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THE BRONTËS

# *Tales of Glass Town, Angria, and Gondal*

## *Selected Writings*

*Edited with Introduction and Notes by*
CHRISTINE ALEXANDER

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Dedicated to the memory of my daughter

*Rebecca Mary Alexander*

20 October 1981–7 October 1999

who shared my enthusiasm for the Brontës and illustrated the characters in their early writings

# CONTENTS

## BRANWELL BRONTË



## EMILY BRONTË







## ANNE BRONTË

# LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

# INTRODUCTION

While researching her *Life of Charlotte Brontë* (1857), Elizabeth Gaskell was lent a 'most extraordinary' packet of papers containing much of the Brontë juvenilia. She found them 'curious' but important enough to necessitate the hasty rewriting of some forty pages to make way for a new chapter on Charlotte's early writings. She speaks of the 'immense amount of manuscript, in an inconceivably small space; tales, dramas, poems, romances, written principally by Charlotte, in a hand which it is almost impossible to decipher without the aid of a magnifying glass'.[1] Unaware of the encompassing sagas of Glass Town, Angria, and Gondal, and quoting fragments from only the earliest manuscripts at the top of the packet, she appears to calmly dismiss the juvenilia as comprehensible only to 'the bright little minds for whom it was intended'. Her subdued tone in the biography, however, is in stark contrast to the excited letter she wrote to her publisher George Smith after securing these manuscripts: 'they are the wildest & most incoherent things, . . . *all* purporting to be written, or addressed to some member of the Wellesley family. They give one the idea of creative power carried to the verge of insanity.'[2] She thought them similar to some manuscripts of William Blake she had recently seen, yet she gave no hint to the public of the imaginative excess she detected in this 'wild weird writing'. The Brontë children's early addiction to a fantasy world and the later sexually charged adolescent writing, that she undoubtedly noticed[3] and that Charlotte herself referred to as her 'world below', would not square with Gaskell's mission to present her subject in a heroic light, as a misjudged rational and suffering heroine.[4]

[1] Elizabeth Gaskell, *The Life of Charlotte Brontë* (1857), ed. Angus Easson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 64.

[2] J. A. V. Chapple and Arthur Pollard (eds.), *The Letters of Mrs Gaskell* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, Mandolin: 1997), 398.

[3] It is significant that although Gaskell includes a facsimile page of the opening of Brontë's story 'The Secret', she says nothing at all about the content of this manuscript, a tale of blackmail, jealousy, and murder, demonstrating the sadistic power of men over women, and suggestions of infanticide—themes inappropriate for the adolescent Victorian girl, and certainly not in keeping with Gaskell's representation of Brontë as a friend to be vindicated from the charges of coarseness and immorality that reviewers found in *Jane Eyre*.

[4] I have explored Gaskell's practice and motivation for her handling of Charlotte's juvenilia in 'Elizabeth Gaskell and Victorian Juvenilia', *Gaskell Society Journal*, 18 (2004), 1–15.

We are now free to discover and appreciate what Gaskell felt she was obliged to conceal: a fictional world of stories, plays, and poems that document the unfettered imaginations of four aspiring young writers—Charlotte, Branwell, Emily, and Anne—as they explore their intellectual and physical surroundings. The Brontë juvenilia are rich in allusion to other books and writers, to art and artistic techniques, to history, geography, current events, and social attitudes. Through writing the young authors create and experience vicariously a world of sexual passion and political intrigue beyond the range of their years or parsonage upbringing. Their juvenilia represent the apprentice works of writers who produced such renowned novels as *Jane Eyre*, *Wuthering Heights*, and *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall*; but they are also important documents in themselves: evidence of the making of literary minds, the collaboration and particularly the rivalry of writers—that 'intelligent partisanship'[5] with which the Brontës imitated and 'played at' the lively publishing scene of the early nineteenth century. The Brontë juvenilia provide the richest record we have of youthful literary activity:[6] a fascinating uncensored world where the young writer can create a parallel political and social space, experiment with adult relationships, test genre and technique, and experience the power of the author and editor.

## *The Brontës' Collaboration and Literary Play*

Two of the early manuscripts that captured Gaskell's attention were 'History of the Year' (1829) and 'Tales of the Islanders'. Together they tell and retell the genesis of the Brontë 'plays'—the now-famous story of the Reverend Patrick Brontë's birthday gift to his 12-year-old son Branwell of a box of twelve wooden toy soldiers, in June 1829. Charlotte, a year older than her brother, and Emily and Anne, several years younger, each excitedly claimed ownership of a soldier who became their special character. 'The Twelves', or Young Men, as the soldiers were called—all veterans of the Duke of Wellington's army in the Peninsular War (1808–14)—provided the catalyst for the imaginary play that grew into the Glass Town and Angrian saga. There had been earlier 'plays' but the Young Men, together with 'Tales of the Islanders', captured the children's imaginations and provided a source of literary inspiration for the next twenty years.

[5] Gaskell, *Life of Charlotte Brontë*, 54.

[6] Only Jane Austen's brilliantly ironic juvenilia rivals that of the Brontës, but it is neither as voluminous nor as revealing of the inner life of its author.



