Wuthering Heights on Stage

Kurt Lerps directed the 1996 production of Charles Vance's stage adaptation of *Wuthering Heights* at the Gold Coast Little Theatre. On April 9th 2005 he spoke to us about it.

Imagine that you are a lonely traveler
Lost on a winter day,
Lost among those bleak, northern hills: moorland country,
You are trudging towards a house,
Set high on a crag:
It is evening,
A light glimmers:
There surely must be shelter for the night!

A sorrowful sight!
Dark night coming down early
Sky and hills mingle in one bitter swirl
Of wind and suffocating snow.

You would turn back if you knew where you are going!
You would seek the stinking lair of the fox
Or the rocky cavern inhabited by the wolf
Rather than dare that threshold!
But you are innocent of these things and press on.
Toil the granite track towards the gate;
Even the pandemonium of dogs ahead seems sweet encouragement!
Across the yard to the great door and the ancient bell:
You do not have to wake the dead with your desperate call
The restless dead and the bitter living mingle freely here
In this place exposed to great winds and tempests
In this place of unquiet spirits:
Wuthering Heights!

With these words begins Charles Vance's stage adaptation of Emily Bronte's *Wuthering Heights*. You may well wonder how a naturalized Australian from New York, ended up directing a stage

version of *Wuthering Heights* on the Gold Coast, Queensland Australia in 1996.

In the mid 1950's, I had been fortunate enough to attend a prep school in upper New York State where the headmaster was English and our English department in the Fourth Form concentrated on 19th century English Literature. My tutor, Mr. Grove, so instilled a love of this genre that I went on to attain a Bachelor of Arts in 19th Century English Literature from Columbia University in New York City.

While in prep school of the many 19th century novels and authors we studied, *Wuthering Heights* was one of the set pieces, along with novels by Austen, Dickens, Charlotte Brontë and George Elliott.

Many of you might remember a series of comic books called Classics Illustrated, which originated in the United States in the 1940s. The series, which was also distributed in the United Kingdom, was developed to give children easy access to the great literary classics. These comics were often used by students to crib book reports on novels that they may have found too long (or boring) to read. When my examination time on *Wuthering Heights* came, we entered the study hall and found on each desk a copy of the Classic Illustrated's version of *Wuthering Heights* and the first question was to point out the mistakes and omissions in this comic book version. Boy! Was I glad I had read the novel. My tutor instilled in me a love for the 19th century novel that I still have today and usually there is a 19 century novel that I am rereading on my bedside table (currently *The Woman In White*) along with a murder mystery (another passion).

I began my directing career in earnest in 1978. I chose *The Heiress*, Ruth and Augustus Goetz's adaptation of Henry James' *Washington Square*, as my first plunge into main house drama. Set in 1850's New York City, I renewed my love of this marvelous form of literature. I directed this play for the Gold Coast Little Theatre in Southport and then basically worked with this theatre as a director, actor and Artistic Director for the next 25 years. I am now a Life Member of that theatre.

When asked in 1995 if I would like to direct a play for the 1996 season Gold Coast season, I immediately thought of Charles Vance's adaptation of *Wuthering Heights*, which I had found during a trip to London. At this point in time the script was only six years old and

had not really been "discovered" by the community theatres. The committee agreed, and thus this naturalized Australian from New York was due to produce and direct *Wuthering Heights* for the 1996 Gold Coast Little Theatre season.

To me, Emily is the most enigmatic of the three famous sisters. Lucasta Miller in her book *The Brontë Myth*, points out that Emily has inspired two detective novels: Austin Lee's *Miss Hogg and the Brontë Murders* and Robert Bernard's *The Missing Brontë*. Miller also points out how enigmatic the novel is along with razor sharp intellect and down to earth imagination.

Having just reread *Wuthering Heights*, I was attracted once again to the Victorian sense of melodrama mixed with realistic detail that is also true of many of the 19th century novelists such as Dickens, Wilkie Collins and George Elliott.

One of the reasons that I was drawn to this script was that it followed the literary conceit of Brontë's two narrators: Lockwood and Ellen Dean. This device also gives the other characters an enigmatic existence. Emily was the one Brontë sister who was determined to remain hidden behind her pseudonym of Ellis Bell.

Before discovering the Vance adaptations of *Wuthering Heights* and *Jane Eyre*, the only script of *Wuthering Heights* that I had to hand was Randolph Carter's inferior adaptation. The Vance script also appealed because it involved Hindley's son Hareton and Catherine's daughter, Cathy.

Once production planning commenced, the Parramatta Riverside Theatre, Sydney mounted a production of the Vance script, with the following summation by Nick Dent in *Theatre Australasia* June 1995:

"When Lockwood speaks the final epitaph over the lover's graves, he's describing the play. This is dead theatre, and the depressing aspect is that much of its audience will be school-kids who will find little to contradict a cynical attitude to literature."

You can imagine how I felt when I read this – it certainly raised a challenge with our production. My next challenge was to select a production team. When directing *The Heiress* my costume designer was a young woman by the name of Lee Bowers. Her costumes for Catherine Sloper were excellent and she had the same love of 19th century literature that I have. So I asked Lee to come on board as my assistant. A very talented Brisbane actor and set designer, Jason

Ingram Roth agreed to design our set and Phillip Carney, a well-known lighting and sound designer in Brisbane also agreed to join our team.

So now, I am ready to share with you some of the results of the final production. One of the most important tools for attracting the audience's attention is the programme. We decided to make the programme as simple and yet as Victorian as possible. Once opened the programme displayed the characters as if in a family tree, with headshots of the characters, as in the old movies. We felt that this would assist the audience in relating to the characters and keep track of the initial story line, which is complicated even to those who know the story. Then the back page again listed the cast, crew and a message from the Director. We felt that the programme was effective and received many comments from the general public as to how it did assist in following the story line.

Next we had to tackle the set design. The design recommended in the back of the French's acting edition was for a much larger stage area. Reading through the script it became apparent that most of the main action in Act 1 took place at Wuthering Heights, whereas Act 2 concentrated on Thrushcross Grange. Mr. Roth came up with a composite set that did allow for major changes between Acts 1 and 2, while keeping both the Heights and the Grange visible to the audience.

I was very lucky in securing an attractive and talented cast. John, who played Lockwood, is a talented actor with a degree from Oxford University and has the bearing of an English gentleman. My Catherine was a lass of Irish/English descent who is extremely passionate about *Wuthering Heights* and would more than likely have had me assassinated if she had not gotten the part. My Edgar was a film and TV actor making his theatre debut.

My young Cathy was a year 10 student who held a Speech and Drama scholarship at her college. Dwayne Lawler, my Heathcliff, was a well know Brisbane actor who actually tracked me down to audition for a part that he had always desired to play – I did not have to look any further. Isabella was a young lass who was enrolled at the Queensland College of Arts and Entertainment. She was excellent foil to Catherine, Heathcliff, Edgar and Hindley.

My Hindley was a new actor with quite a threatening presence and my Hareton had just graduated from the Australian Institute of Dramatic Arts at Bond University and had also just completed a very successful season as the blind boy in *Butterflies Are Free*. My Joseph and Ellen Dean were an English theatrical couple (originally from Yorkshire) with many years of theatre behind them both in the United Kingdom and Australia. They were very helpful in assisting with accents. Joseph was really the only character that was allowed to have the full Yorkshire accent – Vance actually wrote Joseph's speeches in dialect.

So now on with the show. These photographs are from a dress rehearsal where we were trying to conquer the use of the fog machines. Fog machines tend to have a mind of their own and as you will see from the photographs, this machine was no different; we vacillated between no fog and smog!

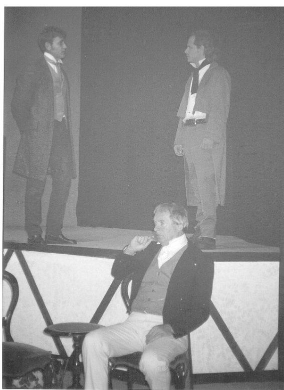
The Prologue – Lockwood appeared through the fog (non existent in this picture) and recited the speech with which I began this talk. Jason had decided that stage right would be the focal point for the major set of each act. Act 1 was focused on Wuthering Heights. Jason's windswept background and composite floor painting kept the audience reminded of the moors and their desolation.

In Act 1 we meet young Cathy and Hareton after Lockwood enters the Heights. The scene is a brooding one with Cathy's apathy and dislike of her place at the Heights quite obvious.
The audience is also introduced to Heathcliff the widower when he ungraciously "welcomes" Lockwood into his home. Please note the cupboard, which belongs to the Heights, which disappeared in the second act when the main playing area became the Grange.

We meet Ellen Dean after Lockwood returns from his unfortunate visit to the Heights. The Grange at this point in time was represented by two Victorian balloon backed chairs and small pie crust table. Whenever Lockwood or Ellen returned as narrators in this act they would use this area.

Edgar and Catherine's Interview leading to the fight with Ellen Dean about leaving the room and Catherine slapping both Ellen and Edgar. Then comes Catherine's fight with Ellen. These two actresses bonded very well and this scene where Catherine displays her mercurial temper was very well done.

Hindley and Edgar discuss Catherine's wedding – Ellen moves in and out of the narrator's area and Lockwood remains as if observing what is happening.



Ellen hears Hindley agree to Catherine's insistence that Ellen go the Grange with her, leaving Hindley, Hareton and Joseph to their own fate. After this scene Ellen ends the act by moving back to the "narrator's" table and chairs and says to Lockwood and says:

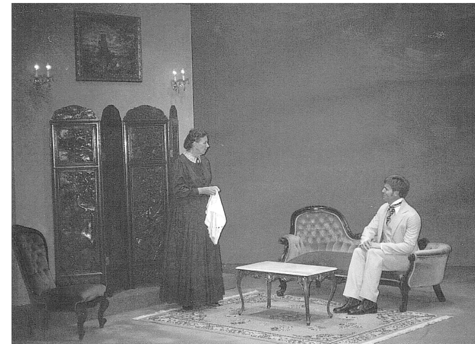
"So, sir, that is when I came to Thrushcross Grange. Eighteen years ago. Miss Catherine, Mrs. Linton I must call her now, took well to her new surroundings and seemed fond, even over-fond, of her husband and showed plenty of affection for Isabella."

Act 2 opens as if Ellen is continuing her narration by saying "And on a mellow evening in September – it ended." With Act 2 the stage right area had now become Thrushcross Grange and the Heights table and chairs had been moved to the area previously occupied by Ellen and Lockwood's table and chairs from the Grange. With a simple turning of the main Heights flat we were

given a room in the Grange with a carved oriental screen, tapestries and crystal sconces. When the lights came up, Ellen was standing in a spot with Lockwood to say the words above and then Lockwood moved off as Ellen joined Isabella and Catherine in the drawing room.

Ellen enters the room and there is a short domestic scene before Heathcliff appears once again. The "new" narrator's area up on the rostra, which had previously been part of the Heights. A brief moment of happiness for Edgar and Catherine – the carpet has now covered most of the flagstone effect used for the Heights.

Ellen announces the "visitor from Gimmerton" – note the Heights area downstage left and that Edgar and Catherine are now using the narrator's area also. The French windows behind them this area will also become Catherine's sick room and the final exit for Heathcliff onto the moors.



Ellen tells Edgar that the "visitor from Gimmerton" is Heathcliff. Our costume designer, Deslye Kruck was extremely clever in leaving Ellen and Lockwood in the same basic costume as they drifted in and out of the action.

Ellen observes Catherine's taunting of Isabella over her feelings for Heathcliff to his amusement. Note that the fog is starting as we will be moving out of the Grange back to the Heights. (By this time in the rehearsal the fog machine was behaving quite well.)

Isabella meets with Hindley – Hindley tells Isabella that he wishes to kill Heathcliff. The stage apron and stage right were used for the Heights and with Phillip's lighting plan the areas were well defined.

Edgar and a deranged Catherine – the fog from the Heights has now invaded the Grange – this was a great effect as the play was approaching its haunting end with its lack of closure for the lost souls.

Hindley signs over the Heights to Heathcliff – the narrator's are back in place as we approach the last scene. Ellen watches as Cathy

tries to teach Hareton before the final visit of Lockwood and his last exit.

By opening night we had tamed the fog machine and Jason's set design, Phillip's lighting and sound design, great ensemble work by the actors and crew, we were fairly certain that we had escaped the threat of presenting "dead theatre".

The reviews we received were glowing. The Gold Coast Guide ended their review by saying:

"Wuthering Heights" is not the easiest novel to read and comprehend, though it's not certain that making a play out of it will entice more readers.

The Gold Coat Bulletin ended their review by saying:

"The stars…shine as Dwayne Lawlor and…Lara Flanagan play their parts with great dexterity and never fail to squeeze the last drop of heated emotion from the ill-fated couple. All that and billows of smoke as well is bound to make *Wuthering Heights* something to savour as winter wraps itself around the Coast." (See even the fog machine gets a rave review!)

Probably, the biggest tribute came from Michael Beard, the President of the Gold Coast, when he wrote in his report:

"More years ago than I like to admit, I was required to study Jane Austen's *Emma* and ever since I have assiduously avoided any literature produced before 1900 by a woman whose name began with "A" or "B", dismissing the whole genre as Victorian balderdash. Consequently I sat in on *Wuthering Heights* more or less out of duty. My gratitude is extended to Kurt and his cast for correcting my misconceptions as I watched this super production unfold, progressing from grudging interest early on to guilty interest, once I'd worked out who every was, to total absorption by the final scene. …

The production's artistic merit was matched by colossal attendances in the final week. On closing night, we had a full house, a dozen in the foyer waiting for any cancellations and I was showing people through the door carrying plastic chairs, as the curtain went up, something unheard of since the days of "Cabaret""

WHAT MIGHT JANE AUSTEN HAVE THOUGHT OF THE BRONTËS?

A summary of a talk given by Beryl Winter on August 6th 2005.

Bearing in mind the "dividing line" between North and South in England which had existed, due to the avarice of many and the destitution of others, over the years since the self-appointed King Alfred, much has been written and said about Jane Austen and the Brontës.

Both, in their own fashion, fought for the rights of women. Austen and the Brontës – and here I will concern myself with consideration of Charlotte Brontë's Jane Eyre and Emily Brontë's Wuthering Heights – all advocated that women were as able as men to think and act for themselves.

In so doing, they may also have as much right as men to influence the society to which each of them belonged. What they all had from early childhood was talent – all were gifted children – and were fortunate in having that talent recognised and encouraged by their fathers.

Gifted children are complex individuals and are often misunderstood, even by their friends. The difficulty arises from the fact of their ability to view life as a wider canvas rather than only the everyday social mores of the communities in which they lived. From my reading and research, I am very familiar with Austen's way of dealing with this.

My view is, reverting to the original query, that Austen would have been intrigued by the fact that both Charlotte and Emily wrote novels about the lives of their main characters, beginning from their early childhood. Also, Austen might have been interested in Charlotte's use of the first person, which could have indicated to Austen that Charlotte was "Jane Eyre". Also, Austen might well have recognised a woman who was ambitious and wished for acknowledgement of her talent.

The reference to the character of "Jane Eyre", as not being pretty or beautifully dressed, would have seemed inconsequential to Austen, who believed that men took no notice of a woman's appearance, and looked only at their dowry! In Austen's mind the fact this gave

women a distinct advantage. It is as well to recall that to be accepted by society in general, women needed to be "Mrs Somebody". This concept prevailed well into the twentieth century.

If we now consider Austen's view of Emily Brontë, she would have commented that Emily was a very private person – not a seeker of publicity at all. So, the question in Austen's mind might have been "Why did she agree to its publication at all?" I think Austen would have been astute enough to realise that Emily was seeking a soul-mate who would embrace the wholehearted dedication to the beauty and wildness and, yes, freedom that she herself found in the wild and tempestuous moorland which surrounded her. Again the story begins with childhood, Catherine and Heathcliff, and is repeated as the inevitable life and death cycle of human existence, but told by two different narrators to add spice to the story, and preserve the author's privacy.

