin as a child named "In @-@ bred Sin" who tempts the young pilgrims on their way to the Celestial City (Heaven) and it is these battles with In @-@ bred Sin that constitute the major conflict of the text. The allegory is complex and, as Demers admits, "tedious" for even the "willing reader." Thus, "some young readers may have found [In @-@ bred Sin's] activities more interesting than the spiritual struggles of the little heroes, reading the book as an adventure story rather than as a guide to salvation." Such religious allegory, although not always so overt, continued to be a favorite literary device of Sherwood's.

Sherwood also infused her works with political and social messages dear to evangelicals during the teens and twenties, such as the crucial role of missions, the value of charity, the evils of slavery and the necessity of Sabbath observance. She wrote Biblically based introductions to astronomy and ancient history so that children would have Christian textbooks. As Cutt argues, "the intent of these (as indeed of all Evangelical texts) was to offset the deistic tendency to consider knowledge an end in itself." Sherwood also revised classic children's books to make them appropriately religious, such as Sarah Fielding's *The Governess* (1749). Sherwood's efforts to make religion more palatable through children's fiction were not always regarded favorably by the entire evangelical community; *The Evangelical Magazine* harshly reviewed her *Stories Explanatory of the Church Catechism* (1817), complaining that it was overly reliant on exciting fictional tales to convey its religious message.

= = = *The History of the Fairchild Family* (1818 ? 1847) = = =

As Cutt argues, "the great overriding metaphor of all [Sherwood's] work is the representation of divine order by the harmonious family relationship (inevitably set in its own pastoral Eden)." . . . No writer made it clearer to her readers that the child who is dutiful within his family is blessed in the

sight of God ; or stressed more firmly that family bonds are but the earthly and visible end of a spiritual bond running up to the very throne of God . " Demers has referred to this " consciously double vision " as the quintessentially Romantic element of Sherwood 's writing . Nowhere is this theme more evident than in Sherwood 's *The History of the Fairchild Family* , the first part of which was published in 1818 .

Of all of Sherwood 's evangelically themed books , *The History of the Fairchild Family* was the most popular . When she published it with John Hatchard of Piccadilly , she assured it and the ten other books she published with him a " social distinction " not attached to her other publications . The Fairchild Family tells the story of a family striving towards godliness and consists of a series of lessons taught by the Fairchild parents to their three children (Emily , Lucy and Henry) regarding not only the proper orientation of their souls towards Heaven but also the right earthly morality (envy , greed , lying , disobedience , and fighting are immoral) . The overarching narrative of the tale also includes a series of tract @-@ like stories which illustrate these moral lessons . For example , stories of the deaths of two neighborhood children , Charles Trueman and Miss Augusta Noble , help the Fairchild children to understand how and why they need to look to the state of their own hearts . The faithful and " true " Charles has a transcendent deathbed experience , suggesting that he was saved ; by contrast , the heedless and disobedient Augusta burns up while playing with candles and is presumably damned . Unlike previous allegorical literature with these themes , such as Bunyan 's *Pilgrim 's Progress* , Sherwood domesticated her story ? actions in the children 's day @-@ to @-@ day lives , such as stealing fruit , are of supreme importance because they relate directly to their salvation . Each chapter also includes prayers and hymns (by Philip Doddridge , Isaac Watts , Charles Wesley , William Cowper and Ann and Jane Taylor , among others) that are thematically linked to it .

The Fairchild Family continued to be a bestseller (remaining in print until 1913) despite the increasingly popular Wordsworthian image of childhood innocence . In fact , one scholar has even suggested that it " influenced Dickens 's depictions of Pip 's fears of the convict , the gibbet , and ' the horrible young man ' at the close of Chapter 1 " in *Great Expectations* (1860 ? 61) . Children 's literature scholar Gillian Avery has argued that *The Fairchild Family* was " as much a part of English childhood as Alice was later to become . " Although the book was popular , some scraps of evidence have survived suggesting that readers did not always interpret it as Sherwood would have wanted . Lord Frederic Hamilton writes , for instance , that " there was plenty about eating and drinking ; one could always skip the prayers , and there were three or four very brightly written accounts of funerals in it . " Although *The Fairchild Family* has gained a reputation in the twentieth century as an oppressively didactic book , in the early nineteenth century it was viewed as delightfully realistic . Charlotte Yonge (1823 ? 1901) , a critic who also wrote children 's literature , praised " the gusto with which [Sherwood] dwells on new dolls " and " the absolutely sensational naughtiness " of the children . Most twentieth @-@ century critics , including George Orwell , who called it " an evil book " , have condemned the book 's harshness , pointing to the Fairchilds ' moral @-@ filled visit to a gibbet with a rotting corpse swinging from it ; but Cutt and others argue that the positive depiction of the nuclear family in the text , particularly Sherwood 's emphasis on parents ' responsibility to educate their own children , was an important part of the book 's appeal . She argues that Sherwood 's " influence , " via books such as the Fairchild Family , " upon the domestic pattern of Victorian life can hardly be overestimated . "