A striking feature of this early imaginative play is the confidence and bravado of the players that belies the usual story of the Brontës' desolate childhood, derived from Gaskell's account of the four motherless children huddled together against a hostile environment, living with their morose father in an isolated village on the edge of the Yorkshire Moors. It is true that they were constantly reminded of death and in need of emotional security: the parsonage was surrounded on two sides by the graveyard and by the time the Young Men's Play began the family had lost three of its eight members. Their mother had died in 1821 when Charlotte was 5 and Anne only 1 year old; and their two older sisters, Maria and Elizabeth, had both died of consumption in 1825. But they were not isolated. They were cared for by the good-natured servant Tabitha Aykroyd and their aunt Elizabeth Branwell—practical, stern, and religious—who lived with them and helped to provide stability and order in their chaotic early lives. Their parsonage home was a centre of social life, close to the church, the Sunday school, and public houses; and Haworth itself was actually a busy manufacturing community important to the wool trade of the district.[7] As parsonage children they would have been relatively isolated from the village children, but they had little need to look beyond their family circle for friendship and entertainment. Close in age, intelligent and active, they naturally formed what their father called 'a little society amongst themselves'.[8]

It was their father, however, who was central to the happiness of the four surviving children. Patrick Brontë's unusually liberal views meant that his children had an unconventional Victorian childhood. Strongly influenced by Wordsworth's attitudes to education, he encouraged them to roam freely on the moors, at first in the care of a servant, and allowed them to read whatever they liked from his bookshelves. He gave them basic lessons in literacy, geography, history, and mathematics, and even managed despite his poor clergy salary to pay for art and music lessons by the best teachers in the district. He taught Branwell the classics and their aunt endeavoured to train the girls in the female accomplishment of sewing. But it was their father's passion for poetry and the classics, his own early 'indescribable pleasure' in writing, his enthusiasm for military and literary heroes of the day, for politics and military campaigns, and his love of nature, that provided the Brontës with a rich, if eclectic, imaginative life.

[7] C. Alexander and M. Smith, *The Oxford Companion to the Brontës* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 235–7. Even by 1820 when the Brontës arrived in Haworth, there were eighteen small textile mills, and by 1850 over 2,000 people were employed in the spinning and weaving industry.

[8] *Brontë Society Transactions* (1933), 8(43), 92.

'This is the Duke of Wellington! It shall be mine!' shouted Charlotte as she snatched up her toy soldier and named it after her father's revered hero. The real Duke, his family and friends, became her fictional equivalents in the children's plays, and when his character proved too restricting Charlotte replaced her chief hero by imaginary recreations of his two sons: Arthur, Marquis of Douro, and his younger brother Charles Wellesley. Their names and early characters, especially that of the mischievous Charles, are transferred to the Duke's fictitious sons: Arthur, Marquis of Douro (later Duke of Zamorna and King of Angria), and Lord Charles Wellesley (later Charles Townshend). Branwell chose Wellington's adversary Napoleon, before creating his hero Alexander Percy ('Rogue', later Lord Ellrington and Earl of Northangerland); and Emily and Anne nominated soldiers who later grew into Parry and Ross, the venerated kings of the Glass Town saga, named after famous explorers. The sheer delight and authority of Charlotte's claim of the Duke of Wellington characterizes the enthusiastic naming and recording of characters, institutions, and landscape in imitation of the adult world. As if sensing its significance, Charlotte and Branwell immediately documented the event as 'History' in language charged with excitement, drew up maps and tables, and over the following year reworked the advent of their Glass Town saga in fictional form. 'A Romantic Tale' (also called 'The Twelve Adventurers') tells, in the form of a popular travel narrative, the story of the Young Men's voyage to the west coast of Africa, their settlement after warfare and negotiation with the indigenous Ashantee tribes, their election of Arthur Wellesley, Duke of Wellington, as their leader, and the founding of Great Glass Town at the delta of the River Niger. Branwell's 'History of the Young Men', written two years later in 1831, documents the same events in exhaustive detail and provides a map of the new kingdoms. Like their models from the real world, the Brontës were colonizers—both literally and imaginatively—imitating and reconfiguring the political and social world of nineteenth-century England that they encountered in their extensive reading.

The juvenilia tell us much about the reading of the young Brontës. Soon after the death of their mother, Maria, the eldest of what were then five siblings, would gather the children together in their tiny nursery that doubled as a bedroom and read newspapers to them, a practice Charlotte continued after Maria's death. As the earliest manuscripts demonstrate, the children were passionate little Tories, mimicking their father's views and absorbing the attitude and tone of *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, whose back-issues were lent to the family by a



parishioner. Here we find, together with *Fraser's Magazine* to which the Brontës subscribed in 1832, the largely masculine culture of individual genius and military heroism that was to fuel the young Brontës' imaginations. The advent of each instalment was as exciting as a new video game nowadays, revealing adventures well beyond their reach: the explorations of Parry and Ross in the Arctic, campaigns of the British Army in America, political news from Paris, stories of mysterious occurrences, and poems on the death of Napoleon. It was not by chance that their imaginary kingdoms were established through the auspices of the four Chief Genii and located in Africa. *The Arabian Nights*, that favourite book of the child Jane Eyre, was—together with *Tales of the Genii* and the Book of Revelation—instrumental in infusing the early stories with magic and the supernatural. Throughout the 1820s and 1830s, *Blackwood's* carried articles on British exploration and emigration in Africa, on the Ashantee Wars and customs. The actual site of the Great Glass Town can be traced to the June 1826 issue of *Blackwood's* (vol. 19, p. 705), which contained an article by James McQueen (who would also become a character in the saga) and an accompanying map based on Denham and Clapperton's explorations in northern and central Africa from 1822 to 1824.[9] Not only did Branwell copy this map for his own illustration of Glass Town locations (see map, p. xxix), but he and his sisters also followed the author's advice on the most favourable site for a new colony—one that 'would COMMAND the trade, the improvement, and the civilization of all North Central Africa'.