WHAT JANE WOULD HAVE THOUGHT OF JANE

A talk given by Catherine Barker on August 6th 2005

When *Jane Eyre* was published in 1847 it proved extremely popular with the Victorian reading public. However it did attract criticism from some quarters, partly due to its harsh portrayal of Evangelical Christianity, but more specifically due to its forthright writing on the subject of feminine emotions and, shock horror – desires! The Victorians considered these to be unmentionable topics and Jane Eyre's strong willed independent spirit was not thought by some to be quite the right example to set young girls. We might well imagine Jane Austen, sitting primly in her Regency cap at home in Chawton with a copy of Charlotte Brontë's novel open in front of her, and it would be easy to believe that she might have agreed with this criticism, disapproving of *Jane Eyre*, and condemning it as a coarse and vulgar Godless novel. The two writers lived and worked in different times and in different genres, and so it is not unreasonable to surmise that Jane could well have had a few surprises as she started to read the novel. What might they have been?

Firstly she would have been surprised by the setting of *Jane Eyre* – the North of England. Jane's journey through life takes her

from her Aunt Reed's at Gateshead away to school at Lowood, from her life as a governess at Thornfield Hall to the vicarage at Marsh End until she finally settles at Fernwood. All these locations are set, as we'd say in the South of England, 'up North'. There existed then, as it still does to some extent today, a degree of difference between the North and the South of England. Those of you who saw the recent BBC Television adaptation of Mrs Gaskell's *North and South* will be well aware of this. Southerners tend to think of the North as being an uncultivated, wild and industrial country, the last place that one would associate with the arts or literature.

Jane Austen's novels are by contrast mainly set in the South of England, with the counties of Kent, Surrey, Sussex and Hampshire as her backgrounds. So Jane might have been surprised, not only to read a novel written by a woman from the North of England, but to find that the North country itself was to be the setting for the story.

Another feature which Jane Austen might have noted with some surprise, as it was a mode of writing which she did not use herself, would have been to discover that the narrative was written in the first person. Jane Eyre tells us her own story which is a fictional semi-autobiography if you like, and therefore the reader is enabled to share her intimate thoughts to a greater extent than that of an Austen heroine. Charlotte Brontë draws her readers in even closer with direct remarks to them. When Jane runs away from Mr Rochester for example, she says of her distress *'Gentle reader, may you never feel what I felt',* and of course at the end of the novel we have the most famous of these direct asides to us:- *'Reader, I married him'*.

Charlotte's inclusion of Yorkshire dialect in the novel, her use of archaic language by the servants, and her incorporation of French in the scenes with Adèle, are all narrative devices not used by Jane Austen.

Jane Austen might have been surprised by the fact that there are relatively few characters in *Jane Eyre*. She is a more isolated heroine than any that Jane wrote about – even Fanny Price is surrounded by the family community living at Mansfield Park. By contrast there is a lack of family life in *Jane Eyre*, with only one hateful aunt and hostile cousins. There are no parents, siblings or even neighbours to round out the storyline. Neither are there any no sub plots, or other couples to be romantically linked, just a focus on the heroine with her own

thoughts and feelings, and maybe Jane Austen might have preferred a few more characters introduced into the story with whom Jane could interact.

Because the events of Jane Austen's novels are more tightly constructed time-wise, the length of the storyline might have intrigued Jane. The plot of *Jane Eyre* concerns the development of a young girl and follows her progress through childhood and adolescence to maturity. The story therefore takes place over a period of years. Jane is writing as a woman telling us of her experiences ten years after they had occurred, narrating events of her childhood, so the reader is taken back in time. Then at the end of the novel, we are taken forward when we are given a glimpse in the final chapter as to Jane and Mr Rochester's married life and their happiness together, with mention of a son being born, *'My Edward and I, then, are happy'*. This expansive time frame is not used by Austen to such an extent and may well have caused her a few doubts as to its inclusion.

As with some sections of the Victorian reading public, Jane Austen may well have been a little startled by the depiction of such raw emotion in *Jane Eyre*. Mrs Gaskell in her biography of Charlotte referred to *'the existence of coarseness here and there in her works, otherwise so entirely noble' (Life of Charlotte Brontë, Chapter 26). Jane Eyre* is certainly a saga of passion, a rebellion against injustice, the story of a young girl reaching maturity as a strong willed and passionate woman. It is explicit in emotional and physical desires in a way in which Jane Austen did not feel was essential to include in order to relate her stories.

I do think that Jane Austen might have been a little disappointed by the lack of humour in *Jane Eyre*. She herself was such a master of satire and created several memorable comic characters such as Miss Bates from *Emma* with her garrulousness, the twitterings and fussings of Mrs Bennett throughout *Pride and Prejudice*, the bombastic manner of John Thorpe in *Northanger Abbey,* and the vanity of Sir Walter Elliott during *Persuasion.* Aunt Reed and Mr Brocklehurst by contrast are just plain nasty. Jane Austen would have looked in vain for touches of humour in *Jane Eyre* where there is little light relief. Satire is definitely missing in *Jane Eyre*. There are some insightful observations, such as those that Jane makes about Blanche Ingram, but there are no deft touches of wit or clever sharp satirical comments.

No-one would call *Jane Eyre* an amusing or sparkling work. It is much more of a dour read and a tear jerker than an Austen novel.

Jane Austen may well have deprecated Charlotte Brontë's lack of a sense of humour but she would surely have been highly amused herself by the quantity of melodrama in *Jane Eyre* with its Gothic style and plot hinging on the mad woman hidden in the attic of an old house, where on her very first day there Jane hears mysterious laughter coming from another wing. There is much more drama in *Jane Eyre* than in an Austen novel, with malevolent characters such as Aunt Reed and Mr Brocklehurst, the dramatic meeting between Jane and Mr Rochester on horseback out on the moors, and the even more dramatic appearance of Bertha Mason's brother in the church. Deaths feature heavily of course, as does the introduction of the supernatural, with the symbolic ripping of Jane's veil the night before the wedding, and the splitting of the chestnut tree in the storm under whose branches Mr Rochester had proposed to her. Plot crises abound, with Jane saving Mr Rochester when his bedroom is set alight, her mistaken jealousy of Blanche Ingram, the unveiling of the fortune telling gypsy as Mr Rochester in disguise, the dramatic wedding scene at the altar, Jane wandering penniless in the countryside before being rescued by the Rivers family. Yes, I think that Jane Austen would have chuckled heartily as she turned the pages.

I don't think however that Jane would have been quite so surprised and shocked by the contents of *Jane Eyre* as we might believe. Why not? Well to answer this it is probably necessary to put the authors and books into their historical context. We tend to think of Jane Austen as belonging to the 18th century Regency period, whereas Charlotte Brontë is firmly classified in our minds as a 19th century Victorian. This is true but Queen Victoria had only been on the throne for nine years when *Jane Eyre* was published, and was still then only in her late twenties. The Victorian Age as we know it, typified by the enormous growth of the British Empire, the Parliamentary ministries of Gladstone and Disraeli, the Great Exhibition, the triumphs of the Crimean War – was yet to happen. So in fact *Jane Eyre* was published towards the beginning of the Victorian era, whereas Jane Austen was writing towards the end of the Regency period, which ended in 1820, only three years after her death. Therefore when we come to examine the dates at which the two authors were writing, we

find that there is not such a huge gap between the two as it first appears. Between the date of Jane's death in 1817 and the publication of *Jane Eyre* in 1847, there is only a gap of thirty years. So when we ask ourselves what Jane Austen might have thought of *Jane Eyre,* it is like considering what a popular writer of the 1970s such as Frederick Forsyth, would think of the fiction being written today by an author such as Dan Brown.

So in this thirty year gap what events occurred that could have accounted for any change in attitude between the two authors? The answer is not a lot.

True in 1825 the first railway was constructed, and the Penny Post was introduced in 1840. The 1830s saw the beginnings of Parliamentary reform, social reform with the first Factory Acts, and humanitarian reform with the abolition of the slave trade in 1833. However surely none of these developments taking place in those years between Jane Austen's death and the publication of *Jane Eyre* would have made a great deal of difference in the viewpoints of Jane Austen and Charlotte Brontë. The railway for example did not actually reach Haworth until 1864, almost a decade after Charlotte's death, and there was certainly no improvement in the status of women until much later in the 19th century with the passage of the Married Woman's' Property Acts of 1870 and 1882. So there is little reason for Jane Austen to be shocked by *Jane Eyre.* She and Charlotte Brontë lived and wrote too close in time for major differences in attitudes to cause surprises. In fact there are actually many similarities between the two authors which are more likely to have created an empathy for our fictional Jane by the author Jane.

Take the settings for example. Contrary to popular belief, Jane Austen's novels are not all set in the drawing rooms of Bath. Not only do her characters venture as far a-field as Lyme Regis, *(Persuasion),* or Portsmouth *(Mansfield Park),* they even get to London, as with Jane Bennett in *Pride and Prejudice*, or the Dashwood sisters in *Sense and Sensibility.* Indeed some of her novels are actually set further north than the capital. Mansfield Park is located in Northamptonshire which is in the Midlands, whilst D'Arcy's house at Pemberley is in the countryside up as far north as Derbyshire. Neither of these counties can be classed as being anywhere near the South of England, and indeed if you look at the map of England you'll find that

Derbyshire is the county immediately below that of West Yorkshire where the Brontës lived at Haworth.

As to the narrative, Austen may not address her readers quite so directly as Charlotte, but she does use a similar literary device by referring to herself, her characters and the reader. In *Mansfield Park* for example we are told *'Let other pens dwell on guilt and misery. I quit such odious subjects as soon as I can………My Fanny indeed, I have the satisfaction of knowing, must have been happy in spite of everything'* . Again, towards the end of *Northanger Abbey* Jane confides to her readers that *'a heroine returning at the close of her career……. Is an event on which the pen of the contriver may well delight to dwell; it gives credit to every conclusion, and the author must share in the glory she so liberally bestows. But my affair is widely different; I bring back my heroine to her home in solitude and disgrace'*. This narrative technique, like Charlottes asides to her reader, does remind us that the authors are relating a story and we feel included in their confidences.

Although Jane Austen's works do not cover such a wide time frame as described in *Jane Eyre,* we are given descriptions of past events in order to explain present circumstances, as for example the story in *Mansfield Park* of how Fanny's mother and Aunt Bertram, despite being sisters, end up living quite different lives to each other. Similarly the background events to *Persuasion* take place seven years before we meet Anne Elliott and are related to us by Austen in order to set the scene for Captain Wentworth's reappearance in her life. Unlike Charlotte, Jane never feels it necessary to go beyond the altar, but she does let her readers know the outcome of various marriages. We are told of Anne Elliott for example that *'she gloried in being a sailor's wife'*, whilst the fortunes of Emma and Mr Knightley look highly promising when we are informed that at the wedding *'the wishes, the hopes, the confidence, the predictions of the small band of true friends who witnessed the ceremony, were fully answered in the perfect happiness of the union'*.

From weddings to passion, and as to accusations from the Victorians concerning Jane's passionate nature, I think Jane Austen would have understood this quite well. Jane Eyre's battle of passion versus self control was surely foreshadowed by Emma Woodhouse who comes to maturity after developing throughout the course of the

novel, and who better at controlling her passion than Anne Elliott in *Persuasion*? Strong feelings and passion may not be so directly referred to in the Austen canon, but this is not to say that Jane was not ignorant or naïve about such things. We know for example from Susannah Fullerton's recent book *Jane Austen and Crime* that Jane was indeed familiar with the seamier side of life and even introduced some of it into her novels. Adultery features in *Mansfield Park* for example, when Maria Rushworth has an affair with Henry Crawford. Elopement is central to the plot of *Pride and Prejudice* when Lydia Bennet runs away with Wickham, and we are told that prostitution accounts for the ruin of Colonel Brandon's ward in *Sense and Sensibility*. So it is a mistake to think that Jane Austen wrote solely of upper class life. She describes well the newly straightened circumstances of the Dashwood sisters in *Sense and Sensibility* as they have to leave their home and move to the country after the death of their father, and the sordid squalor of Fanny Price's Portsmouth home in *Mansfield Park* is quite graphically written. So perhaps the alleged coarseness and vulgarity in *Jane Eyre* would not have astonished Jane Austen after all.

Jane might well have been amused by such a piling on of the melodrama in *Jane Eyre*, but she was well aware of the fashion for tales of Gothic horror, and mistress of satire as she was, lampooned them wickedly in '*Northanger Abbey.*' There she used the fashion for reading Gothic novels as a comic relief to highlight the naivety of Catherine Morland and her vivid imagination.

As to the independent spirit of the character of Jane Eyre herself, which caused a few raised eyebrows when the book was published, I think that Jane Austen would have approved of the heroine's principled stances. After all, she herself created such women as Anne Elliott and Fanny Price, both of whom are very aware of their obligations and take their duties seriously. I think she would have found Jane Eyre to be a mixture of Emma Woodhouse and Elizabeth Bennett, both of whom are strong minded and independent characters.

Another of the facets of *Jane Eyre* of which some sections of the Victorian public disapproved was that of the theme of love transcending the social classes – the impoverished heroine marrying the landowner. But surely this device would have been familiar to Jane Austen? It was she who wrote of Fanny marrying Edmund in

Mansfield Park, Jane Bennett marrying Mr Bingley in *Pride and Prejudice* and Marianne marrying Colonel Brandon in *Sense and Sensibility*.

Jane would also have recognized a similarity in plot structure whereby the heroine is faced with a choice of marriage partners. Just as Jane Eyre must decide whether she loves Mr Rochester or would be content to settle for St John Rivers, Jane Austen's heroines face similar dilemmas. Is Elizabeth Bennett going to be swayed by the charms of Wickham or Mr D'Arcy, and will Emma ever realize that Mr Knightley is really the man for her and not the easy going and charming Frank Churchill? When Fanny Price is persuaded by her uncle to consider Henry Crawford as a marriage partner, like Jane Eyre she refuses to marry without love, despite being offered the easy option. So Jane Eyre's romantic dilemmas and eventual choice of marriage partner would hardly have surprised Jane Austen. She had been creating and solving such problems over thirty years earlier.

Jane Austen would also have sympathised with Charlotte's feelings as to the hypocrisy of clergymen who preach one thing and practice another. Both were critical of overt religious sentiment, Charlotte's dislike of the excesses of religious zeal being depicted by her portrayal of Mr Brocklehurst and St John Rivers. Both are strongly principled men of faith but hypocritical, the relevance of their religion bearing no relation to their actual behaviour. Jane Austen also had similar feelings as Charlotte in relation to religious cant, but she displayed hers by poking fun at the clergy instead, creating clerical characters at whom we can laugh. The behaviour of Mr Elton from *Emma* and Mr Collins from *Pride and Prejudice* speak volumes as to Jane Austen's personal thoughts on hypocritical clergymen.

So to sum up, what would Jane have thought of Jane? Pleasure and surprise rather than shock and horror would surely have been Jane's chief feelings if she had been able to read *Jane Eyre*. I think that it is a truth universally acknowledged that Jane Austen was the first woman to write such books as are still widely read and extremely popular two centuries later. She would therefore surely have felt extremely pleased to know that other women were following in her footsteps, and she would have been proud to have lead the way, not only for Charlotte and her sisters, but also for such women as Mrs Gaskell and George Elliott.

After this initial feeling of pleasure at reading a book by a fellow female author, I think Jane would have enjoyed the actual reading of *Jane Eyre*, just as we all have in our time. After all, it is a compelling narrative. Jane would also have realized and appreciated that just as she used people and places from her own life as characters or background in her novels, so Charlotte did with *Jane Eyre*, drawing on her own experiences of school life and as a governess.

The book may have held a few minor surprises for her, but not as many as we ourselves may have experienced on first reading the novel. Looking back from our comfortable 21st century viewpoint we may well have been more shocked by the brutality of Jane's experiences at Lowood there than Jane Austen would have been. We may also have been appalled by the story of Jane's solitary struggle to make her way in the world, having to seek a living for herself as a governess. I don't think however that these would have surprised Jane Austen to the same extent. Her own single circumstances were similar to Charlotte's, both being unmarried daughters of country parsons, and both were only too well aware of the fate of unmarried women of their class. Like Charlotte, Jane did not come from a wealthy family and she would have been more familiar with the condition of the poorer classes of society that existed then than we are from our modern vantage point today. Jane Austen shows her awareness of this fact of life by her depiction of the illegitimacy of Harriet Smith and the poverty of Miss Bates and her widowed mother in *Emma*, the struggling working class Price household in *Mansfield Park*, not to mention the plight of Charlotte Lucas in *Pride and Prejudice*, surely fiction's original desperate spinster!