The Fairchild Family was so successful that Sherwood wrote two sequels , one in 1842 and one in 1847 . These reflected her changing values as well as those of the Victorian period . Significantly , the servants in Part I , " who are almost part of the family , are pushed aside in Part III by their gossiping , flattering counterparts in the fine manor @-@ house . " But the most extensive thematic change in the series was the disappearance of evangelicalism . Whereas all of the lessons in Part I highlight the children 's " human depravity " and encourage the reader to think in terms of the afterlife , in Parts II and III , other Victorian values such as " respectability " and filial obedience come to the fore . Dawson describes the difference in terms of parental indulgence ; in Parts II and III , the Fairchild parents employ softer disciplinary tactics than in Part I .

===== Evangelical tract literature in the 1820s and 1830s =====

During the 1820s and 1830s, Sherwood wrote a great many tracts for the poor; like her novels for the middle class, they "taught the lessons of personal endurance, reliance on Providence, and acceptance of one's earthly status." Emphasizing individual experience and one's personal relationship with God, they discouraged readers from attributing their successes or failures to "larger economic and political forces." In this, they resembled the Cheap Repository Tracts, many of which were written by Hannah More. As Linda Peterson, a scholar of nineteenth-century women's literature, argues, Sherwood's tracts use a Biblical "interpretative frame" in order to highlight the fleetingness of earthly things. For example, in *A Drive in the Coach through the Streets of London* (1819), Julia is granted the privilege of shopping with her mother only if she will "behave wisely in the streets" and "not give [her] mind to self @-@ pleasing." Of course, she cannot keep this promise and she eagerly peeks in at every store window and begs her mother to buy her everything she sees. Her mother therefore allows her to select one item from every shop. Julia, ecstatic, chooses, among other things, blue satin boots, a penknife, and a new hat with flowers, until the pair reach the undertaker's shop. There her mood droops considerably and she realizes the moral of the lesson, recited by her mother, as she picks out a coffin: "but she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth" (1 Timothy 5:6).

===== Anti @-@ Catholicism in the 1830s =====

Sherwood's vigorous anti @-@ Catholicism appears most obviously in her works from the 1820s and 1830s. During the 1820s in Britain, Catholics were agitating for greater civil rights and it was at this time that Sherwood wrote her most sustained attacks against them. When the Catholic Emancipation Act was passed in 1829, Sherwood and many like her were frightened of the influence that Catholics might gain in the government. Therefore, she wrote *Victoria* (1833), *The Nun* (1833) and *The Monk of Cimies* (1834) in order to illustrate some of the dangers of Catholicism. *The Monk* narrates, in the first person, Edmund Etherington's decision to renounce the Church of England and join the Catholic church. While a monk, he ridicules his fellow brothers, plans a murder and debauches a young woman. But evangelicals were not all in agreement on the issue of Catholic Emancipation and some were uncomfortable with these books; one evangelical reviewer called *The Monk of Cimies* "unfair and unconvincing."

===== Colonialism =====

While in India, Sherwood wrote a series of texts based on colonial life. Her most popular work, *The History of Little Henry and his Bearer* (1814), tells the story of a young British boy who, on his deathbed, converts Boosy, the Indian man who has taken care of him throughout his childhood. The book was enormously successful; it reached 37 editions by 1850 and was translated into French, German, Spanish, Hindustani, Chinese, and Sinhalese. Sherwood's tale blends the realistic with the sentimental and introduces her readers to Hindustani words and descriptions of what she felt was authentic Indian life. As Cutt explains, "with this work, the obituary tract (which invariably stressed conversion and a Christian death) had assumed the colouring of romance." Sherwood also wrote a companion story titled *Little Lucy and her Dhaye* (1825) that told a similar tale but from a little girl's perspective.