British attitudes to Africa reflected in the juvenilia can also be found in the Brontës' old geography books (especially their well-used *A Grammar of General Geography* by Revd J. Goldsmith); and elements of classics such as *The Pilgrim's Progress* and *Gulliver's Travels* are woven into early tales. Traces of Gothic and historical romance (from their literary heroes Sir Walter Scott and Lord Byron in particular), and quotations from Shakespeare, Milton, and the Bible abound. Scott's *Life of Napoleon* (1827) was as familiar to all the children as was his poetry, and *Tales of a Grandfather*, given to them by their aunt for Christmas 1828, helped to stress the importance of historical models like Mary, Queen of Scots who appears in various guises in both the Glass Town and Gondal sagas. Romantic poetry by Wordsworth, Coleridge, Southey, and Byron was plundered for its exotic settings, sensational plots, and intense emotions. Paintings too form the intertext of the sagas, with verbal references to visual works by contemporary artists like Thomas Bewick, John Martin,

[9] Reprod. in Alexander (ed.), *An Edition of the Early Writings of Charlotte Brontë* (hereafter Alexander *EEW*) (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1987–91), 2(2), frontispiece.

and Edward Finden, whose prints the children saw on the walls of the parsonage, in books and in engravings they copied in drawing lessons.

It was not simply knowledge and quotation they appropriated from their reading: the example of authorship and publication, particularly the magazine culture gleaned from *Blackwood's*, helped to determine the Brontës' writing practice and attitudes towards authorship. The early volumes of juvenilia were imitations of adult publications in all except size: they were initially designed the size of large postage stamps for the 12-inch toy soldiers and written in minuscule script to represent print. The tiny size of the print, which was used by all four Brontës almost uniformly throughout their juvenilia, had the added advantage of rendering the contents of the manuscripts illegible to adult eyes, helping to maintain the secrecy of their shared imaginary world. The pages were bound and carefully sewn into brown paper wrappers, and the layout of title pages and contents were modelled on *Blackwood's*, the Annuals, and other books owned by the Brontës. Publication conventions were taken seriously by the young writers but they were also open to parody, as we see when Charlotte ironically notes the fictive nature of their enterprise in one of her title pages: 'The Search after Happiness A Tale by Charlotte Bronte Printed By Herself And Sold By Nobody.'

Almost as soon as the Glass Town was established, Branwell began a monthly journal for the Young Men in imitation of *Blackwood's*. Here the children could practise their 'scriblomania'—Charlotte's pet word for their obsessive literary pursuits. 'Branwell's Blackwood's Magazine' was begun in January 1829, but soon taken over by Charlotte when Branwell lost interest and began a newspaper instead. She changed the name first to 'Blackwood's Young Men's Magazine' and then to 'Young Men's Magazine' in August 1830 when she began a 'second series', clearly relishing the authority of the editor as much as her brother had done. Branwell had announced his resignation with characteristic pomposity:

> We have hitherto conducted this Magazine & we hope to the satisfaction of most. (No one can please all.) But as we are conducting a Newspaper which requires all the time and attention we can spare from ot[h]er employments we hav[e] found it expedient to relinquish the editorship of this Magazine but we recommend our readers to be to the new Editor as they were to me. The new one is the Cheif Genius Charlotte. She will conduct it in future tho' I shall write now and then for it. ΔΘΗ July 1829 P B Brontë.[10]

[10] C. Alexander and V. Benson (eds.), *Branwell's Blackwood's Magazine* (Edmonton: Juvenilia Press, 1995), 34. The Greek letters preceding the date and Branwell's signature do not spell any particular word; they simply show his knowledge of the letters delta, theta, and eta.



Charlotte also assumes a proprietorial tone: 'This second series of magazines is conducted on like principles with the first. The same eminent authors are also engaged to contribute for it'; and stamps her own mark on the content, replacing drinking songs and tales of violent murders with stories of magic, mysterious occurrences, and romance, much to Branwell's consternation. He complains to the new editor in a series of poems, but he no longer has the controlling voice and Charlotte's rule prevails. It is not clear what role Emily and Anne played in relation to the magazine: their chief characters are present in stories which make it clear that they had their own more realistic preferences for Yorkshire models of setting and character. Perhaps they were simply too young at this stage for their exacting older siblings to accept their literary contributions, or perhaps their prose pieces were destroyed at the same time as their prose juvenilia of Gondal?

The title page for the 'Young Men's Magazine' for October 1830 (included in this edition) announces that it is 'Edited by Charlotte Brontë' and 'SOLD BY SERGEANT TREE AND ALL OTHER Booksellers' in the various 'Glass Town' capitals of the Glass Town Federation. Distribution and editorial policy are as carefully planned as the elaborate contents and advertisement pages. Like the original *Blackwood's*, the magazines include a variety of genres: stories, articles, poems, reviews of paintings and books, letters to the editor, and 'Conversations', the latter based on the renowned discussions of literary and current affairs known as 'Noctes Ambrosianae' (1822–35). The 'Nights', as the Brontës also called them, were evening affairs held in the convivial masculine atmosphere of Ambrose's Tavern in which *Blackwood's* fictitious and opinionated personalities—'Christopher North' (John Wilson), 'The Ettrick Shepherd' (James Hogg), 'The Opium Eater' (De Quincey), 'Timothy Tickler' (John Lockhart or Robert Sym), and their company—displayed their rhetorical skills, trying to outdo each other's eloquence, so that their good-humoured debate becomes a type of verbal pugilism that underlined the Brontës' early view of journalism as competitive literary play.