In a letter to her brother Edward, Jane Austen described her own writing as *'a little bit of ivory on which I work with so fine a brush'*. In contrast Charlotte Brontë's writing is much wilder, full of sweeping brush strokes and bold colour. Just as we can go to an art gallery and admire both types of painting, the dramatic oil canvas and the delicate water colour, so can one artist admire and appreciate the style of another. Jane Austen may have written in a slightly different genre, but there is little evidence to suggest that she would not have approved of *Jane Eyre.* Instead she surely would have relished her reading of the novel and taken as a compliment the many similarities between it and her own work.

A RECENTLY "DISCOVERED" LETTER FROM JANE AUSTEN IN HER LATER LIFE, IN WHICH SHE REVEALS HER REACTIONS TO *JANE EYRE* AND *WUTHERING HEIGHTS*

"Found" by Christopher Cooper

Nice – 14th June 1848

My Dearest Cassandra,

I am very much obliged to you for writing to me. My back has been giving me some trouble but your letter lifted my spirits. The weather has been wonderfully warm and I enjoy sitting out on the balcony looking out at all the little boats. I do not think I could ever return to England again as I am not as portable an Invalid as I once was. Cassandra, you really must come again soon – for a longer visit this time. We have so much to catch up on that cannot be conveyed by letter. As you know my health has been extremely fragile ever since my illness in 1817. But God graciously spared me then and I pray that he will continue to do so.

I have few regrets that my poor health has not permitted me to engage in sustained writing, but my little family of six books continue to give me great pleasure. I am thankful to Mr John Murray for continuing to send me parcels of books. Two that he sent recently I found very interesting. They are the ones you were telling me of – by those two unknown writers, Currer and Ellis Bell, though I don't think these can be their real names.

I'm convinced that Currer Bell must be a woman, don't you agree? She always takes the woman's part – no man would write of a woman having power over a man. Though I have many reservations about "Jane Eyre" I rather think this young lady C.B. shows great promise. I blush to observe that her book is in no small part influenced by one or two of my own children and I'm tempted to write to her to offer her some advice.

In making the heroine one of the servant class she was no doubt thinking of my Fanny Price. Both she and her Jane were poor but both had uncles of means. However I think she made her Jane much too forward. The way she speaks to Mr Rochester you would think they were equals. Well, I suppose that by the end of the third volume,

having inherited her uncle's fortune, she becomes a more suitable match for Mr Rochester.

Mr Rochester got £30,000 from his first marriage, and by the time he marries Jane she had inherited £20,000 from her uncle. That makes £50,000 between them which, invested in the funds at 5%, would yield them a comfortable income. Not quite what Mr Darcy would be able to survive on but comfortable none the less.

I found Miss Bell's St John Rivers quite amusing. It is clear to me that she had my Mr Collins in mind. Nothing is *so* amusing as extravagant earnestness, particularly an extravagance of religious zeal. Religion is a valuable seasoning for the dish of life, but too much spoils its flavour and nothing is more amusing than seeing a clergyman make a fool of himself with too much fervour. (Of course in Mr Collins' case it was a case of his worship of his patron Lady Catherine rather than the usual kind.)

I'm sure that Miss Bell has trimmed and cut my Mr Collins and so fashioned her St John Rivers. Don't you feel that St John's proposal to J.E. reminds you of Mr Collins' proposal to Elizabeth Bennett? Neither man can imagine that there is the faintest possibility of a refusal and Jane has as hard a time as E.B. in convincing her proposer that what he has to offer is not what her heart desires.

Where I feel this Miss Bell fails badly is in the way she allows Jane to tell the reader her innermost thoughts. This "first-person" style of writing is not to be encouraged. Nevertheless I can understand why she adopts this style. She is too inexperienced to reveal Jane's inner feelings by what she says and does. That would have required great delicacy and careful brush strokes. Instead she takes the easy road of explaining to the reader what would have been obvious enough if Miss Bell had been a more accomplished author. It's a mercy that she is not a painter for I fear that she would merely paint the crude outlines of the objects and write the words "this is a lady", "this is a dog" and "this is a tree" on the canvas.

I also object to the way she feels obliged to place extraordinary incidents in her novel after the fashion of those old-fashioned Gothic "stunners". (Yes, Cassandra, she does use this strange and rather ugly word – it must be some North Country dialect.) Perhaps these ghostly apparitions in the middle of the night are something that appeals to the manufacturing class in the North.

Maybe she thought that since I included such nocturnal thrills in *Northanger Abbey* then so could she, but she really misses the point. In her novel there was no awakening to the fact that such things don't really happen in civilized England. Well, maybe they do in the wilds of Yorkshire.

Now where are all the balls in Thornfield Hall? I do believe that Miss Bell has probably never attended a ball in her life. But one must make allowances for her being brought up in such a remote part of the moors. I'm sure that if she entered society it would make a world of difference to her writing.

The other book goes by the highly unchristian name of "Wuthering Heights". Dr Johnson has never heard of the word "wuthering" and nor, I'm sure, have I. It must be one of those horrible words used by illiterate farmers or shepherds. And if the name of the book is unchristian then so is the book itself! You were telling me there have been rumours that Currer Bell and Ellis Bell are one and the same. Nothing could be further from the truth. For a start Currer, as I have said, is clearly a woman but Ellis is most definitely a man – and a rather savage one at that. I can't imagine that he could even be her brother. She's a little rough in parts but Ellis seems to be a complete heathen. I am wondering whether Mr Bell once found a grubby little gypsy boy in Liverpool and brought him home and gave him the name Ellis. Could it be that Ellis is partly telling his own story?

I'll wager that this little Ellis was such a rough little creature that he had to be locked up by Mr Bell to protect his own children. For on every page of the novel somebody is being locked up, or breaking out or breaking in. This Ellis seems preoccupied with escape. Even windows serve as a mode of egress more often than they are looked out of.

And the final "stunner", to use his sister's horrible word, is when Heathcliff instructs the sexton to break open Catherine's coffin when he is laid next to her. The poor girl can't find peace even in the grave, but she must be a-mingling with Heathcliff's remains.

Well, enough of what I've been reading. Let me ask you a few questions about our friends.

……………………………………………………………..

WAS HEATHCLIFF A BROWNIE?

By Christopher Cooper

On Thursday 6th October the Melrose Literary Society heard a talk by Douglas Gifford, Professor of Scottish Literature at the University of Glasgow. They were joined on this occasion by the expeditioners from the 2005 Brontë Society Northern Excursion, who were in Melrose to visit Walter Scott's "castle" at Abbotsford. The question Gifford posed, in deference to the Brontë visitors, was "Was Heathcliff a Brownie?"

The Brontës certainly knew of "brownies" as figures in Scottish folklore and Charlotte referred to them in her Juvenile piece, *Tales of the Islanders*, volume four. In this work, written by Charlotte at the age of fourteen, she appears with her two sisters as Little Queens, and Branwell is cast as the Little King. As a sport the three Little Queens disguise themselves as washerwomen and gain employment in the household of the Duke of Wellington.

"The next day they commenced the performance of the duties of their office which they continued for some weeks to execute with equal punctuality, diligence & sobriety but not without many quarrels among themselves, often ending in ferocious fights where tooth, nail, feet & hands were employed with equal fury. In these little fracas Little King (who always continued with them) was observed to be exceedingly active inciting them by every means in his power to maul & mangle each other in the most horrible way. This circumstance however was not much wondered at as his constant disposition to all kinds of mischief was well known & he was considered by every member of the house of Strathfeildsay, not excepting the Duke himself, more as an evil brownie than a legitimate fairy."

The above extract is from the new Juvenilia Press edition of the fourth and last volume of Charlotte Brontë's *Tales of the Islanders*. It was edited by Christine Alexander with the assistance of Donna Couto and the students of English 5032 at the University of New South Wales and it was officially launched on Thursday 3rd November 2005.

The fact that Charlotte clearly identified herself and her brothers and sisters as the Little Kings and Queens in this story makes us wonder whether or not this passage gives us a glimpse into some of the more turbulent aspects of life in the Parsonage!

With Charlotte's reference to "brownies" the editorial team provide us with a long note about "brownies", describing them as friendly goblins or sprites "of Scottish folklore … The brownie wears a brown hood, attaches itself to families, and may reside in farmhouses or barns. It does the chores at night when people sleep. If criticized the brownie may exact revenge by breaking dishes or spoiling the crops. Although always thought to be of Scottish Gaelic origin, the brownie is widely known in other parts of the British Isles and the English-speaking world. The brownie has much in common with the kobold of Germanic folklore and may be classed as a solitary fairy, despite its benevolence (James McKillop, A Dictionary of Celtic Mythology)."

Brownies are characterised by the following. They come from who knows where. They wear brown clothes. They attach themselves to a farm house and perform menial tasks for little payment. This work is carried out at night. They sleep rough and only want a little food and kindness. More than that will offend them. Indeed, if they are given clothing they will put on the clothes and vanish, never to be seen again!

Treated with basic kindness they will serve the family well. But mistreat a brownie and they will stir up trouble, and cause all kinds of mischief. If sufficiently offended, they will exact a terrible revenge.

In referring to the Little King, and no doubt with Branwell in mind, Charlotte was thinking of the impishness of the brownie more than the fact that they were industrious in carrying out menial tasks. But others have focussed on their hard work with little thought of reward.

The Canadian writer Palmer Cox wrote a number of stories about brownies as diminutive humanoids, in brown costumes, who did good deeds for human beings. The first story, *The Brownie's Ride*, appeared in 1883. In a poem, called *The Brownies in the Toy Shop*, Cox wrote of a troop of brownies rambling through the town at night

‘to pry at this, to pause at that’ till they see a toy store. They are curious and end up spending the night in the shop ‘in greatest glee’, playing with the toys.

Soon Brownie Dolls were themselves to be found on the shelves of toy shops. This sanitized version of the brownie appealed to George Eastman when he developed his box camera. The Box Brownie was as useful as these helpful little brownies, and as Eastman prided himself that his camera was simple enough for children to use he chose the word “brownie” for his camera. Also, that name would appeal to children.

Baden Powell also thought that little brownies, going about doing good deeds, would provide an appropriate name for the junior girls in his scouting movement. And, of course, from that we got “brownie points”. But in their original setting, brownies had their dark side with a propensity for revenge.

Was Heathcliff a brownie? Certainly not in the later “Santa’s little helper” tradition. But we should consider the following. Heathcliff came from nowhere. Mr Earnshaw claimed to have picked him up from the back streets of Liverpool, but he certainly did not carry him all the way home under his coat. Perhaps, in fact, he came across him on the moors, closer to home. If Heathcliff really *was* a brownie, it might have been he who chose Mr Earnshaw rather than the other way round.

Like a brownie, Heathcliff worked hard on the farm, for no pay, just simple board and lodgings (and these became more rudimentary once Hindley was in charge). But Heathcliff was ill treated by Hindley and, like a brownie, he moved heaven and earth to get his revenge.

Professor Gifford distributed some sheets describing some brownies in Scottish literature. One was the story *Brownie of the Black Haggs*, by James Hogg. In it the Lairds wife, took a strong dislike to a servant by the name of Merodach. She wanted her husband to get rid of him but the Laird felt sorry for him and would not let him go. So the Laird’s wife hated Merodach “as one might hate a toad or an adder”. “She scolded him, she raged at him; but he only mocked her wrath…”. She tried to kill him but ended up killing

her only son, by mistake. Every evil she hurled at Merodach seems to have rebounded upon herself.

Merodach was a strange looking creature, “a boy in form, and an antediluvian in feature”. Some thought he was a “wizard, some a kelpie, or a fairy, but most of all, that he was really and truly a Brownie.

Brownies were often ill-favoured creatures, outcasts of society because of some physical deformity. If Heathcliff was a brownie, he could be a very presentable one, as Nelly Dean knew, if only he would wash his face and comb his hair. But the grossly unhandsome brownie was more usual, such as the boy with a face as old as Methuselah in Hogg’s tale.

The *Brownie of Blednoch* is a poem by William Nicholson and this brownie is quite hideous.

I trow the bauldest stood aback,
Wi’ a gape an’ a glower till their lugs did crack,
As the shapeless phantom mumblin’ spak –
Hae ye wark for Aiken-drum!

O! had ye seen the bairns’ fright,
As they stared at this wild and unyirthly wight;
As they skulkit in ‘tween the dark and the light,
And graned out Aiken-drum!

“Sauf us!” quoth Jock, “d’ye see sic een?”
Cries Kate, “There’s a hole where a nose should ha’ been;
An’ the mouth’s like a gash that a horn had ri’en:
Wow! Keep’s frae Aiken-drum!”

Nicholson spends several more stanzas describing the grotesque face, body and limbs of this poor man, Aiken-drum, and several more to the horror that he creates in those who see him. He had a hole where his nose should have been and a gash in his face served as a mouth. Yet he was a brownie and would work for naught.

"I'se seek nae guids, gear, bond, nor mark;
I use no beddin', shoon, nor sark;
But a cogfu' of brose 'tween the light an' the dark,
Is the wage o' Aiken-drum.

Such terms seem very reasonable to the wily old farmer's wife. No lodgings to be found – he'd sleep under the stars – and a bowl of gruel once a day, would be sufficient payment.

Quoth the wylie wife, "The thing speaks weel;
Our workers are scant – we hae routh o' meal;
Gif he'll do as he says – be he man, be he deil –
Wow! We'll try this Aiken-drum.

This brownie was not mistreated, and so no revenge was wrought. But, as a jest, "a new-made wife, fu' o' frippish freaks" for a joke, laid out for this Aiken-drum a mouldy old pair of her husband's breeches. While it is suicide to ill treat a brownie, one must never be too generous to one either, especially with clothes, even mouldy ones. For from the moment that he was offered the breeches he disappeared. But the memory remained behind and his story was told long after.

Though the "Brownie of Blendoch" lang be gane,
The mark o' his feet's left on mony a stane;
An' mony a wife an' mony a wean
Tell the feats o' Aiken-drum.

In a similar way, long after Heathcliff was long gone and cold in the earth, the mark of his feet was left on many a stone and "idle tales" were told by old men and young boys. Remember Lockwood's encounter with the little boy who "was crying terribly" because he still felt the presence of Heathcliff and Catherine.

From *Beauty and the Beast* to the *Hunchback of Notre Dame* and *The Phantom of the Opera*, we are fascinated by the deformed body that houses a normal heart – the unloved "beast" who craves love. And when that love is denied him, his normal heart learns to hate and

desire revenge. Did Emily have Frankenstein's unnamed monster in mind when she created Heathcliff?

But surely we cannot consider Heathcliff as being unloved. He may have been unhappy at having missed out on Catherine, but it is clear that she still loves him, and Isabella too. Yet his bitterness, and insatiable desire for revenge, tell of one who is no longer capable of responding to love in a normal way. The creature conceived by Mary Shelley could have loved, but was never given the chance. Heathcliff was loved but his desire for revenge on Hindley was stronger even than his desire for Catherine. He built a prison around himself, and despite the open windows, love could not come in.

We might well ask, was Frankenstein's creature a brownie? Of course we couldn't claim that "he came from who knows where", but he *was* willing to perform menial work for little reward – he just wanted to be accepted. Yet, like a brownie, his mistreatment soured his once generous nature until a passionate hate and desire for revenge overtook him.

It is quite probable that, consciously or unconsciously, the stories of brownies influenced both Emily Brontë and Mary Shelley. But they each added much to the folk-lore. They reveal not just the devastation that their brownies inflict on those around them – they manage to get right inside their brownies' hearts and reveal the devastation that takes place right there.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË AND THE KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH'S OF GAWTHORPE HALL

Based on some notes compiled by Stephen Whitehead for a talk at Gawthorpe Hall on 25th September 2005

Gawthorpe Hall is a National Trust property in Lancashire, built in 1600-1605 by the Rev. Lawrence Shuttleworth, whose family had been established at Gawthorpe for over two hundred years.

In the years 1850 to 1852, following his retirement from public service with a baronetcy, Sir James Kay-Shuttleworth employed the

architect Sir Charles Barry to restore and improve the Hall in a sympathetic 'Elizabethan' style. Barry heightened the staircase tower and added openwork parapets, extensively restored the interior and introduced some rich furnishings.

James Kay-Shuttleworth was born James Kay in Rochdale, the son of a cotton manufacturer. He became a doctor and practised in Manchester. He then turned his interest to politics and public life and became a political writer and reformer. He was the first Secretary to the Committee of the Privy Council on Education. His work was held in such high regard that he is known as the father of English elementary education. He was a colleague of Dr Arnold and he was founder of Battersea training College where he met Janet Shuttleworth. They married in 1842 and he changed his name to Kay-Shuttleworth. He was highly strung, obsessively hard working and this led to a nervous breakdown.