In *The Indian Pilgrim* (1818) Sherwood tried to adapt *Pilgrim's Progress* for the Indian context; the work focused on "the supposed depravity and pagan idolatry of Brahmans, fakirs, nautch (dance) girls, and soldiers' temporary wives." This text demonstrates Sherwood's religious biases: "Muslims and Jews receive better treatment than Hindus because of their belief in one God, but Roman Catholics fare little better than the Hindu idolaters." *The Indian Pilgrim*, although never published in India, was popular in Britain and America. Sherwood also wrote texts for Indian servants of British families in the style of British writings for the poor. One of these was *The Ayah and Lady* (1813) in which the ayah, or maid, is "portrayed as sly, selfish, lazy, and

untrustworthy . Her employers are well aware of her faults , yet they tolerate her . " A more culturally sensitive and realistic portrayal of Indians appears in *The Last Days of Boosy* (1842) , a sequel to *The History of Little Henry and his Bearer* , in which the converted Boosy is cast out of his family and community because of his conversion to Christianity .

Colonial themes were a constant thread in Sherwood 's texts ; *The History of Henry Milner* (1822 ? 37) , its sequel *John Marten* (1844) , and *The Indian Orphans* (1839) all evince Sherwood 's interest in these topics . Her writings on India reveal her strong sense of European , if not specifically British , superiority ; India therefore appears in her works as a morally corrupt land in need of reformation . She wrote *The History of George Desmond* (1821) to warn young men of the dangers of emigrating to India . Sherwood 's books shaped the minds of several generations of young Britons . According to Cutt , Sherwood 's depictions of India were among the few available to young British readers ; such children " acquired a strong conviction of the rightness of missions , which , while it inculcated sincere concern for , and a genuine kindness towards an alien people for whom Britain was responsible , quite destroyed any latent respect for Indian tradition . " Cutt attributes the growing paternalism of nineteenth @-@ century British policies on India in part to the widespread popularity of Sherwood 's books .

Using a postcolonial analysis , Nandini Bhattacharya emphasizes the complex relationship between Sherwood 's evangelicalism and her colonialism . She argues that Sherwood 's evangelical stories demonstrate the deep colonial " mistrust of feminized agency , " represented by a dying child in *Little Henry and his Bearer* . Henry " subvert [s] the colonialist 's fantasy of universal identity by generating a subaltern identity that mimics and explodes that fantasy . " But , ultimately , Bhattacharya argues , Sherwood creates neither a completely colonialist text nor a subaltern text ; the deaths of children such as Henry eliminate any possibility for an alternative consciousnesses to mature .

= = = Later writings : Victorianism = = =

By 1830 , Sherwood 's works had drifted away from evangelicalism and her novels and stories reflected more conventional Victorian plots and themes . For example , *Gipsy Babes* (1826) , perhaps inspired by Walter Scott 's *Guy Mannering* (1815) , emphasizes " human affections . " In 1835 , she published a Gothic novel for adolescents titled *Shanty the Blacksmith* ; it employs all the tropes of the genre ? " lost heir , ruined castle , humble helpers and faithful retainer , sinister and mysterious gypsies , prisoner and plot " in what Cutt calls " a gripping " and " exciting tale . " In 1835 Sherwood published the novel *Caroline Mordaunt* ; it tells the story of a young woman forced to become a governess . Her parents die when she is young , but luckily her relatives pay to educate her so that she can earn her own living . The novel follows her progress from a flighty , discontented girl to a reliable , content woman ; she learns how to accommodate herself to the whims of the proud nobility , silly literati , and dogmatic evangelicals . She realizes that in her dependent position she must content herself with less than complete happiness . Once she recognizes this , though , she finds God and , in the last chapter , an ideal husband , thus granting her near complete happiness . Cutt suggests that Sherwood drew on the works of Jane Austen and Jane Taylor for a new " lively , humorous , and satirical strain " in works such as this .

In both later works such as *Caroline Mordaunt* and her earlier evangelical texts , Sherwood participated in the Victorian project of prescribing gender roles ; while her later works outlined ever more stringent and narrow roles for each sex , her early works such as *The Fairchild Family* suggested such demarcations as well : Lucy and Emily learn to sew and keep house while Henry tends the garden and learns Latin .