The same kind of rivalry is evident in the Brontës' earliest articles and reviews. Under the guise of fictitious poets, historians, and politicians, they jockey for the Glass Town public's attention by writing slanderous reviews on each other's work. In the process the young writers are not only playing with their material but with the process of narration itself. In one article the lawyer and bookseller Sergeant Bud (Branwell's voice) scorns Charlotte's degenerate editorial

policy;[11] in the next, Lord Charles Wellesley (Charlotte's voice) satirizes Emily's 'Parry's land' with its Yorkshire puddings and dull landscapes.[12] The young writers carry on a continual verbal battle in editorial notes, prefaces, afterwords, and the actual texts of their stories. Lockhart, one of the leading lights of *Blackwood's*, had characterized himself as 'the scorpion, which delighteth to sting the faces of men'.[13] Likewise, Charlotte's Captain Tree aims to scotch 'one small reptile',[14] namely, his literary rival Lord Charles Wellesley (another of Charlotte's own pseudonyms). In the preface to his next work, however, Lord Charles assures 'the reading publick' that he has not been 'expiflicated by the literary Captain's lash'.[15]

One of the most remarkable features of the Brontë juvenilia is their robust dialectic nature. The Glass Town writings constitute a literary marketplace where various roles and ideas can be explored and questioned. There is a cacophony of voices as narrators of disparate texts challenge each other for the 'Truth' of their story, appealing to their Glass Town audiences through the authority of their genre (the history writer Captain Bud carries more weight than his annoying young nemesis Lord Charles Wellesley who specializes in romance, Gothic tales, and scandal). Historians, poets, and novelists jostle with each other for their readers' attention. Editors and critics reinterpret and cast doubt on their rival's productions. The Glass Town writers are all male like their *Blackwood's* originals, but they are hardly all-powerful. Incompetent poets are mocked (in 'The Poetaster' the extravagant 'Rhymer'—a parody of Branwell's poetic persona 'Young Soult'—narrowly escapes beheading!) and scandalmongers like Lord Charles (Charlotte) are barred from the inner circles of political power (as we see in 'The Spell'). Through their narrative personae, Charlotte and Branwell constantly satirize and rewrite each other's versions of events. They analyse, admire, or scorn each other's characters. Their personae act as 'masks', allowing them to identify and 'play' with opposing points of view. Branwell and Emily are critical of Charlotte's penchant for romance; they prefer the cut and thrust of politics and war, and the mundane Yorkshire landscape of moorland, factories, and canals

[11] 'Lines spoken by a lawyer on the occasion of the transfer of this magazine', in Victor Neufeldt (ed.), *The Works of Patrick Branwell Brontë: An Edition*, 1 (New York: Garland, 1997), 73.

[12] 'A Day at Parry's Palace', in Alexander *EEW* 1. 229–33.

[13] Ian Jack, *English Literature 1815–1832*, *The Oxford History of English Literature* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963), 19.

[14] Alexander *EEW* 2(1). 44.

[15] Ibid. 128.



rather than love affairs, palaces, and exotic settings. But Charlotte is not unaware of her own desires. Her assumption of various masks allows her to argue as much with her own polyphonic voices as with those of Branwell. Under cover of 'Lord Charles' (later Charles Townshend) she can analyse (and ironize) her indulgence in romantic fiction while still exploring the passionate relationships of her central characters. Her adoption of a male pseudonym—not unlike Charles Townshend—for her first novel *The Professor* was not only to mask the woman writer but was a continuation of the assumption of literary authority practised since childhood.

The whole notion of fiction is explored in levels of narrative reality. The four Brontës were both creators of and characters in their 'plays', and these characters in turn created both 'true' and fictitious tales about other characters and themselves. In 'Tales of the Islanders' they control the course of events and participate in the action as 'Little King and Queens', appearing and disappearing at crucial moments in the plot, conveying vital messages and raising characters from the dead. Part of the literary fun is the 'making alive' of characters that have been killed off in a previous story. In early Glass Town stories the children appear as the omnipotent Chief Genii, each responsible for their particular soldiers and kingdoms. The Genii dwell in Mt. Aornos, which (like Mt. Olympus) is the home of the 'gods', and also inhabit the Jibble Kumri (or Mountains of the Moon) and the great Sahara Desert to the north of the Glass Town Federation. Branwell plays with their association of godlike power and with his identity as Chief Genius 'Banni Lightening', derived from the relationship of the Greek god Zeus with lightning and thunder (*bronte* means thunder in Greek, and in Italian *brontolare* means to grumble or rumble, specifically with reference to thunder). He makes it clear to his sisters and to their characters that, as in 'A Romantic Tale', they hold absolute power of life and death, a despotism instituted and liberally used by Branwell, though railed against by Charlotte's Young Men not simply because she resents Branwell's self-appointed leadership but because she knows that narration is by its nature disparate and unstable. Lucy Snowe, in Charlotte's final novel *Villette*, presents a duplicitous narrator who plays with the reader and dupes even herself. The juvenilia demonstrate that even at an early age, Charlotte's grasp of narrative process and its implications was surprisingly sophisticated.

In 'Albion and Marina', written at 14 years old, Charlotte's sharp observation of her own creative process is clearly evident, and in an article in the 'Young Men's Magazine' she imagines this process from

the viewpoint of her creature. When the cynical disaffected Lord Charles is musing in the Glass Town Public Library, he finds his identity as a writer becoming increasingly insubstantial and his narrative voice alarmingly precarious:

> Whilst I was listlessly turning over the huge leaves of that most ponderous volume, I fell into the strangest train of thought that ever visited even my mind, eccentric and unstable as it is said by some insolent puppies to be.
>
> It seemed as if I was a non-existent shadow, that I neither spoke, eat, imagined or lived of myself, but I was the mere idea of some other creatures brain. The Glass Town seemed so likewise. My father, Arthur and everyone with whom I am acquainted, passed into a state of annihilation: but suddenly I thought again that I and my relatives did exist, and yet not us but our minds and our bodies without ourselves. Then this supposition—the oddest of any—followed the former quickly, namely, that WE without US were shadows; also, but at the end of a long vista, as it were, appeared dimly and indistinctly, beings that really lived in a tangible shape, that were called by our names and were US from whom WE had been copied by something—I could not tell what.[16]