In 1849 Kay-Shuttleworth resigned from the Education Committee through ill-health and overwork. He was created Baronet in Autumn 1849. This was the year in which Charlotte's novel, *Shirley*, was published.

Charlotte had come to the attention of Sir James, through her novels. He now had time on his hands and when he discovered that this literary sensation lived nearby he decided to take 'Currer Bell' under his wings.

He invited Charlotte to Shuttleworth but Charlotte declined. He wasn't easily put off so he decided to visit her. He got Lady Kay-Shuttleworth to write, proposing the visit. Patrick Brontë was delighted that such an important gentleman wished to call on his daughter so Charlotte reluctantly replied saying, "my only regret and scruple is that it should be so little worth your while to undertake such a journey". As Charlotte put it "they came boring to Haworth". This was March 1st 1850.

She wrote to Ellen Nussey "the baronet looks in vigorous health". She said that he looked more like thirty-five than the forty-four years that he was. "Sir James is very courtly, fine-looking; I wish he may be as sincere as he is polished. He shows his white teeth with too frequent a smile; but I will not prejudice him."

Sir James renewed his invitation for Charlotte to visit Gawthorpe and Patrick enthusiastically accepted on her behalf. She had used the

fact that she could not leave her father as an excuse for not going but Patrick's enthusiasm for the scheme "left me without plea or defence".

They wanted her to travel back with them that day but she managed to postpone her going till the next day. She travelled by train from Keighley to Burnley where Sir James was waiting to collect her. It was three miles drive to the gates of Gawthorpe.

Charlotte's found her first view of the Hall, after the long drive along a "somewhat desolate avenue" quite stunning. It was three stories high with a high central tower, recently raised, and was adorned with large stone mullioned windows and lacy stone balustrades. She was impressed by this "model of old English architecture". It was exactly the sort of mansion that she and Branwell had imagined when writing their tales of Angria.

She decided she quite liked Sir James "admiring his clear intellect, highly cultivated mind and polished manners". But he was a one-sided conversationalist. Sitting by the fireside in his antique oak-panelled drawing room Charlotte wrote to Ellen "listening to his monologues did much to oppress and exhaust me".

Charlotte found Lady Kay-Shuttleworth "frank, good humoured and active" and the four children "all fine in their way". The person that Charlotte warmed to most was the young German governess. She was a quiet, intelligent girl and, between an ex-governess and a current one, there sprung up a rapport. Charlotte wrote to Ellen "she is very well treated for a governess but she wore the usual pale, despondent look of her class – She told me she was home-sick – and she looked so."

On the whole she was glad her father had made her go. She loved the house and enjoyed the excursions they made to Whalley Abbey, Mytton Hall and old Pendle.

During the visit Kay-Shuttleworth invited Charlotte to stay with them in London and he promised to introduce her to society but she firmly declined. She did not like the spotlight to shine upon herself and was reluctant for any of it to be reflected upon him. He bombarded her with invitations and refused to be put off.

He assured her that "the parties would be small and the contacts would assist her in her future writings". Patrick, who didn't want her to sink into depression and apathy at Haworth was "eager and restless" for her to go – "the idea of a refusal quite hurt him".

Charlotte eventually gave way and agreed to go in early May. Kay-Shuttleworth had planned that they should spend a week travelling down to London, visiting his friends and relations. Charlotte was horrified at the prospect. "I would as lief have walked among red-hot ploughshares" she wrote. But Ellen Nussey's fever took a turn for the worse and her symptoms sounded alarmingly like those of Anne's had been. So she called off the visit to London and went straight to Brookroyd to see for herself. Ellen improved and Charlotte returned to Haworth to find her father ill.

After everyone had recovered Patrick was again insistent that she should go to London. But then Sir James fell ill. He was desperately worried that while he was ill someone else would introduce her into London society. He wanted that honour for himself and he wrote to her from his sickbed asking her to promise not to allow anyone else to perform the introductions, and that she should wait till he got better. "I feel sure that in this decision I shall have your concurrence."

Charlotte gave the promise but then George Smith, her publisher, and his mother, invited her to stay with them in Hyde Park Gardens. She was in a difficult position, having made this promise to Sir James. The prospect of visiting George Smith in London was so much more inviting than staying with the Kay-Shuttleworths. With the Smiths she would be free to do whatever she wished and would not have to put up with being shown off, as would have been the case with the Kay-Shuttleworths. She wrote to Mrs Smith, explaining her difficulty and said that if she did visit the Kay-Shuttleworths she would only stay there a few days and then she would be "excessively disposed, and probably profoundly thankful to subside into any quiet corner of your drawing-room, where I might find a chair of suitable height."

Five days later she was in Hyde Park Gardens. She wrote to Lady Kay-Shuttleworth to make excuses for breaking her promise declaring that she had been "summoned" to London "on a little business which it seems cannot well be deferred". An author can always find a good excuse to visit her publisher "on business" and Charlotte made it sound that it was more a duty than a pleasure. She gave the address in Hyde Park Gardens and promised to visit the Kay-Shuttleworths before she returned to Yorkshire. But Sir James and

Lady Shuttleworth were on her doorstep as soon as she arrived, and the next day. They would not leave her alone. Lady Kay-Shuttleworth proposed taking Charlotte to Hampton Court and Windsor, but Charlotte was horrified. She just wanted to stay quietly at home. Though she did accompany the Smiths to the Opera, the Royal Academy, the House of Commons, the tomb of the Duke of Wellington at the Chapel royal, and was introduced to George Lewis, Thackeray and Harriet Martineau.

Had Charlotte persisted in declining the Kay-Shuttleworth's ceaseless invitations she might never have met Mrs Gaskell, and the biographies of Charlotte Brontë may have taken a different turn. But Sir James rented Briery Close up the hill behind Low Wood, near Lake Windermere, and again an invitation came. The opportunity to visit the Lakes District, with its association with poets such as Wordsworth and Coleridge, was too much for Charlotte to resist. Mrs Gaskell was also a guest of the Kay-Shuttleworth's and, although Mrs Gaskell had written to Charlotte after the publication of *Shirley*, this was their first meeting. The two authors got on well, and Charlotte spoke freely about herself. This was wonderful first-hand material for her biography though it is unlikely that Mrs Gaskell had thought of such a project at this point.

Other information about the Brontës came to Mrs Gaskell less directly. A nurse, who had been the only servant ever to be dismissed from employment at the Parsonage, had gone on to set up a china shop at Padiham, near Gawthorpe. She told Lady Kay-Shuttleworth romanticised half truths of "strange half-mad Patrick who drove his wife to an early grave".

While at Briery Close the two literary ladies met Francis Newman, Thomas Arnold and Ruskin. On one day they set out to drive to visit the Tennysons but the heavy rain drove them back.

Sir James persisted in lecturing the authoresses about Art. Mrs Gaskell remarked that this was from a man "who has never indulged in the exercise of any talent which could bring him a tangible and speedy return". Charlotte wrote that "nine parts out of ten in him are utilitarian – the tenth artistic, it is just enough to incline him restlessly towards the artistic class, and far too little to make him one of them … were he to forget me, I could feel no regret."

In December 1850 Charlotte spent a week with Harriet Martineau at Windermere. Kay Shuttleworth was still at Briery Close and, of course, called on them every day.

In June 1851 Charlotte was in London again, staying with the Smiths. Sir James, also in London for the season, found out and called on her, showering her with invitations. She accepted one such invitation to dine with them, feeling it was the least she could do.

In January 1853 *Villette* was published and again Charlotte went to stay with the Smiths. Kay-Shuttleworth had written, asking her to let him know when she was in London. She wrote to say she was in town – just when her visit was nearly over. "I really dread the sort of excited fuss into which he puts himself – that I only wish to see just as much of him as civility exacts." He had been fussing round her in constant attendance during the last week of her visit. She sent him a copy of *Villette*, expecting that he would not like it and be embarrassed as to how to react to her gift.

In November 1854 Kay-Shuttleworth arrived uninvited to Haworth and stayed two days. Charlotte was now married and Kay-Shuttleworth offered Arthur the living at a new church at Paddiham, at ₤200 per annum, twice what he was getting at the time, at Haworth. Arthur turned down the offer because he was committed to looking after Patrick. In any case there is no way that Charlotte would have wished to become dependent on Kay-Shuttleworth and she resented the offer.

In the second week of January 1855 Charlotte and Arthur visited Sir James at Gawthorpe Hall as guests of Sir James and Lady Shuttleworth. The purpose of the invitation seems to have been to renew the offer of the living, but the answer was still in the negative.

When Charlotte returned to Haworth she was not feeling well. Mrs Gaskell claims that this was through having aggravated a cold she caught at the end of November by walking in thin shoes on damp ground. But, according to Juliet Barker, it more likely had something to do with her pregnancy. She died at the end of March.

Patrick commissioned Mrs Gaskell to write Charlotte's biography and in May 1856 Mrs Gaskell called, unannounced, together with Kay-Shuttleworth. Patrick was ill in bed but got up. The whole house was in confusion over such important guests. Sir James bullied Patrick and Arthur into handing over many items of

Charlotte's, while Arthur was trying to say that he couldn't possibly part with them. Arthur was against giving permission for the Richmond portrait to be photographed but Sir James talked Patrick into agreeing. And Sir James managed to walk away with the manuscript of *The Professor* and the last unfinished story, *Emma*, not to mention a large packet containing the Juvenilia. For years he wanted to be part of Charlotte's literary life (there is no evidence that he was in love with her). Finally, after her death, he succeeded.

Though these manuscripts were only on loan, to help Mrs Gaskell in her biography, Sir James became determined to edit and publish *The Professor* and so have his name intimately linked with hers in a literary sense. Mrs Gaskell wasn't happy for him to do so. She hadn't read the manuscript and was worried that it would deal closely with the Heger family. She was worried that its publication might provoke the Hegers into publishing Charlotte's letters to M. Heger, and this might damage her reputation.

She wrote, "I foresee, if Sir James has set his will upon it, it *is* to be published whatever may be the consequences. He over-rides all wishes, feelings, and delicacy. I saw that in his way of carrying everything before him at Haworth, deaf to remonstrance and entreaty."

In the end Arthur stepped in and insisted that he would edit *The Professor*, and he did so, changing very little.

EMILY BRONTË – ARCHITECT

By Christopher Cooper

The popular image of Emily Brontë is that of a free spirit, running bare-foot across the moors and rolling in the heather. Her poetry abounds with images of nature and her novel, *Wuthering Heights*, takes place in a remote, uncivilized part of the country where the raw forces of nature dominate.

Now it can't be denied that she loved the moors, and spent much of her time on them. She, and her sisters, had some special places

there, as did Hindley and Nelly in *Wuthering Heights*. Their special place was at the crossroads.

"Hindley and I held it a favourite spot twenty years before. I gazed long at the weather-worn block; and, stooping down, perceived a hole near the bottom still full of snail-shells and pebbles, which we were fond of storing there with more perishable things."

I've often wondered if one day a similar cache of "treasures", buried by Emily and her sisters, might be unearthed.

Yes, Emily loved the moors, but she loved them more because they provided a back-drop for her own imaginary world than just for their own sake. What she loved most about the moors was the way they symbolized freedom, and freedom was what she valued most.

Many of her poems mention the natural world. "Faith and Despondency" begins with the line "The winter wind is loud and wild". But don't imagine that the poet is out there, with the wind in her face. No, further down she reveals that she's in a "sheltered hall".

"… round our sheltered hall
November's gusts unheeded call:
Not one faint breath can enter here
Enough to wave my daughter's hair.
And I am glad to watch the blaze
Glance from her eyes, with mimic rays;"

No, wild nature is being experienced – indeed it is being enjoyed – from the coziness of a warm fireside.

"And in the fire's cheerful glow,
I think of deep glens, blocked with snow;
I dream of moor, and misty hill."

This is not a nature poem; it's a poem about relationships, about love and separation.

The poem "Stars" describes the heavens … but from the perspective of one lying in bed and looking at the stars through the window. "Honour's Martyr" begins with the lines "The moon is full this winter night; The stars are clear, though few". You can, of course, understand the poet not wanting to venture out of doors on such a cold winter's night. She experiences Nature as she lies awake

watching the moon gleaming through the lattice while "the old clock in the gloomy hall ticks on, from hour to hour."

In one of her poems, Emily does venture on a summer afternoon to enjoy a "sunny brae".

"On a sunny brae, alone I lay
One summer afternoon;
It was the marriage-time of May
With her young lover, June."

Surely here we have Emily rejoicing in Nature for its own sake.

"The trees did wave their plumy crests,
The glad birds carolled clear;"

But Emily now shifts our gaze from this bright vision of Nature's wedding feast into the depths of her mind, for she immediately goes on to say:

"And I of all the wedding guests,
Was only sullen there.
There was not one, but wished to shun
My aspect void of cheer;
The very grey rocks, looking on,
Asked, "What do you do here?"

When we read her poetry we don't see the moon, or hear the birds, or smell the grass. We are taken inside her head. We experience her grief, her hope, her despair. Sometimes, for Emily, Nature is a Great Comforter – sometimes Nature lets her down. It's never just something to be experienced.

Some of her poems are set in prison cells. In the fragment, titled "The Prisoner" we read of "dungeon-crypts", "bars", "hinges harshly turning", "chill chains", "damp flag-stones", "triple walls", "fetters", "bolts and irons" and "granite stones". Nature is all but locked out. But every night She sends messengers of Hope, offering eternal liberty. They are the western winds, with its rich odours, and the stars that kindle visions and kill her with desire. But in another poem, also set in a "grated den", Hope is described as a false friend.

“Hope, whose whisper would have given
Balm to all my frenzied pain,
Stretched her wings, and soared to heaven,
Went, and ne’er returned again.”

So Emily was equivocal about Nature in her poems. But surely her novel *Wuthering Heights* is all about the unbridled forces of Nature. The stereotype images we have of the moors from the novel appear in:

(1) the oft-parodied scene where Cathy and Heathcliff run toward each other with outstretched arms;

(2) the scene where they sit atop Penistone Crag, pretending that it’s a castle, and plotting their future life together.

You’ll find these scenes in some of the film versions, but not in the novel.

Wuthering Heights is essentially an *indoor* story. The vast majority of the action takes place inside one or other of the two houses or in the shadow of one or other of them. And where the action briefly takes us to the moors the scene is almost entirely empty of descriptions of the surroundings. For example, the word “heather” only appears twice in the whole novel and one of these instances is when Cathy is indoors, reminiscing.

Less than five percent of the novel takes place out of doors and most of this is in the vicinity of one or other house. Compare this to the detail that is given of the two houses. You could say that the main characters in the novel *are* these houses. They’re there at the start of the novel and they’re still there at the end. For which of the human characters could you say this? – only Nelly Dean and Joseph. But Joseph is like an ugly piece of furniture and Nelly Dean, well she’s “the housekeeper, a matronly lady, taken as a fixture along with the house”. Actually, she is the “fixture” that alternates between the two houses. You could argue that the houses themselves are the real protagonists.

I suppose you could perhaps make a case for Heathcliff being the novel’s hero. He’s there *almost* at the beginning, and stays until *almost* the end. But when he runs away for three years we don’t follow him. That would take us away from the vicinity of Wuthering

Heights. Although Liverpool and London and other far-off places are mentioned in the novel we, the reader, see nothing but what takes place in these two houses or within view of one or other of them.

When Hindley goes away for three years he completely disappears, until he returns, married. When Heathcliff runs away for his three years it is as if he falls off the edge of the world. Isabelle runs off to London and lives there for a somewhat longer period. But we hear nothing of her life there, or of Linton, until she is dead and Linton returns to the scene of the action. It is as if the outside world is just a big cupboard into which Emily puts her characters until she is ready to play with them again.

It's an interesting idea, and perhaps one that was at the back of Emily's mind, that old houses remember the events that take place within them. I remember a book called "Walls Have Ears". I never read it but that title stuck in my mind. What if a house could tell its story – the story of several families, or a family over several generations? If the house was the narrator then anything that takes place elsewhere would be a complete blank. This is exactly what Emily does.

It is often said that Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange represent contrasting lifestyles – lifestyles that Cathy struggled to reconcile. Life at the Heights was wild, raw and uncivilised. Life at the Grange was peaceful, and orderly. Wuthering Heights is a working farm while Thrushcross Grange is a gentleman's residence. Young Cathy and Heathcliff found the contrast startling when they looked through the windows of Thrushcross Grange. Cathy grew to enjoy the life of the mistress of Thrushcross Grange yet she could never get that gypsy passion, which she grew up with, out of her system.