= = Legacy = =

As Britain 's education system became more secularized in the second half of the nineteenth century , Sherwood 's evangelical books were used mainly to teach the poor and in Sunday schools . Hence her missionary stories were the most influential of all her works . According to Cutt , " these

stories , which in themselves kept alive the missionary spirit and perpetuated that paternal attitude towards India that lasted into the [twentieth century] , were widely imitated " and " an unfortunate assumption of racial superiority was fostered by the over @-@ simplification of some of Mrs. Sherwood 's successors . " These books influenced Charlotte Maria Tucker (" A.L.O.E. ") and even perhaps Rudyard Kipling . In the United States , Sherwood 's early works were very popular and were republished well into the 1840s ; after that , a tradition of specifically American children 's literature began to develop with authors such as Louisa May Alcott .

Sherwood was also instrumental in developing the ideology of the Victorian family . Cutt acknowledges that " the omniscient Victorian parent was not the creation of Mrs. Sherwood , but of the Victorians themselves ; nevertheless , by presenting the parent as God 's vicar in the family , she had planted and fostered the idea . " This in turn increased the value placed on childhood innocence .

The prevalence of death in Sherwood 's early stories and her vivid portrayal of its worldly and otherworldly consequences have often caused twentieth @-@ century critics to deride her works . Nevertheless , Sherwood 's stories prepared the literary ground for writers such as Charles Kingsley and Charlotte Yonge . It has even been suggested that John Ruskin used Henry Milner as the basis for his imaginative autobiography *Praeterita* (1885 ? 89) . Sherwood 's narrative experiments with a variety of genres allowed other writers to pursue innovative forms of children 's fiction . Furthermore , her imaginative use of tracts domesticated reformist literature and also encouraged radical writers such as Harriet Martineau to employ the same genre , if to opposite ends . Because of the popularity of Sherwood 's works and their impact on later writers , Janis Dawson writes : " though her books are no longer widely read , she is regarded as one of the most significant authors of children 's literature of the nineteenth century . "

= = Selected works = =

This is a list of some of Sherwood 's most important works . For a more complete list of her works that includes her many chapbooks and religious tracts , see the list of works by Mary Martha Sherwood .

The History of Little Henry and his Bearer (1814)

The History of Susan Gray (1815) (revised)

Stories Explanatory of the Church Catechism (1817)

The History of the Fairchild Family (1818)

The Indian Pilgrim (1818)

An Introduction to Geography (1818)

The Governess , or The Little Female Academy (1820)

The History of George Desmond (1821)

The Infant 's Progress (1821 , 2nd edition)

The History of Henry Milner (1822)

The History of Little Lucy and her Dhaye (1823)

The Lady of the Manor (1823 ? 29)

The Monk of Cimies (1834)

Caroline Mordaunt , or The Governess (1835)

Shanty the Blacksmith (1835)

The Last Days of Boosy , the Bearer of Little Henry (1842)

The Youth 's Magazine (1822 ? 48) ? " This periodical . . . brought out tales , tracts , and articles by Mrs. Sherwood for over twenty @-@ five years (signed at first M.M. , and after 1827 , M.M.S.) The earlier tales were rapidly reprinted by Houlston , Darton , Melrose , Knight and Lacey and the R.T.S. [Religious Tract Society] , as well as by various American publishers . "

The Works of Mrs. Sherwood by Harper & Bros. (1834 ? 57) ? most complete collected works

= = = Online full @-@ text resources = = =

Works by Mary Martha Sherwood at Project Gutenberg
Works by or about Mary Martha Sherwood at Internet Archive
History of the Fairchild Family Part I (1818)
The Lady of the Manor (1823 ? 29)
Père la Chaise (1823)
Arzoomund (1829 , 2nd edition)
The Indian Pilgrim (1858 edition)
The History of the Fairchild Family , Part III (1847)
The Little Woodman and his Dog Cæsar and the Orphan Boy (1860 edition)
The History of Little Henry and his Bearer (1816 , 7th edition)
The Infant 's Progress (1821 , 2nd edition)
The History of Henry Milner Part IV (1837)
Shanty the Blacksmith (1852)
Roxobel , Vol . 1 (1831)
The Orphans of Normandy (1828 , 2nd edition)
Emancipation (1829)
The Lily of the Valley (1844 , 6th edition)
The Latter Days (1833)
The Fairy Knoll (1848)
The Little Momiere (1833)
Katharine Seward (1837 , 3rd edition)
The Garland (1835)
Jamie Gordon (1851)