As Lord Charles senses his fictionality his confidence wanes and he begins to disintegrate, his self splits between subject ('WE') and object ('US') whose identification depends on point of view. He returns to his senses (the narrative 'I') only when the 'other creature' (Charlotte) whose idea he is comes into view and he finds himself, Gulliver-like, in the hands of his author. In this clever parody of the insubstantiality of the imaginative world the Brontës had made so pivotal to their lives, we sense Charlotte's (probably unconscious but prescient) adolescent anxiety about the lack of real control she actually has as both child and female over her life.[17]

The reality of her position and that of her sisters was all too clear during their brief periods of schooling at Roe Head, Mirfield. Charlotte attended Miss Wooler's small private school from 17 January 1831 until mid-June 1832, returning as a teacher in July 1835 and remaining until December 1838. Emily attended for only three months in 1835, when Anne replaced her as a pupil, both sisters' fees being paid for by

[16] Ibid. 257.

[17] Heather Glen takes this interpretation further in her perceptive analysis of 'Strange Events' in relation to 'A History of the Year', where the presence of 'papa' frames and limits the children's power to create. Thus 'Strange Events' speaks not only of power but, more crucially, of 'the imagination of powerlessness'. At 14, Brontë was beginning 'to explore the intuition that "reality" might be less simply that which is than that which is constructed by the powerful' ('Configuring a World', in Mary Hilton et al. (eds.), *Opening the Nursery Door* (London and New York: Routledge, 1997), 229–31).



Charlotte's teaching. All three sisters suffered illness and depression in varying degrees away from home and in the presence of strangers. Despite several lasting friendships for Charlotte and Anne, they were acutely conscious of their difference, intellectually and materially, from the other girls of the new manufacturing families of the district. More significantly, at school they were separated from the writing partnerships that had by then developed between Charlotte and Branwell and Emily and Anne. Without the freedom to indulge in their shared imaginary worlds they could not express themselves; they became physically sick. Emily became so ill at Roe Head that Charlotte feared for her life. When she again attempted to live away from home as a teacher at Law Hill, near Halifax, Emily survived a mere six months. Home represented the space where her creativity could have free reign, where she might experience the passionate elemental world of Gondal amidst the mundane regularity of routine life at Haworth. Anne and Charlotte, despite their sustaining sense of duty and Christian faith, also eventually succumbed to the strain and suffered severe religious crises that necessitated a return to the nurturing atmosphere of 'Haworth and home [that] wakes sensations which lie dormant elsewhere'. Charlotte's *Roe Head Journal*, part autobiographical and part Angrian, documents her frustration as a young woman needing to make her own way in life yet longing for the fictional world that brought release for her creative energy.

At home the collaborative writing immediately resumed, but the relationships changed. Charlotte and Branwell were both strong-willed and enthusiastic, and Emily and Anne had followed their lead. In 1831, however, while Charlotte was at school, the younger siblings had taken the opportunity to form their own Pacific kingdom of Gondal, although they still remained privy to Glass Town and Angrian events, as Emily's 1837 Diary Paper attests. Modelled on themes in their early collaborative play, the Gondal saga was also concerned with love and war, played out against a dramatic background drawn from the writings of Shakespeare, Scott, and Byron. As with Glass Town writings, their poems explore different modes of identity through the voices of various personae—issues of class and gender, rebellion and incarceration, sexual desire and power.

After her first eighteen months away at school, Charlotte also had new ideas to pursue. The soldiers had belonged to Branwell; he assumed leadership of the 'play' and established the plot lines, and Charlotte—sharing his interests—had been happy to follow in her own style, reacting to his constant innovations and puncturing the pomposity

of his extravagant creations. But Scott's novels and ballads began to take priority, mixing with Byron's Gothic tales as the source of invention. On her return home, she launched into long Gothic romances like 'The Spell' (1843) that obsessively explore the motivations of characters, especially her own fascination for the Byronic Duke of Zamorna and his increasingly complicated love affairs. Branwell was still focused on military and political adventures but he too became progressively obsessed by his persona 'Northangerland' and the possibilities of the dark side of the Byronic character. In 'The Politics of Verdopolis', he takes account of Charlotte's new tales, provides a more sophisticated lineage for his hero as a descendant of the Northumberland Percys, lays the foundations for Mary Percy's future role as wife of Zamorna and Queen of Angria, and introduces the Ashantee leader Quashia Quamina as an accomplice who will aid Northangerland in his future insurrection in Angria.

From the outset the two older siblings had had a stimulating effect on each other's development; now in their teens, Branwell reacted to Charlotte's new dimension to their saga: the creation of Angria, a kingdom to accommodate Zamorna's increasing tyranny and his new social and political coteries. The old world of Glass Town (now 'Verdopolis') could be seen as historical background, against which Angria defines itself as a more sophisticated and 'modern' space where a new generation of characters can be made to explore their authors' pubescent desires and anxieties. 'Mina Laury' (1838) and 'Caroline Vernon' (1839) represent Charlotte's later novelettes in this edition, revealing not only the increasing sophistication of her writing and deep commitment to the now-Angrian saga, but also her increasing unease with her own emotions and position as a young woman. Her poem 'We wove a web in childhood' acknowledges her acute awareness of the importance of her rich imaginative life—that 'web of sunny air' that constitutes the Glass Town and Angrian saga—to her ability to express herself and to provide her with some agency in the real world over which she now has little control. If she is to maintain that agency she must bridge the imaginative divide between her 'bright darling dream' and the real world: her 'Farewell to Angria' maps out the route she will take towards the more sober world of *The Professor*. Yet although Charlotte came to see her early writing as sinful fantasy and characterized it as 'lurid'—a hothouse of 'ornamented and redundant composition' (preface to *The Professor*) from which she must withdraw for a time—she also acknowledged the value of her 'practice of some years', the formative experiences without which a novel like *Jane Eyre* could not have been written.