Wuthering Heights is not about windswept moors and purple heather and stunted trees. It's about windows and doors, gates and gables, chimneys and hearthstones. Of these architectural features probably the most significant are the windows, lattices, casements, skylights and panes. Between them they are mentioned 103 times. Compare this to Jane Austen's *Northanger Abbey* and *Mansfield Park*. You might expect, from their titles, for these novels to have an

architectural flavour. But "windows" only appear 29 times in Northanger Abbey and only 17 times in Mansfield Park.

Actually Charlotte referred to windows as often as her sister – 105 times in each of *Villette* and *Jane Eyre*. But it is not so much the *number* of references to windows as the *way* windows are used that is significant. In *Wuthering Heights* one doesn't just look through windows. The characters are constantly poking their heads out of them, smashing them, or climbing in and out of them.

Consider the many uses to which windows are put to in Wuthering Heights.

Windows let in light, and shutters and curtains keep the light out. On the morning after Heathcliff had run away Nelly describes how she came downstairs. "I saw, by the sunbeams piercing the chinks of the shutters, Miss Catherine still seated near the fireplace".

One might read near windows or sit near them to carve figures of birds out of turnip-parings. At night the moonlight shining in through windows can avoid the need to light a candle. After Cathy was struck down by Heathcliff she shows Linton the cut inside her mouth by going to the window where there is more light.

Windows let in heat, as when Cathy sits in an easy-chair in the sunshine by the parlour window, while she is recuperating. Windows can also let in the cool air. When Cathy was burning with fever she wanted Nelly to open the windows. Linton was irritated if the windows were left open too late. Windows can also let in the rain. Heathcliff died with the "window swinging open and the rain driving straight in" onto his face.

Open windows let in smells. Nelly described how "the morning was fresh and cool; I threw back the lattice, and presently the room filled with sweet scents from the garden."

Cathy wanted to look out at the moors and frequently characters look out to see who is coming. And you can look out of a window to assess the weather. On his first visit to the Heights Lockwood approached a window to examine the weather and saw that the "sky and hills mingled in one bitter whirl of wind and suffocating snow". Snow builds up at windows and rattling windows indicate strong wind.

But looking in from outside is also useful, as when Cathy and Heathcliff looked into the drawing room of Thrushcross Grange –

“they had not put up the shutters and the curtains were only half closed”. Shutters and curtains are mentioned 12 times in the novel.

Unlit windows can be a sign that nobody is home.   When he returned from his long absence Heathcliff looked “up to the windows, which reflected a score of glittering moons, but showed no lights from within” and wondered if they were at home. That description of the multiple reflections of a moon in the small panes of a leaded window shows how observant Emily was in things architectural. Black gaps in windows indicate that a house has fallen into disrepair.

A bedroom window can also represent the person who sleeps there and a lover will maintain a vigil outside his paramour’s window even he does not see her. Heathcliff promised not to stray five yards from Cathy’s window while she was ill.

Windows can transmit sounds from the outside to the inside. Recalling the time when Cathy and Heathcliff had run off to Thrushcross Grange Nelly said “…I, too, anxious to lie down, opened my lattice and put my head out to hearken, though it rained: determined to admit them in spite of the prohibition, should they return”.

Windows can be used to communicate between the outside and the inside. Joseph projected his head out from a round window of the barn to ask “what are ye for?” And when Heathcliff returned, Edgar Linton “walked to a window on the other side of the room that overlooked the court. He unfastened it, and leant out. I suppose they were below, for he exclaimed quickly: 'Don't stand there, love! Bring the person in, if it be anyone particular.' “Nelly used the window to warn Heathcliff of Hindley’s threats.

Window panes can even be used to draw pictures, as when young Catherine amused herself on an Easter Monday. Window ledges can double up as tables, as the one in the large oak case that enclosed a bed. Lockwood put his candle on it and found “a few mildewed books piled up in one corner”.

Or, as Lockwood did, while musing on the name Catherine Earnshaw, one can rest one’s head against the window. A window can even be sat in, if it is large enough. Edgar and Catherine “sat together in a window whose lattice lay back against the wall, and displayed, beyond the garden trees, and the wild green park, the valley of Gimmerton, with a long line of mist winding nearly to its top”.

But most importantly windows are for getting in and out of. In Lockwood's dream Cathy tries to get in through the window. The Lintons thought that the young Heathcliff was a robber who would climb through the window "to open the doors to the gang". Nelly leaves one of the windows open to give Heathcliff the opportunity of entering Thrushcross Grange. And windows are judged as to whether they are wide enough for someone to climb out of.

In relating her imprisonment at Wuthering Heights Nelly observed that the windows were too narrow for even Cathy's little figure. Even the windows on the floor above, or those in Zillah's room at least, were too narrow to climb through. Luckily young Catherine was able to climb out through the window in her mother's room and climb down the fir tree.

Cathy was not as resourceful as Heathcliff who, some years earlier, had found the window too small when he wanted to get in. He "took a stone, struck down the divisions between two windows, smashed the mullion between them and sprang in".

Towards the end of the novel Nelly suspected Heathcliff of secretly plotting a midnight excursion. "We heard him mount the stairs directly; he did not proceed to his ordinary chamber, but turned into that with the panelled bed: its window, as I mentioned before, is wide enough for anybody to get through; and it struck me that he plotted another midnight excursion, of which he had rather we had no suspicion."

Skylights might be too high to make an escape to the ground but they are particularly useful for climbing out of, across the roof, and into another. Nelly called Cathy a "little monkey" when she relates how she "crept by the skylight of one garret, along the roof, into the skylight of another" to be with Heathcliff. On a much later occasion Nelly had contemplated escaping from her confinement in this way but the trapdoor into the garret was locked.

Windows can be used to throw oneself out of. Not that anyone ever did so but Nelly was cautioned to watch Cathy and to "take care she did not throw herself downstairs or out of the window". While Cathy didn't actually fling herself out of the window she did threaten to do so if ever Nelly mentioned Heathcliff's name.

Windows in *Wuthering Heights* are always being closed or unclosed, locked or unhasped. The window at which the ghost of Cathy appeared to Lockwood had been soldered shut.

Emily also uses the word “windows” as a description of Heathcliff’s eyes or eyelids. “… a couple of black fiends, so deeply buried, who never open their windows boldly, but lurk glinting under them, like devil’s spies”. And “the clouded windows of hell flashed a moment towards me; the fiend which usually looked out, however, was so dimmed and drowned that I did not fear to hazard another sound of derision”.

In the opening pages Emily describes Wuthering Heights in great detail. She even refers to the architect, though here she probably means the master mason rather than a separate professional.

“Happily, the architect had foresight to build it strong: the narrow windows are deeply set in the wall, and the corners defended with large jutting stones. Before passing the threshold, I paused to admire a quantity of grotesque carving lavished over the front, and especially about the principal door; above which, among a wilderness of crumbling griffins and shameless little boys, I detected the date '1500,' and the name 'Hareton Earnshaw.' I would have made a few comments, and requested a short history of the place from the surly owner; but his attitude at the door appeared to demand my speedy entrance, or complete departure, and I had no desire to aggravate his impatience previous to inspecting the penetralium.”

“One stop brought us into the family sitting-room, without any introductory lobby or passage: they call it here 'the house' pre-eminently. It includes kitchen and parlour, generally; but I believe at Wuthering Heights the kitchen is forced to retreat altogether into another quarter: at least I distinguished a chatter of tongues, and a clatter of culinary utensils, deep within; and I observed no signs of roasting, boiling, or baking, about the huge fireplace; nor any glitter of copper saucepans and tin cullenders on the walls. One end, indeed, reflected splendidly both light and heat from ranks of immense pewter dishes, interspersed with silver jugs and tankards, towering row after row, on a vast oak dresser, to the very roof. The latter had never been

under-drawn: its entire anatomy lay bare to an inquiring eye, except where a frame of wood laden with oatcakes and clusters of legs of beef, mutton, and ham, concealed it. Above the chimney were sundry villainous old guns, and a couple of horse-pistols: and, by way of ornament, three gaudily-painted canisters disposed along its ledge. The floor was of smooth, white stone; the chairs, high-backed, primitive structures, painted green: one or two heavy black ones lurking in the shade."

Doors and gates are referred to nearly 200 times in Wuthering Heights compared to only 70 to 80 in each of Northanger Abbey and Mansfield Park. But again, it's not simply the number of references that it is significant – it's the nature of those references. In Jane Austen, as indeed is the case in most novels, doors are simply openings that lead from one scene to the next. Characters walk through doors, or maybe stand or loiter in doorways. In *Wuthering Heights* the doors are constantly being closed or unclosed, locked or unlocked.

The main role of a door or a gate in *Wuthering Heights* is not as a connection between two spaces. It's a barrier that can be used to keep people out or to keep them in. While Heathcliff was master of the Heights it was as impenetrable as a Norman castle. Lockwood's first visit was met with a locked gate. Heathcliff sullenly invited him to walk in.

"The 'walk in' was uttered with closed teeth, and expressed the sentiment, 'Go to the Deuce:' even the gate over which he leant manifested no sympathising movement to the words …
When he saw my horse's breast fairly pushing the barrier, he did put out his hand to unchain it…"

On his second visit Lockwood found it even harder to gain admittance.

"Being unable to remove the chain, I jumped over, and, running up the flagged causeway bordered with straggling gooseberry-bushes, knocked vainly for admittance, till my knuckles tingled and the dogs howled."

“'Wretched inmates!' I ejaculated, mentally, 'you deserve perpetual isolation from your species for your churlish inhospitality. At least, I would not keep my doors barred in the day-time. I don't care - I will get in!' So resolved, I grasped the latch and shook it vehemently. Vinegar-faced Joseph projected his head from a round window of the barn.”

“'What are ye for?' he shouted. 'T' maister's down i' t' fowld. Go round by th' end o' t' laith, if ye went to spake to him.'”

“'Is there nobody inside to open the door?' I hallooed, responsively.”

“'There's nobbut t' missis; and shoo'll not oppen 't an ye mak' yer flaysome dins till neeght.'”

“'Why? Cannot you tell her whom I am, eh, Joseph?'”

“'Nor-ne me! I'll hae no hend wi't,' muttered the head, vanishing.”

“The snow began to drive thickly. I seized the handle to essay another trial.”

One day when Cathy and Heathcliff were banished from the sitting room they are locked in the wash-house. They escaped and ran off to Thrushcross Grange. When they were discovered to be missing Hindley instructed the servants to bolt the doors and “swore that nobody should let them in that night”.

Heathcliff is locked in a garret after he threw hot apple sauce in Edward’s face.

There is the scene in Thrushcross Park where Cathy climbed over the wall to retrieve her hat and could not get back. Nelly struggled to find the key to unlock the door, giving Heathcliff an opportunity of speaking to Catherine. Having tried all the keys in vain Nelly eventually broke the lock with a stone.

Hindley advised Isabella to keep her bedroom door locked to remove the temptation for him to murder Heathcliff.

And, of course, there's the scene towards the end of the book where Nelly and the young Catherine are imprisoned by Heathcliff in Wuthering Heights. The windows were too narrow and Nelly even contemplates burning the house down to escape. She was confined to Zillah's room where she thumped on the panels and rattled the latch but there was no escape. She tried to persuade Linton to fetch the key.

"Linton who had been conveyed up to the little parlour soon after I left, was terrified into fetching the key before his father re-ascended. He had the cunning to unlock and re-lock the door, without shutting it; and when he should have gone to bed, he begged to sleep with Hareton, and his petition was granted for once. Catherine stole out before break of day. She dared not try the doors lest the dogs should raise an alarm; she visited the empty chambers and examined their windows; and, luckily, lighting on her mother's, she got easily out of its lattice, and on to the ground, by means of the fir-tree close by."

Locks and keys also feature in young Catherine's locking away her letters from Linton, and Nelly using a second key to discover the treasure trove.

The contrast between the dark inhospitable Wuthering Heights in the earlier days and the bright, happy times after Heathcliff's death, is highlighted by the changed policy regarding locks. On visiting Wuthering Heights after his long absence Lockwood noticed that everything was unlocked and unsecured.

"I had neither to climb the gate nor to knock – it yielded to my hand. That is an improvement, I thought. And I noticed another, by the aid of my nostrils; a fragrance of stocks and wallflowers wafted on the air from amongst the homely fruit-trees."

"Both doors and lattices were open; and yet, as is usually the case in a coal-district, a fine red fire illumined the chimney: the comfort which the eye derives from it renders the extra heat endurable."

THE VERNACULAR ARCHITECTURE OF YORKSHIRE

By Louise Ommundson

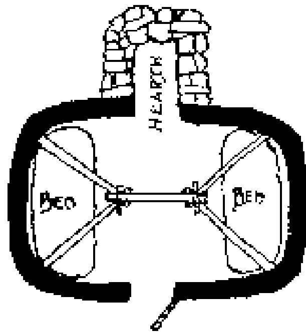
Suppose you were to go on one of these study tours with names like “The Architectural Heritage of Europe”. What would you expect to see? Cathedrals, opera houses, palaces, castles, stately homes, no doubt. I’m sure you’d be very surprised if instead you visited farm houses and cow sheds.

Some would insist that unless the aesthetic qualities of a building are more prominent than the practical ones the term “architecture” should not be applied. Farmhouses and cowsheds wouldn’t have been designed by an architect in the modern sense. Instead the design would have been carried out “on the run” by the head mason or head carpenter to the general specifications of the farmer.

Emily was not one of those purists. She used the word “architect” when referring to the design of Wuthering Heights even though that architect was no doubt also the master mason. The phrase “vernacular architecture” gets over this problem. Vernacular architecture is the architecture of the people. It’s not quite the same as “domestic architecture” because a cow shed is vernacular but not domestic while a stately home is domestic but not vernacular. Examining the architecture of places where people lived gives us great insight into the way they lived.

Although early huts have not survived we can guess at their construction from a few foundations that have remained. Also the tradition of their construction has been handed down through the generations into modern times. While even poor people have not had such primitive huts as their principal dwelling for many centuries, such huts were still being constructed up till the Second World War, by the charcoal burners in Yorkshire and the

bark-peelers in the Lakes District. Four poles are stuck into the ground and their upper ends are tied to a short cross-beam.



This hut was 13ft by 8ft and it had double walls 2ft high made of wattles with the spaces between them packed with earth. On top of these low walls lighter poles are placed, forming the skeleton of a roof. These are covered by pieces of turf, with the grass on the inside. At the back of the hut is a primitive chimney.

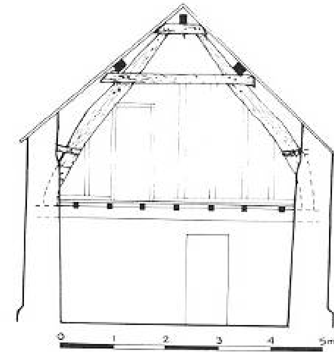
Nathaniel Lloyd, from whose book, *A History of the English House,* these pictures are taken points out that "it is a remarkable characteristic of builders of all ages to adhere to an established form of design for certain materials long after those materials have been superseded by others for which the traditional form is quite unsuited". Here the same design that is so natural for the four pole timber and turf hut is used much more clumsily in stone.

This design developed into what was called the A-line design in the 60's when they began to reappear. But the design goes back many centuries. While this house is not ancient it is an instance of this primitive A design. Like the turf hut it is formed of inclined timbers, called "crucks", supporting a ridge. The roof is mostly covered in thatch, but near the ground slates are used. This house is in Lincolnshire and is called "Tea Pot Hall". It is described locally by the ditty:

Tea-Pot Hall,
All roof, no wall.

The problem with this design is clearly headroom. The above house solves it to some extent by the small gable coming out at right angles. The next design development was to introduce walls. The problem with vertical walls in a primitive structure is to support the weight of the roof

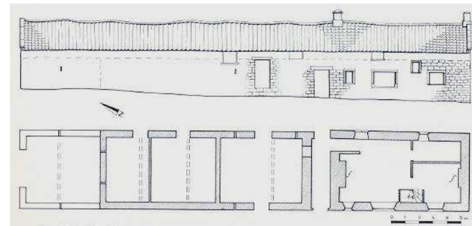
without the walls splaying outwards. Here the weight of the roof is supported by the angled crucks while the walls need to support only their own weight.