Branwell, too, increasingly questioned his sense of identity and agency as a writer with ambitions to join the ranks of his revered *Blackwood's*. From the age of 18, he wrote repeatedly to the editor requesting a place on his staff, but the many unanswered letters and final rebuff simply confirmed this talented young man's early sense of insecurity. *Blackwood's* had long fed his image of a man of letters as a purveyor of power: through the Glass Town and Angrian saga he had cultivated this ambition. As the privileged only son in a Victorian household, he was expected to pursue a respectable if not illustrious career; but the unrealistic confidence placed in him and his haphazard home education did little to curb his ebullient nature or provide guidance in self-control. At 16, Branwell laughs at his own pretensions to art, his physical inadequacies, and—despite his age and fluency in writing—his inability to respond appropriately or even articulately in social situations, when he creates his self-important alter ego Patrick Benjamin Wiggins. Charlotte joins in the joke: 'as musician he was greater than Bach; as a Poet he surpassed Byron; as a painter, Claude Lorrain yielded to him'.[18] Her mockery of his 'almost insane devotion to all celebrated characters in Verdopolis' and reference to his three sisters as 'miserable silly creatures not worth talking about', is as much comic self-deprecation as criticism of her brother.

As Charlotte asserted herself in the partnership and Branwell became less sure of himself in the real world, this note of insecurity—comic but ominous—began to creep into his other literary personae. Robert Patrick S'Death (derived from the oath 'God's Death') is Wiggins's uncle and reincarnation of Chief Genius Bannii: he is cast as former servant and sinister mentor of the young Alexander Percy (then 'Rogue' and later 'Northangerland'), who appears in 'The Pirate' as captain of the pirate ship *The Rover*. A Mephistophelean figure that mockingly quotes Scripture and orchestrates evil, he is impervious to any attempts to destroy him. His evil relationship with the young Percy owes much to James Hogg's study of evil possession and double personality in *The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner* (1824). 'The Pirate' marks the beginning of Northangerland's career and 'The Politics of Verdopolis' illustrates his increasingly duplicitous personality and the split between public and private life that was later to haunt Branwell himself. Gradually Percy/Northangerland morphs into the sinister, atheistic personality we see represented by Charlotte in 'Caroline Vernon'—anarchic, powerful, but damned—the Byronic figure Branwell admires but also fears. Northangerland and his cronies

[18] 'My Angria and the Angrians', Alexander *EEW* 2(2). 245–53.

become increasingly inebriated (Branwell himself was drinking at this time) and treacherous in their dealings with both Angria and the Verdopolitan Union. At the same time Branwell's manuscripts degenerate into formless chronicles of political and military skirmishes, with detailed accounts of speeches, manoeuvres, and casualty lists. His production had always been prodigious: through poems, travel books, verse dramas, magazines, historical novelettes, translations of Horace and Virgil, he cultivated his image as man of letters; but now the very form and style of his writing expressed its decline. The exploration of self afforded by literary play is no child's game: long after Charlotte bade farewell to Angria, Branwell continued to explore his deepest desires and fears through Northangerland. Unknown to his sisters, eighteen of his poems were published in local newspapers under 'Northangerland', the pseudonym that continued to frame his identity; but he never obtained a secure job or became the successful writer or artist his early talents and ambition promised.

Like Branwell, Emily continued to play the Gondal game until the year of her death. There is no evidence that Emily's imaginative world had anything but a constructive effect on her mature writing. It appears to have provided sustenance, security, and inspiration for her intensely secretive and self-contained personality. She moves seamlessly in her poetry between Gondal and the real world: both are portrayed as intensely abstract and personal; and although the Gothic power of Gondal may have combined with Scott and Shakespeare to provide the inspiration for *Wuthering Heights*, the novel is solidly structured within the domestic world of a middle-class Victorian narrator. Anne also made the adjustment to Victorian domestic fiction without trauma, taking with her her early lessons in writing. The development of her moral sense led her increasingly away from Emily's often anarchic world and it is significant that she was not always party to innovations in Emily's Gondal plot, as the Diary Papers indicate.

## *Glass Town and Angrian Saga: Charlotte and Branwell*

Poised on the Great Bay at the confluence of rivers, Glass Town—capital of the Glass Town Federation—is a city of reflections: 'the Queen of the Earth, who looks down on her majestic face mirrored in the noble Niger . . . [and] the glass that her harbour gives her'.[19] As the saga became more sophisticated, and its creators acquired more knowledge,

[19] Ibid. 241.



the title 'Glass Town' was changed first to 'Verreopolis' ('Glass Town' in Latin) then corrupted to 'Verdopolis'. The name, like that of the saga itself, was clearly significant for the Brontës, suggesting the paradoxical nature of their imaginative world, a fantasy that was founded on and became an alternative reality.

The Glass Town and Angrian saga centred first on the Glass Town Federation and its principal city Verdopolis (initially called the Great Glass Town), and then moved to Angria, a new kingdom created in 1834 to the west of the Federation. It is most commonly referred to as the 'Glass Town Saga'; the titles 'Angrian Saga' or 'Angrian Legend' are used by writers to refer to later stories centred on the kingdom of Angria, but no separate saga is involved. This fictitious world established in Africa bears little resemblance to Africa itself apart from occasional place names, incursions by Ashantee tribes, and exotic scenery that owes as much to fairy tale and the *Arabian Nights* as it does to geographical descriptions of what was known as 'the dark continent'. The Brontës filled this imaginative space with their own version of early nineteenth-century society with its international relations and domestic affairs. Here they reconfigured European colonial aspirations, republican uprisings, military and administrative organization, buildings and landscapes, social ideology and cultural institutions. Struggles of the Peninsular Wars, together with the names and battles associated with Wellington and Napoleon, were mapped on to the African colony. Even Quashia, the only indigenous African to be fully charactized in the saga, is associated with Wellington. Just as the historic Duke adopted the son of a chief in the Indian wars, so Charlotte's Wellington adopts Quashia Quamina, who later rebels, aligns his warriors with the republican rebellion of Northangerland (formerly Branwell's Napoleon), and lusts after the Queen of Angria (daughter of Northangerland and wife of Wellington's son Zamorna, King of Angria). This single example demonstrates the intricate association between fictional and historical characters, constitutional and republican rivalries, and the authors themselves.

Much of the saga was formulated only in discussion amongst the creators; knowledge was assumed between the collaborators, who had no need to explain circumstances or background in individual stories. Some tales, like 'An Adventure in Ireland', appear to bear no relation to the saga at all but were often written as independent contributions to the 'Young Men's Magazine'. Other stories from the saga can be bewildering, since the Brontës were continually rewriting events and reinventing the personalities of their characters.

## HISTORY, GEOGRAPHY, AND EVENTS[20]

The history of the Young Men became the history of the Glass Town and Angrian saga; and the geography of the four kingdoms ruled by the original heroes of the Young Men's Play constituted the Glass Town Federation in the new saga, becoming increasingly associated with the geographical regions of Britain: Wellington's Land (Ireland, birthplace of the historical Wellington), Sneaky's Land (Scotland), Parry's Land, and Ross's Land (both roughly equivalent to Yorkshire and lowland Scotland), each of which has its own provincial 'Glass Town' capital (such as 'Wellington's Glass Town').

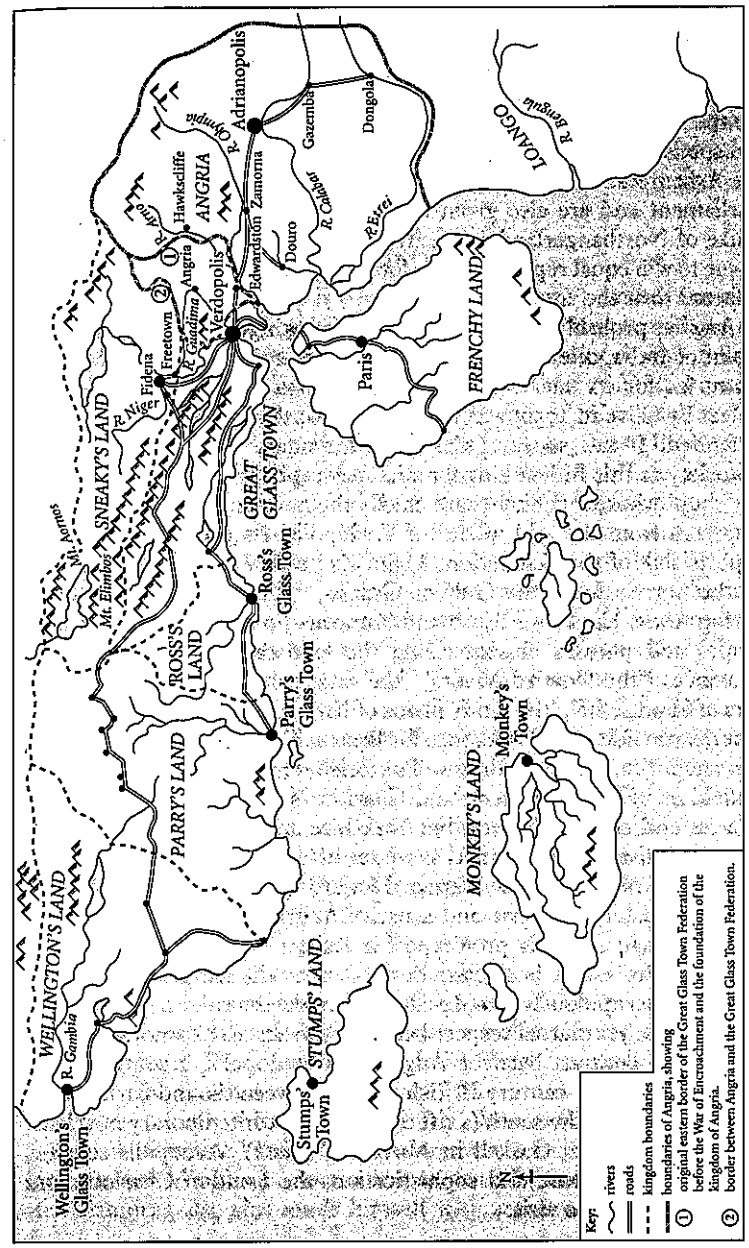
The great capital Glass Town, founded by the Twelves, is not simply a dream world but a working city, where 'lofty mills and warehouses piled up storey above storey to the very clouds, surmounted by high tower-like chimneys vomiting forth the huge columns of thick black smoke, while from their walls the clanking, mighty din of machinery sounded and resounded till all that quarter of the city rang again with the tumult'.[21] Beneath the symmetry and elegance of the brilliant white marble buildings lies a subterranean Gothic world of labyrinthine caves that reach, like those below the palace of Kubla Khan in Coleridge's famous poem, down to the sea. But the young Brontës put them to good use: it is here that the labourers, the artisans, the prisoners and the underworld of Glass Town live. Branwell and Emily were determined to create prisons, and factories, despite Charlotte's preference for palaces and country estates. Below the illustrious Tower of All Nations (modelled on the Tower of Babel) lie the state dungeons[22] that, together with the dungeons in the Palace School in the Islanders' Play, prefigure the Gothic prisons of Gondal.