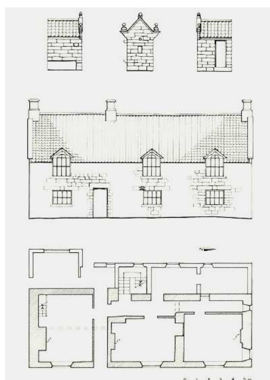
In the course of time, crucks were omitted from such timber construction and the framing was carried out with upright and horizontal timbers, the only sloping timbers being the rafters.

Let's now focus on what was happening in Yorkshire. The fact that stone was plentiful and timber less so, in the northern areas, meant that stone became the predominant building material. But in many cases the roof was held up by internal timber crucks that came right down to the foundations. In fact some houses had a full timber frame with an outer skin of stone – the original "stone veneer" house!

The earliest design for the Yorkshire farmhouses was the long-house, with two or three rooms in a row with a second story. Sometimes the stairs to the upper floor were external.



These long-house designs can be classified according to where the entry was located. One of the most common designs was called "the hearth-passage plan" where the entry leads into an internal passage. You might call this a hallway except that on one side was the byre, or cow shed and on the other the entry to the habitable part of the house. This hallway typically had an earthen floor or flagstones because this passageway served both humans and animals! Sometimes the wall dividing the passage from the byre was simply a wooden screen that was high enough to keep the animals in but low enough for the farmer to look over.

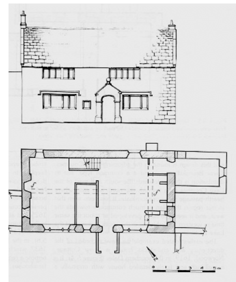


This passage typically had, on the human's side, the rear of a chimney stack. On the other side was the hearth that warmed the "hall", or "house", the main living area. The warmth from the chimney stack in the passage would take the chill off the area in which the animals were housed. Another advantage of this arrangement was the fact that the

farmer could check on his animals without having to brave the elements.

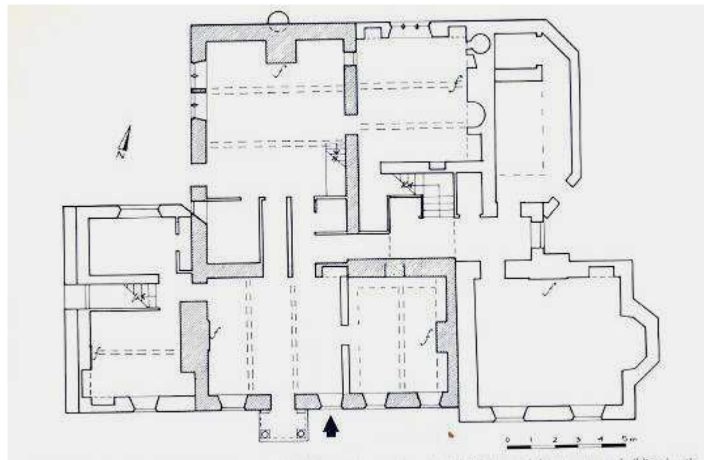
The farmhouses later developed into what was called the "lobby entry plan group" where the front door opens on a small lobby area, behind which is the chimney stack. Entering this lobby and turning left might take you into the house. On the right this lobby might lead to a parlour or it might be enclosed with the byre on the other side of the wall. In this case the animals would have a separate entrance.

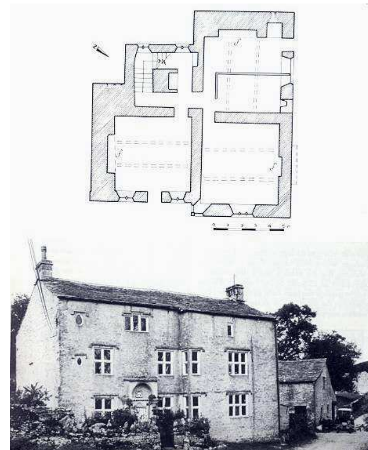
Another variation was termed "the Direct Entry Plan" where the door opened directly into the house. This was the arrangement at Wuthering Heights: "one step brought us into the family sitting-room, without any introductory lobby or passage: they call it here 'the house' …"



At this time, there were many examples of these direct entry plans which were essentially based on two front rooms with two end chimneys massively built in stone, and the kitchen, service area and staircase beyond.

For example this house in Halsteads, shows a large house perhaps built around 1670, with direct entry into the house, and a rear wing containing staircase and service with kitchen beyond. It is sited in far west of Craven and was re-styled with additions in the early 19th century.





Similarly this house in Ribblesdale shows a similar direct-entry plan with a massive fireplace in the front room, and the kitchen more remote. Interestingly enough, this house shows rubble walling which has been rendered over, similar to that described for Wuthering Heights.

Usually there would have been a porch to stop the "wuthering" winds from entering too far inside whenever the door was opened. Frequently the porch had a separate door, providing an air lock, and often was large enough to allow a small room to be built above.

While the tradition of the long-house continued well beyond the 16th and 17 centuries, in the 17th century the affluent farmers began to build on the double-pile plan. This was where the plan was squarish, with two rooms in the front and two at the back, with a hall down the middle. This would be repeated on the floor above.

The Georgian central hallway plan, such as the Haworth Parsonage was another standard plan type, and it became the single most popular farmhouse design throughout England in the 19th century. Here, the central hallway is more than a mere lobby or internal porch. It consists of a compact area into which the outer door opens and from which all the rooms of the house are reached both by their several doors and by the staircase. This plan also had another characteristic – a symmetrical façade.

Interestingly enough however, despite this being the most common plan at the time of Emily's writing, Wuthering Heights was not based on this plan. It had a direct entry and no central hallway. This may be because Wuthering Heights may have been an older house, say one built in the early 17th century.

This farmhouse in Eshton St Helens is about 20 miles north east of Haworth and dates from about 1700. It is very reminiscent of the Haworth Parsonage.

Here are some miscellaneous Yorkshire houses to give you a feel of the architectural landscape with which the Brontë sisters would have been familiar.

Oxnop Hall in Swaledale dates from 1685. It has rubble walls with exceptionally good sandstone detailing. The sandstone dressing includes labels and carved stops even for the upper windows.

Colby Hall in Askrigg is a typical Yorkshire stone house. The walls are of rubble, harled (that is, rough-cast) to protect from driving rains. The stone slated roofs are of low pitch, and both verges and eaves have slight projection.

The doorway has a semicircular head, springing from moulded imposts. There is a tradition that such doorways were removed from ruined Norman Abbeys but this is not so.

Griffin Farm in Bagby is a simple farmhouse with the direct entry plan with a third chimney added later.

The Manor House in Monk Fryston, dating from 1655. It comes at the beginning of the stone building period. Stone and brick building did not commence in Yorkshire until after the middle of the 17th century. Two farmhouses at Barkston have stone outer walls but internal timber ones and many stone houses of the period contain some timber framing.

Berry Garth at Gatenby was built about 1690 with brick walls 45cm thick quoined in stone and with an upper cruck roof. Two upper windows have been blocked

Rookeries at Eastby, 12 miles north of Haworth was built on the hearth-passage plan. The roof was raised at one stage and the rounded stair-turret is roofed at the former lower level. The staircase in earlier

houses was a simple ladder stair, often of a type that could be hooked onto the ceiling when not in use. Sometimes they were a Jacob's ladder – a perforated plank fixed to the wall. In the stone regions of Yorkshire there are sometimes spiral newel stairs with stone steps in a curved turret projecting at the rear of the house as in this house.

Now let's have a look at some of the building materials. With wattle and daub the wattles are interlaced with the oak studs (one of which is visible) which are fixed together at regular intervals between the oak rails. The daub consisted of loam and reeds and was applied by a man on each side of the wall. Such panels are found in houses throughout the medieval period.

Cobble and brick with a single block of magnesium limestone. This was found at Hopperton in the northern Vale of York.

At first glance this looks like a pretty ordinary brick wall. It is indeed made from bricks, but the bricks are the small ones at the bottom of the picture. They had been "pargetted" (plastered over) to resemble stone blocks. The channels are covered with lime.

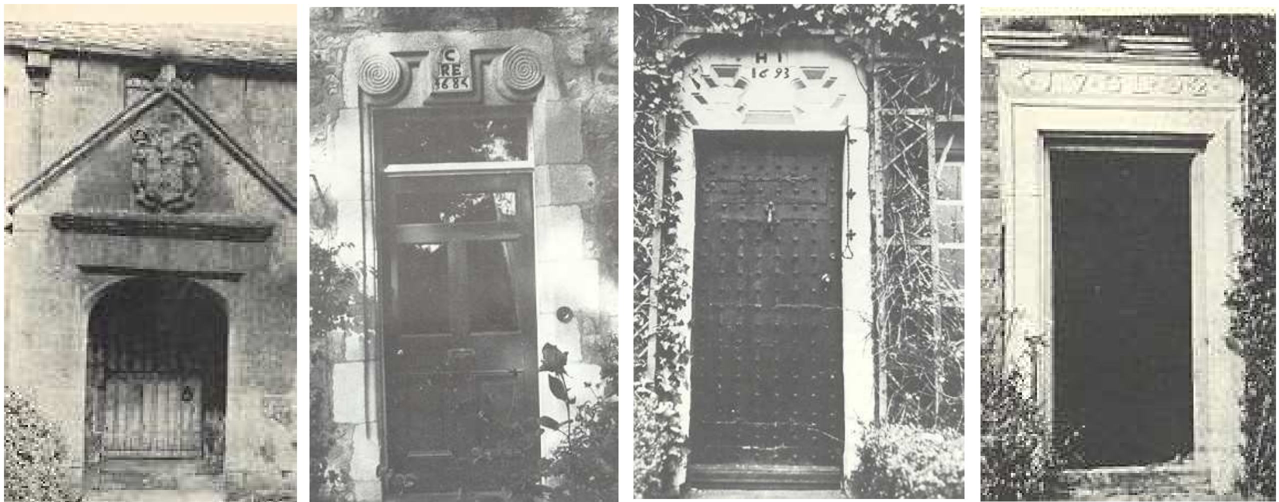
So much for the treatment of walls in other parts of the country. From the end of the 17th century walls in Yorkshire were nearly all stone or brick.

Roofs were rarely thatched in this part of the country. The most common form of roofing, before tiles, were stones cut as tiles as in this example.

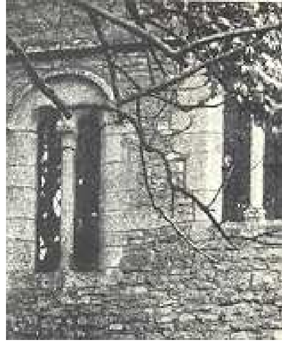
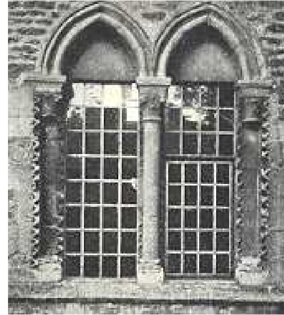
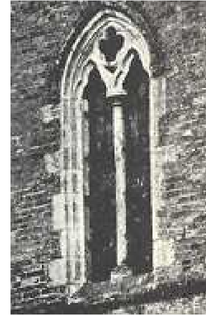
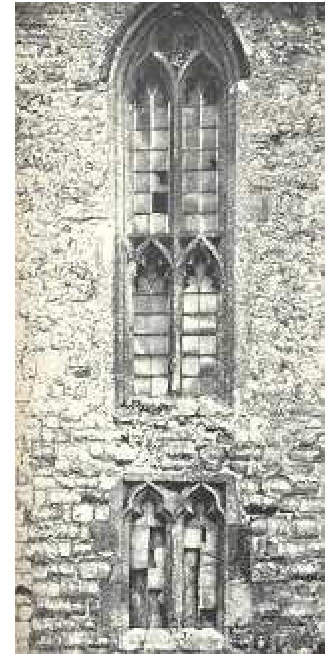
The architectural history of the nineteenth century with respect to style was generally stated to be a history of revival – predominantly a Gothic revival. The Gothic revival was nothing new. Gothic design had shown itself in different forms and degrees of intensity from time to time during the preceding 200 years. It never died out, it merely subsided, and although it is constantly found in ecclesiastical buildings, it was also persistent in the house plan, and was firmly established in minor domestic architecture in almost every country.

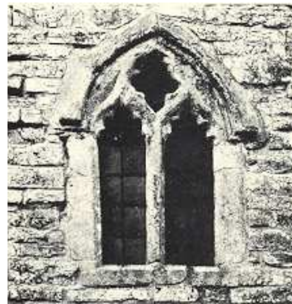
This era also saw somewhat of a Classic Revival, which was essentially a copying and adaptation of Italian and Greek details. However this Revival was more decorative than architectural, its novelties being in the trimmings rather than in form. The fashion soon developed into copying every form of antique ornament and decoration and applying them to architectural features such as the front door to Wuthering Heights, with its gargoyles and "shameless little boys"

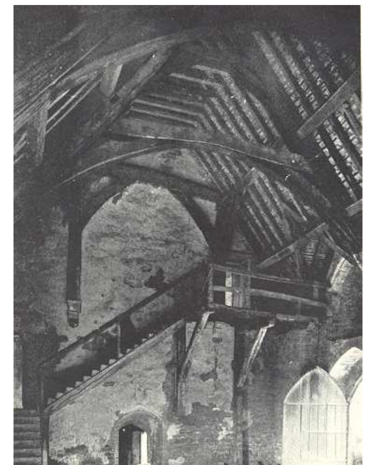
The style of a building is also generally given by the detailing of architectural elements such as windows and doors. I wonder what you imagine of Wuthering Heights to look like. Let's do an "identikit" reconstruction with a few key features. Which of the following comes closest to the front door of Wuthering Heights?



Now what about the windows? Which of these do you imagine look most like the windows of Wuthering Heights?





Is this what you imagine the main living room, or "house" to be, in Wuthering Heights?

It is generally believed that the two houses Emily had in mind for Wuthering Heights are Top Withins on Haworth Moor and High Sunderland Hall near Halifax. Top Withins is actually the name of the location. The house itself was known as High Withins. There were actually three isolated farmhouses in the area, known as Low Withins, Middle Withins and High Withins. The house was derelict in Emily's time. This shows how it looked in the early 20th century.

It is now in ruins. The location may be what Emily had in mind for Wuthering Heights but the house itself was much smaller than the house that Lockwood describes.

High Sunderland Hall, the other

original for Wuthering Heights, also fell into disrepair and was demolished in 1950. Let me read how Christine Alexander describes it in her Oxford Companion to the Brontës.

"It was an ornate stone building within walking distance of Law Hill where Emily was a teacher. Originally it was a wooden edifice that was clad in stone in the 17th century. The carvings above the door and over the gateway are similar to those on the façade of Wuthering Heights. They included two griffins on the inside of the gateway and two misshapen nude men, one on either side of the house door."

Remember that Lockwood describes the entrance to Wuthering Heights as having 'a wilderness of crumbling griffins and shameless little boys'.

It is fairly certain that Emily took these features and transplanted them to Wuthering Heights but as a whole the Hall is much too grand for Wuthering Heights. Those large windows would let in far too much light and the flat roof does not provide for garrets and skylights.

I came across the above house on the internet and it conforms well to my imagined Wuthering Heights. It's Middle House at Kirkby Malham, within 20 miles of Haworth, though there is no evidence that Emily ever saw it. Still it's typical of the area and it's highly likely Emily did see a house somewhat like it. Prior to the 17th century it was a single storey cruck built construction, using pairs of curved timbers to create an A-frame supporting the roof independently of the walls. The roof would probably have been covered with ling or straw thatch. It was probably rebuilt around 1600 to a second storey and the roof was replaced by stone slates.

THE HAWORTH PARSONAGE

Adapted from “Haworth Parsonage: The Home of the Brontës” by Jocelyn Kellett, published by The Brontë Society in 1977.

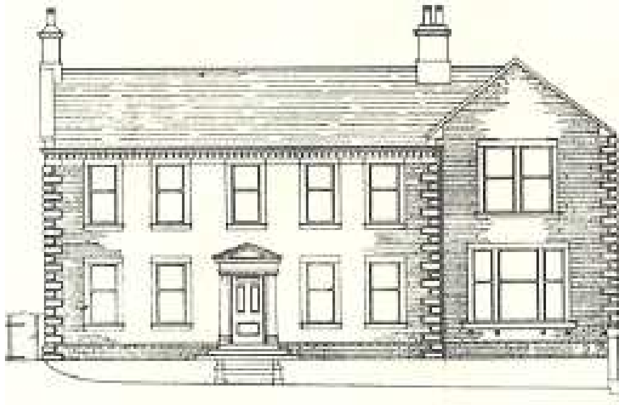
The Haworth trustees obtained the land from Richard Emmott and began to build the Parsonage in 1778. Facing east, it benefits from the morning sun, an important factor in the days when artificial light was both poor and expensive – in the 18th century people rose early and went to bed at dark.

The design is a typical late Georgian rectangular house with a doorway in the centre, a room with two windows on each side and bedrooms of equivalent size above; the centre window above the front door lights a small room over the hall.

The Parsonage has a churchyard on the east and south. When the Brontës first came to Haworth the churchyard lay only on the east side, and to the south and west were open fields. On the north side the small piece of land that provided access to the Parsonage and the barn, divided the garden from the Croft. In 1821 more land was bought, to extend the graveyard to the south-west.

When Patrick died in 1861 the Rev John Wade succeeded him. The house needed much repair and Mr Wade set about doing extensive renovations. Arthur Nicholls wrote in November of that year

“There are extensive alterations going on at the Parsonage I understand, I dare say I shall not know it when I see it”.



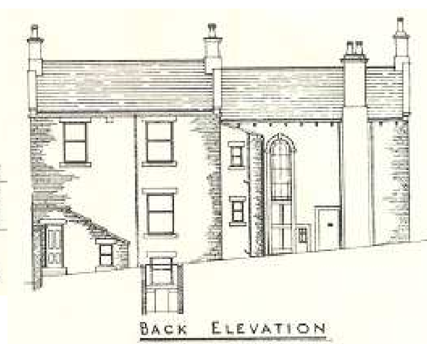
This is how the house looked when the Brontë Society bought it 1928. The front of the house is built of straight cut dressed ashlar stone now a dark colour. The side walls are constructed of random coursed ashlar. There are large chamfered quoins at the corners, showing alternately long and short. There are two main chimney stacks with three flues in each, on the original part of the house.

The windows at the front of the house are sash windows fitted with shutters on the inside. The sills, jambs and lintels standing proud of the wall surface, are of fine smooth ashlar stone with a simple running mould under the sill.

The windows at the rear were of a different design. They were mullioned casements, a pattern much used in the district throughout the 17th and 18th centuries in farmhouses and cottages. They were 5ft wide by 4ft high, divided into two lights by a stone mullion with a V-shaped section. Each light was divided into small panes fixed in wood.

In 1831 Mr Brontë paid window tax on 13 windows. Blocking up one of the two sections in the mullioned window in Tabitha’s room saved tax on one window since mullioned windows with two lights separated by a stone mullion were counted as two windows.

These are the other three elevations.



On 4th August 1928 Sir James Roberts, who had purchased the Parsonage, handed over the deeds to the President of the Brontë Society before a huge crowd.

And this is more or less how it looks today.

One of Mr Wade's changes was to remove the small Georgian window panes and put in plate glass. In 1955 these windows were restored to their original style.

Mr Charles Hale visited Haworth in 1861 and wrote in the Brontë Society Transactions "The house is a hundred years old and is sadly out of repair, for Mr Brontë disliked having mechanical work going on there. Only once out of necessity to keep out bad leakage he allowed the roof to be mended. The new incumbent does not choose to go into a rotten old house, but they are doing very much more than making merely necessary repairs. They are putting in fireplaces and mantel pieces of marble and windows of plate glass, a single pane filling the whole sash and weighing 30 pounds. The stone walls, stone floors of the passages, and stone staircase, will stand unchanged for another hundred years as they have the last, but the masonry is new pointed and the house will be refitted throughout. In old Tabby's chamber, for some reason, half the window had been walled up with a stone wall by Mr Brontë's direction; this erection has been pulled down … I purchased the whole lower sash of the window of the bedroom of Charlotte Brontë. This is the window at which she was most fond of sitting ... I have also brought away plenty of the moulding or woodwork that went about the room so that I can frame photographs."

A plan of the Parsonage, drawn before 1824, shows a small square on the south-west corner of the main building. This was an outside staircase to Tabitha's room which was at one time inaccessible from inside the house. Both the outside and inside wall of Tabitha's

room at this point show evidence of a doorway in the wall giving access to this staircase.

One can also see the back kitchen, joined to the house by a passage. This back kitchen may have been the main working kitchen of the house. Charlotte wrote to Emily on October 1st 1843, “I should like uncommonly to be in the dining room at home, or in the kitchen, or in the back kitchen … cutting up the hash.”

At the north corner of the back yard another small building is also marked; a single storey building, standing against the high wall which ran up the lane, and was probably the one known as the “peat house” by the Brontës. In a house run by someone as fastidious as Aunt Branwell who did not greatly favour pets, it would seem more reasonable that the pet geese were housed here, and not in the room behind the dining room. Mrs Gaskell refers to this room, which became Mr Nicholls’ study, as “a sort of flagged store-room” and makes no mention of the geese. The dotted lines in the front garden depict the garden path.

The passageway which joins the house to the back kitchen could well be the one that the dying Emily used when going to the back kitchen to collect food for her dogs. “She got up walking slowly, holding out in her thin hands an apronful of broken meat and bread. When she reached the flagged passage the cold took her, she staggered on the uneven pavement and fell against the wall”. [Mary Robinson]

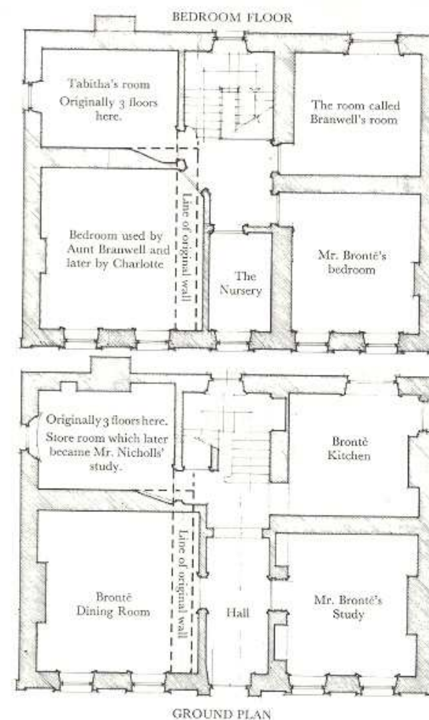
This passage gave access to the back door which was approached from the lane by a short flight of steps from a gate in the high wall at a point just beyond the north-west corner of the house. This wall originally ran the full length of the north boundary of the property, and Mr Wade’s extension involved its removal in the vicinity of the house.

In 1878 Wade added the large gabled wing on the north. This meant breaking through a doorway from the old kitchen to his new dining room and, in addition, he extended behind the house. The existing kitchen arrangements were old-fashioned and not sufficient for his requirements, so the domestic offices were extended by building a larger kitchen wing behind the house with bedrooms above. This blocked up both the kitchen window and that of the room above, both these rooms becoming virtually passages to the new north wing.

The back room on the left as you reach the top of the stairs (over the kitchen) is Branwell's room and the one on the right (over the storeroom) is called Tabitha's room. Mr Shorter's account goes on "the room on the right as you mount the stairs was allotted to Branwell as a studio". Other accounts have allotted the room on the other side of the landing to Branwell without giving any basis for it. Certainly, as a practical use for a room not accessible to the house from the inside, it might well have been handed over to the boy of the family as his painting studio. The evidence is inconclusive.

When the Brontës came to Haworth they were a household of ten and there would be little room to spare. The servants probably slept over the back kitchen. Later, when death had reduced the household, the servants could sleep in the main part of the house.

The front door was originally in the middle of the hall but it is now only 6 inches from the dining room wall, while on the other side it is 2 feet from the wall of the study. The width of the hall was reduced by 1ft 6in when Charlotte moved the dining room wall further into the hall. The wall between the hall and the dining room has also been reduced in thickness, making a total gain to the dining room of 3 feet. Note the slight curve in the hall, by the front door to allow it to open to its full width. Similar treatment was given to the bedroom wall above (Charlotte's bedroom) and this reduced the size of the children's nursery, or study, by 1ft 6in. The room as it is today would have been too small for a bed across the window, long enough for Emily. Emily's drawing in the nursery shows a bed across this window. The doorway to Charlotte's bedroom originally faced that of the room opposite. The house may



have had no nursery in its original plan, and the whole area could have been open landing, but by putting a wall across this end of the landing an extra room would have been created.

In Mr Wade's time, the ground floor level was raised by about 5 inches by laying a wooden floor over the existing flags in the study and dining room. However this necessitated raising all the other flagged floors to the same level. The raising of the hall floor meant that the front door was too large so it was reduced in height by altering the top panel, which accounts for its unusual proportions. The raising of the floor level allowed air grates to be put in.

The much photographed archway is equidistant from the existing walls, showing that it cannot be original.

The small room behind the dining room which Charlotte altered from a store room to a study for her husband was originally only entered from outside and the stone framework of the doorway is still visible. It had no fireplace until Charlotte built an external chimney.

It was a common practice in the 18th century to have ground floor accommodation for storage and a room above, both only accessible from the outside. This upstairs room would provide sleeping quarters for a man servant. The room above the store room became Tabitha's bedroom, but originally it would be entered by a stone staircase from the yard and the lintel of the outside door can still be seen on the outside wall. At one point below this doorway, near the chimney, can be seen a stone which could be a vestige of the outside stone staircase, marked on the earliest plan as the square on the south-west corner.

It is possible that this part of the Parsonage originally had three floors, as the ground level was, at the time, about 1 ½ ft lower and there would be no need for rooms of great height. The room at ground level would be for storage, the room above for a manservant and above that a hay loft. In Tabitha's room, the old window and small doorway (only 5ft 4in high) to the outside staircase were uncovered for repairs in 1976. The side of the

doorway has now been covered by glass so that it may be seen by visitors. The base of this doorway is 1ft 5in higher than the existing floor of Tabitha's room, confirming the fact that there were originally three floors.

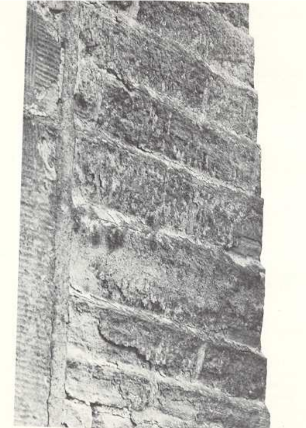
In 1976 the roof was showing signs of old age, gales had dislodged some of the flags, and a close inspection revealed a horrible sight. The main roof timbers supporting the heavy roof were in a sad state – they appear in the foreground. Sapwood had been used and instead of hardening through the years, the timbers were crumbling away. The main beams were rotten, the purlins too thin and too far apart and the ceiling laths had become friable. The whole roof had to be removed, new beams put in and purlins of double thickness were fitted. The roof was then felted and boarded in accordance with modern building practice before the stone flags were re-laid. Fortunately the summer of 1976 was exceptionally dry.

With the roof off it was possible, for the first time since 1850, to examine the wall structure from above. This showed where the wall between Charlotte's room and the nursery had been moved.

By 1850 Charlotte was a woman of consequence, and she had a bit more money. In May she set off on her travels, not returning until mid July. She went to London, Birstall and Edinburgh and then back to Birstall. Apparently Mr Brontë, who in later life expressed his distaste for having work done in the house, was left with Martha and other helpers to deal with this alone.

Charlotte wrote "I cannot come home for the house is now unroofed".

Mr Brontë had installed a lightning conductor on the south chimney of the house and during the roof repairs in 1976, examination showed that the lightning conductor had perished and it was removed for repair. Three days later, on a brilliant June afternoon, three men working on the roof observed the "heavens to blacken fast". In a great hurry they struggled to cover the roof with plastic sheeting. Suddenly there was an "explosion" – lightning had struck – the three on the roof were stunned, though they were unharmed. Had he been still the incumbent at Haworth Mr Brontë would have used this as inspiration for a sermon, just as he did after the famous Bog Burst.



Examination of the rear and south walls show that the stones are laid in the overshot method, each flat stone being laid sloping down towards the outside, so shedding away from the joints any rain water running down the wall. The roof is covered with stone flags. It has a pitch of about 30 degrees and the gables have heavy stone copings which end horizontally at the foot. Gutters run along the front and rear of the house supported on stone corbels, all of which appear similar from below but, in fact, are of two different kinds.

What was Wuthering Heights like?

by Louise Ommundson and Christopher Cooper

Emily provides us with many clues, so we thought we'd collect these and try to build up a floor plan of *Wuthering Heights*.

CHAPTER I: …When he saw my horse's breast fairly pushing the **barrier**, he did put out his hand to **unchain** it, and then sullenly preceded me up the **causeway**, calling, as we **entered the court**, - 'Joseph, take Mr. Lockwood's horse; and bring up some wine.'

Wuthering Heights is the name of Mr. Heathcliff's dwelling. 'Wuthering' being a significant provincial adjective, descriptive of the atmospheric tumult to which its station is exposed in stormy weather. Pure, bracing ventilation they must have up there at all times, indeed: one may guess the power of the north wind blowing over the edge, by the excessive slant of a few stunted firs at the end of the **house**; and by a range of gaunt thorns all stretching their limbs one way, as if craving alms of the sun. Happily, the **architect** had foresight to build it strong: the **narrow windows** are **deeply set in the wall**, and the **corners defended with large jutting stones**.

Before passing the **threshold**, I paused to admire a quantity of grotesque **carving** lavished over the front, and especially about the

principal door; above which, among a wilderness of **crumbling griffins** and shameless little boys, I detected the date '1500,' and the name 'Hareton Earnshaw.' I would have made a few comments, and requested a short history of the place from the surly owner; but his attitude at the **door** appeared to demand my speedy **entrance**, or complete departure, and I had no desire to aggravate his impatience previous to inspecting the **penetralium**.

One stop brought us into the family **sitting-room**, without any introductory **lobby** or **passage**: they call it here '**the house**' pre-eminently. It includes **kitchen** and **parlour**, generally; but I believe at **Wuthering Heights** the **kitchen** is forced to retreat altogether into another quarter: at least I distinguished a chatter of tongues, and a clatter of culinary utensils, deep within; and I observed no signs of roasting, boiling, or baking, about the **huge fireplace**; nor any glitter of copper saucepans and tin cullenders on the **walls**. One end, indeed, reflected splendidly both light and heat from ranks of immense pewter dishes, interspersed with silver jugs and tankards, **towering row after row, on a vast oak dresser, to the very roof**. The latter had never been **under-drawn**: its entire anatomy lay bare to an inquiring eye, except where a frame of wood laden with oatcakes and clusters of legs of beef, mutton, and ham, concealed it. Above the **chimney** were sundry villainous old guns, and a couple of horse-pistols: and, by way of ornament, three gaudily-painted canisters disposed along its **ledge**. The **floor** was of **smooth, white stone**; the **chairs, high-backed**, primitive structures, painted green: one or two heavy black ones lurking in the shade. In an **arch under the dresser** reposed a huge, liver-coloured bitch pointer, surrounded by a swarm of squealing puppies; and other dogs haunted other recesses …

I took a seat at the end of the **hearthstone** opposite that towards which my landlord advanced, and filled up an interval of silence by attempting to caress the canine mother, who had left her nursery, and was sneaking wolfishly to the back of my legs, her lip curled up, and her white teeth watering for a snatch. My caress provoked a long, guttural gnarl.

'You'd better let the dog alone,' growled Mr. Heathcliff in unison, checking fiercer demonstrations with a punch of his foot. 'She's not accustomed to be spoiled - not kept for a pet.' Then, striding to a **side door**, he shouted again, 'Joseph!'

Joseph mumbled indistinctly in the depths of the **cellar**, but gave no intimation of ascending; so his master dived down to him …

Mr. Heathcliff and his man climbed the **cellar steps** with vexatious phlegm: I don't think they moved one second faster than usual, though the **hearth** was an absolute tempest of worrying and yelping. Happily, an inhabitant of the **kitchen** made more despatch: a lusty dame, with tucked-up gown, bare arms, and **fire**-flushed cheeks, rushed into the midst of us flourishing a frying-pan: and used that weapon, and her tongue, to such purpose, that the storm subsided magically, and she only remained, heaving like a sea after a high wind, when her master **entered** on the scene …

CHAPTER II: …The snow began to drive thickly. I **seized the handle** to essay another trial; when a young man without coat, and shouldering a pitchfork, appeared in the yard behind. He hailed me to follow him, and, after marching through a **wash-house**, and a **paved area containing a coal-shed, pump, and pigeon-cot**, we at length arrived in the **huge, warm, cheerful apartment** where I was formerly received. It glowed delightfully in the radiance of an **immense fire**, compounded of coal, peat, and wood; and near the **table**, laid for a plentiful evening meal, I was pleased to observe the 'missis,' an individual whose existence I had never previously suspected. I bowed and waited, thinking she would bid me take a seat. She looked at me, leaning back in her **chair**, and remained motionless and mute …

'Hareton, drive those dozen sheep into the **barn porch**. They'll be covered if left in the fold all night: and put a plank before them,' said Heathcliff ...

CHAPTER III: WHILE leading the way **upstairs**, she recommended that I should hide the candle, and not make a noise; for her master had an odd notion about the **chamber** she would put me in, and never let anybody lodge there willingly. I asked the reason. She did not know, she answered: she had only lived there a year or two; and they had so many queer goings on, she could not begin to be curious.

Too stupefied to be curious myself, I **fastened my door** and glanced round for the **bed**. The whole **furniture** consisted of a **chair**, a **clothes-press**, and a **large oak case, with squares cut out near the top resembling coach windows**. Having approached this **structure**, I

looked inside, and perceived it to be a singular sort of **old-fashioned couch**, very conveniently designed to obviate the necessity for every member of the family having a **room** to himself. In fact, it formed a little **closet**, and the **ledge** of a **window**, which it **enclosed**, served as a **table**. I slid back the **panelled sides**, got in with my light, pulled them together again, and felt secure against the vigilance of Heathcliff, and every one else.

The **ledge**, where I placed my candle, had a few mildewed books piled up in one corner; and it was covered with writing scratched on the **paint**. This writing, however, was nothing but a name repeated in all kinds of characters, large and small - CATHERINE EARNSHAW, here and there varied to CATHERINE HEATHCLIFF, and then again to CATHERINE LINTON …

This time, I remembered I was lying in the **oak closet**, and I heard distinctly the gusty wind, and the driving of the snow; I heard, also, the fir bough repeat its teasing sound, and ascribed it to the right cause: but it annoyed me so much, that I resolved to silence it, if possible; and, I thought, I rose and endeavoured to **unhasp the casement**. The **hook was soldered into the staple**: a circumstance observed by me when awake, but forgotten. 'I must stop it, nevertheless!' I muttered, **knocking my knuckles through the glass**, and stretching an arm out to seize the importunate branch; instead of which, my fingers closed on the fingers of a little, ice-cold hand! The intense horror of nightmare came over me: I tried to draw back my arm, but the hand clung to it, and a most melancholy voice sobbed, '**Let me in - let me in**!' 'Who are you?' I asked, struggling, meanwhile, to disengage myself. 'Catherine Linton,' it replied, shiveringly (why did I think of LINTON? I had read EARNSHAW twenty times for Linton) - 'I'm come home: I'd lost my way on the moor!' As it spoke, I discerned, obscurely, a child's face looking through the **window**. Terror made me cruel; and, finding it useless to attempt shaking the creature off, I pulled its wrist on to the **broken pane**, and rubbed it to and fro till the blood ran down and soaked the bedclothes: still it wailed, '**Let me in**!' and maintained its tenacious gripe, almost maddening me with fear. 'How can I!' I said at length. 'Let ME go, if you want me to let you in!' The fingers relaxed, I snatched mine through the hole, hurriedly piled the books up in a pyramid against it, and stopped my ears to exclude the lamentable

prayer. I seemed to keep them closed above a quarter of an hour; yet, the instant I listened again, there was the doleful cry moaning on! 'Begone!' I shouted. 'I'll never let you in, not if you beg for twenty years.' 'It is twenty years,' mourned the voice: 'twenty years. I've been a waif for twenty years!' Thereat began a feeble scratching outside, and the pile of books moved as if thrust forward. I tried to jump up; but could not stir a limb; and so yelled aloud, in a frenzy of fright. To my confusion, I discovered the yell was not ideal: hasty footsteps approached my **chamber door**; somebody pushed it **open**, with a vigorous hand, and a **light glimmered through the squares at the top of the bed**. I sat shuddering yet, and wiping the perspiration from my forehead: the intruder appeared to hesitate, and muttered to himself. At last, he said, in a half-whisper, plainly not expecting an answer, 'Is any one here?' I considered it best to confess my presence; for I knew Heathcliff's accents, and feared he might search further, if I kept quiet. With this intention, I turned and **opened the panels**. I shall not soon forget the effect my action produced …

I descended cautiously to the **lower regions**, and landed in the **back-kitchen**, where a gleam of **fire**, raked compactly together, enabled me to rekindle my candle. Nothing was stirring except a brindled, grey cat, which crept from the ashes, and saluted me with a querulous mew.

Two benches, shaped in sections of a circle, nearly enclosed the hearth; on one of these I stretched myself, and Grimalkin mounted the other. We were both of us nodding ere any one invaded our retreat, and then it was Joseph, shuffling down a **wooden ladder that vanished in the roof, through a trap**: the ascent to his **garret**, I suppose. He cast a sinister look at the little flame which I had enticed to play between the ribs, swept the cat from its elevation, and bestowing himself in the vacancy, commenced the operation of stuffing a three-inch pipe with tobacco. My presence in his **sanctum** was evidently esteemed a piece of impudence too shameful for remark: he silently applied the tube to his lips, folded his arms, and puffed away. I let him enjoy the luxury unannoyed; and after sucking out his last wreath, and heaving a profound sigh, he got up, and departed as solemnly as he came.

A more elastic footstep **entered** next; and now I opened my mouth for a 'good-morning,' but closed it again, the salutation

unachieved; for Hareton Earnshaw was performing his orison SOTTO VOCE, in a series of curses directed against every object he touched, while he rummaged a corner for a spade or shovel to dig through the drifts. He glanced over the back of the **bench**, dilating his nostrils, and thought as little of exchanging civilities with me as with my companion the cat. I guessed, by his preparations, that **egress was allowed**, and, leaving my **hard couch**, made a movement to follow him. He noticed this, and thrust at an **inner door** with the end of his spade, intimating by an inarticulate sound that there was the place where I must go, if I changed my locality.

It **opened into the house**, where the females were already astir; Zillah urging flakes of flame up the **chimney** with a colossal bellows; and Mrs. Heathcliff, kneeling on the **hearth**, reading a book by the aid of the blaze. She held her hand interposed between the furnace-heat and her eyes, and seemed absorbed in her occupation; desisting from it only to chide the servant for covering her with sparks, or to push away a dog, now and then, that snoozled its nose over forwardly into her face. I was surprised to see Heathcliff there also. He stood by the **fire**, his back towards me, just finishing a stormy scene with poor Zillah; who ever and anon interrupted her labour to pluck up the corner of her apron, and heave an indignant groan ...

CHAPTER IV: … They entirely refused to have it in **bed** with them, or even in their **room**; and I had no more sense, so I put it on the **landing of the stairs**, hoping it might be gone on the morrow. By chance, or else attracted by hearing his voice, it crept to Mr. Earnshaw's **door**, and there he found it on quitting his **chamber** …

CHAPTER V: IN the course of time Mr. Earnshaw began to fail. He had been active and healthy, yet his strength left him suddenly; and when he was **confined** to the **chimney-corner** he grew grievously irritable ...

I ran to the **children's room**: their **door was ajar** …

CHAPTER VII: … I urged my companion to hasten now and show his amiable humour, and he willingly obeyed; but ill luck would have it that, as he **opened the door leading from the kitchen** on one side, Hindley **opened** it on the other. They met, and the master, irritated at

seeing him clean and cheerful, or, perhaps, eager to keep his promise to Mrs. Linton, shoved him back with a sudden thrust, and angrily bade Joseph 'keep the fellow out of the **room** - send him into the **garret** till dinner is over. He'll be cramming his fingers in the tarts and stealing the fruit, if left alone with them a minute.' …

Catherine loved it too: but she said it sounded sweetest at the **top of the steps**, and she went up in the dark: I followed. They **shut the house door below**, never noting our absence, it was so full of people. She made no stay at the **stairs'-head**, but mounted farther, to the **garret** where Heathcliff was **confined**, and called him. He stubbornly declined answering for a while: she persevered, and finally persuaded him to hold communion with her **through the boards**. I let the poor things converse unmolested, till I supposed the songs were going to cease, and the singers to get some refreshment: then I clambered up the **ladder** to warn her. Instead of finding her outside, I heard her voice within. The little monkey had crept by the **skylight** of one **garret**, along the **roof**, into the **skylight** of the other, and it was with the utmost difficulty I could coax her out again ….

CHAPTER IX: … Poor Hareton was squalling and kicking in his father's arms with all his might, and redoubled his yells when he carried him **up-stairs** and lifted him over the **banister**. I cried out that he would frighten the child into fits, and ran to rescue him. As I reached them, Hindley leant forward on the **rails** to listen to a noise below; almost forgetting what he had in his hands. 'Who is that?' he asked, hearing some one approaching the **stairs'-foot**. I leant forward also, for the purpose of signing to Heathcliff, whose step I recognised, not to come further; and, at the instant when my eye quitted Hareton, he gave a sudden spring, delivered himself from the careless grasp that held him, and fell ….

I went into the **kitchen**, and sat down to lull my little lamb to sleep. Heathcliff, as I thought, walked through to the **barn**. It turned out afterwards that he only got as far as the other side of the **settle**, when he flung himself on a **bench** by the wall, removed from the **fire** and remained silent …

About midnight, while we still sat up, the storm came rattling over the **Heights** in full fury. There was a violent wind, as well as thunder, and either one or the other split a tree off at the **corner of the**

building: a huge bough fell across the **roof**, and knocked down a portion of the **east chimney-stack**, sending a clatter of **stones and soot into the kitchen-fire**. We thought a bolt had fallen in the middle of us; and Joseph swung on to his knees, beseeching the Lord to remember the patriarchs Noah and Lot, and, as in former times, spare the righteous, though he smote the ungodly. I felt some sentiment that it must be a judgment on us also. The Jonah, in my mind, was Mr. Earnshaw; and I **shook the handle of his den** that I might ascertain if he were yet living …

CHAPTER XIII: … Heathcliff stayed to speak to him, and I **entered** the **kitchen** – a dingy, untidy hole; I daresay you would not know it, it is so changed since it was in your charge …

I walked round the **yard**, and through a **wicket**, to another **door**, at which I took the liberty of knocking, in hopes some more civil servant might show himself …

'Joseph will show you Heathcliff's **chamber**,' said he; '**open that door** - he's in there.' …

'I shall have my supper in another **room**,' I said. 'Have you no place you call a **parlour**?'

'**PARLOUR**!' he echoed, sneeringly, '**PARLOUR**! Nay, we've noa **PARLOURS**. If yah dunnut loike wer company, there's maister's; un'if yah dunnut loike maister, there's us.'

'Then I shall go **up-stairs**,' I answered; 'show me a **chamber**.'

I put my basin on a tray, and went myself to fetch some more milk. With great grumblings, the fellow rose, and preceded me in my ascent: we **mounted to the garrets**; he **opened a door**, now and then, to look into the **apartments** we passed.

'Here's a **rahm**,' he said, at last, **flinging back a cranky board on hinges**. 'It's weel eneugh to ate a few porridge in. There's a pack o' corn i' t' corner, thear, meeterly clane; if ye're feared o' muckying yer grand silk cloes, spread yer hankerchir o' t' to pon't.'

The '**rahm**' was a kind of **lumber-hole** smelling strong of malt and grain; various sacks of which articles were piled around, leaving a wide, bare space in the middle.

'Why, man,' I exclaimed, facing him angrily, 'this is not a place to sleep in. I wish to see my **bed-room**.'

'**BED-RUME**!' he repeated, in a tone of mockery. 'Yah's see all t' **BED-RUMES** thear is - yon's mine.'

He pointed into the **second garret**, only differing from the first inbeing **more naked about the walls**, and having **a large, low, curtainless bed**, with an indigo-coloured quilt, at one end.
'What do I want with yours?' I retorted. 'I suppose Mr. Heathcliff does not lodge at the **top of the house**, does he?'

'Oh! it's Maister HATHECLIFF'S ye're wanting?' cried he, as if making a new discovery. 'Couldn't ye ha' said soa, at onst? un' then, I mud ha' telled ye, baht all this wark, that that's just one ye cannut see - he allas **keeps it locked**, un' nob'dy iver mellson 't but hisseln.' …

He made no reply to this adjuration; only plodding doggedly down the **wooden steps**, and halting, before an **apartment** which, from that halt and the superior quality of its **furniture**, I conjectured to be the best one. There was a **carpet** - a good one, but the pattern was obliterated by dust; a **fireplace** hung with cut-paper, dropping to pieces; a handsome **oak-bedstead** with **ample crimson curtains of rather expensive material and modern make**; but they had evidently experienced rough usage: the **vallances** hung in festoons, wrenched from their rings, and the **iron rod supporting them was bent in an arc on one side, causing the drapery to trail upon the floor**. The **chairs** were also damaged, many of them severely; and deep indentations deformed the panels of the walls. I was endeavouring to gather resolution for **entering** and taking possession, when my fool of a guide announced, - 'This here is t' maister's.' …

I fancy it knew me: it pushed its nose against mine by way of salute, and then hastened to devour the porridge; while I groped from step to step, collecting the shattered earthenware, and drying the spatters of milk from the **banister** with my pocket-handkerchief. Our labours were scarcely over when I heard Earnshaw's tread in the **passage**; my assistant tucked in his tail, and pressed to the **wall**; I **stole into the nearest doorway**. The dog's endeavour to avoid him was unsuccessful; as I guessed by a scutter **down-stairs**, and a prolonged, piteous yelping. I had better luck: he passed on, **entered** his **chamber**, and **shut the door**. Directly after Joseph came up with Hareton, to put him to **bed**. I had found shelter in Hareton's **room**, and the old man, on seeing me, said, - 'They's rahm for boath ye un'

yer pride, now, I sud think i' the hahse. It's empty; ye may hev' it all to yerseln, un' Him as allus maks a third, i' sich ill company!' …

CHAPTER XVII: … As I sat nursing these reflections, the **casement** behind me was banged on to the **floor** by a blow from the latter individual, and his black countenance looked blightingly through. The **stanchions** stood too close to suffer his shoulders to follow …

He then took a stone, **struck down the division between two windows**, and sprang in …

I happened to leave him ten minutes yesterday afternoon, and in that interval he **fastened the two doors of the house against me** …

CHAPTER XX: … we halted before the **farmhouse garden-gate**. I watched to catch his impressions in his countenance. He surveyed the **carved front** and **low-browed lattices** …

CHAPTER XXIV: I went at five o'clock, and walked; fancying I might manage to creep into the **house**, and up to Linton's **room**, unobserved. However, the dogs gave notice of my approach. Zillah received me, and saying "the lad was mending nicely," showed me into a small, tidy, **carpeted apartment**, where, to my inexpressible joy, I beheld Linton laid on a little sofa, reading one of my books …

CHAPTER XXVII: … Our first thought, on his departure, was to **force an exit** somewhere. We tried the **kitchen door**, but that was **fastened outside**: we looked at the **windows** - they **were too narrow** for even Cathy's little figure …

At learning the chance we had missed, we both gave vent to our grief without control; and he allowed us to wail on till nine o'clock. Then he bid us go **upstairs**, through the **kitchen**, to Zillah's **chamber**; and I whispered my companion to obey: perhaps we might contrive to **get through the window** there, or **into a garret**, and **out by its skylight**. The **window**, however, was narrow, like those below, and the **garret trap** was safe from our attempts; for we were **fastened in** as before. We neither of us lay down: Catherine took her station by the **lattice**, and watched anxiously for morning; a deep sigh being the only answer I could obtain to my frequent entreaties that she would try to rest …

CHAPTER XXXIV: … Joseph rattled some **fire** into the shovel, and went: but he brought it back immediately, with the supper-tray in his other hand, explaining that Mr. Heathcliff was going to **bed**, and he wanted nothing to eat till morning. We heard him mount the **stairs** directly; he did not proceed to his ordinary **chamber**, but turned into that with the **panelled bed**: its **window**, as I mentioned before, is **wide enough for anybody to get through**; and it struck me that he plotted another midnight excursion, of which he had rather we had no suspicion …