Wars and political upheavals dominate the events of the saga throughout its history. They are chronicled in obsessive detail by Branwell and form the background to many of Charlotte's stories. In March 1831 there is insurrection in Verdopolis, the Great Rebellion, in which Rogue sets up a provisional government on the French model of 1789. Order is restored miraculously, but a year later Rogue again leads a rebellion in the north which is eventually defeated at the battle of Fidena by Alexander Sneaky, King of Sneaky's Land, and his son John, Duke of Fidena, assisted by forces from the other kingdoms.

[20] Much of the material in the following sections is drawn from my essays 'Glass Town and Angrian saga' and 'Gondal saga' in Alexander and Smith, *Oxford Companion to the Brontës*.

[21] Alexander *EEW* 1. 139.

[22] Ibid. 2(1). 194.




Map of the Glass Town Federation and the kingdom of Angria
(Based on Branwell Brontë's frontispiece to 'The History of the Young Men' (1831), with Angria added by Christine Alexander.)

The Ashantees are a constant threat to the east of the Federation. In 1833 they are joined by the Arabs and French in the War of Encroachment against the united Verdopolitan forces. This proves to be a watershed for the Federation in which the new kingdom of Angria is created from the spoils of war. Zamorna and Percy (formerly Rogue), who defeated the Ashantees in the east, demand the territory from the Verdopolitan Parliament and are also given the new titles of King of Angria and Duke of Northangerland respectively. Constant parliamentary battles ensue to win equal representation for Angria in the old Federation, now referred to as the Verdopolitan Union.

Angria, probably named after the pirate kingdom on the Malabar Coast of India, celebrated in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries for its successful repulsion of European powers until its defeat by Clive in 1756, was won by the sword and must be constantly defended. It has some of the same legendary wealth and dubious notoriety as this Indian kingdom: its new capital is an opulent 'marble toy shop' whose inhabitants are chiefly the nouveaux riches and entrepreneurs from the 'old world' of Verdopolis. Its geography basically repeats that of the Federation. Major rivers flow from the mountains in the north-east to the Gulf of Guinea, with prosperous manufacturing towns like Edwardston and Zamorna on their banks. Repeated names and phrases characterizing the landscape of Angria's seven provinces ('the Howard Moors', 'the savannah of Arundel', 'the forests of Hawkscliff', 'the sandy plains of Etrei'), governed by Zamorna's coterie, provide a solid reference for Branwell's warfare and Charlotte's romance. The action of Branwell's stories remains chiefly on the battlefield or in the parliament, and Charlotte's tales continue to inhabit palaces and country houses; but Yorkshire and the north of England are now a distinctive presence, as we see in 'Mina Laury' and 'Caroline Vernon'. The new hero Warner Howard (after Haworth) Warner, prime minister of Angria and a native Angrian, is quintessentially a Yorkshireman (like his prototype Sir Robert Peel), a tough-minded earnestly Protestant businessman who values the simple pleasures of life and is scrupulously moral and loyal, unlike the ruler he serves. The antagonistic yet mutual respect between Warner and Zamorna reflects the central contrast between Angria and Verdopolis, a contrast built on the nineteenth-century British divide between the industrial north and London and the south (a rift examined by contemporary novelists, not least Elizabeth Gaskell in *North and South*). Verdopolis remains the centre of culture and sophistication, the London Charlotte and Branwell longed to visit.



With the advent of Angria, Glass Town political alliances are cemented into distinct factions and leaders. Zamorna, as King of Angria, appoints Northangerland (now his father-in-law) as prime minister, but Northangerland remains in league with his old republican associates and leads a rebellion against Zamorna. The ensuing Angrian Wars ravage the country, and Zamorna is repeatedly deposed and reinstated.

### GLASS TOWN AND ANGRIAN SOCIETY

Glass Town's social history is equally developed and becomes extraordinarily complex. The royal families of each of the kingdoms have an entourage of friends, associates, servants, and retainers who follow them between their palaces in Verdopolis and their country houses. In the capital itself there are lower-class groups of 'rare lads', bodysnatchers, vagabond Frenchmen, servants, and pugilists (Branwell's favourite sport was boxing) who interact with the 'High Life' in various ways. The professionals and the military mix freely with the aristocracy, united by political alliances and by a common enthusiasm for literature in which many of them take an active part. The Twelves are venerated as the elders of society, but considered too authoritative and serious by the younger generation of gallants. Stumps and Monkey (original Twelves) are retired to islands off the Glass Town coast, whose inhabitants are mocked by Verdopolitans for their bizarre dialect and old-fashioned manners and dress (a parody of provincial Yorkshire compared to London). Branwell's original Frenchyland continues to exercise a political presence through the machinations of Northangerland and Montmorency. Several Glass Town institutions, such as Bravey's Inn, the Great African Games (modelled on the Olympic Games), the Elysium (a type of Masonic society), and the university on Philosopher's Island, have a significant impact on the lives of the inhabitants and events in the saga.

Social life focuses on a group of characters: the Duke of Wellington and his two sons, their friends and admirers, and their enemies. As Wellington becomes an elder statesman, Zamorna moves into centre stage, accompanied by his older sometime friend and enemy Northangerland. The cynical young Lord Charles records Zamorna's marriages (to Helen Gordon, Marian Hume, and Mary Percy), his mistresses (chiefly Mina Laury, Sofala, Rosamond Wellesley, and potentially Caroline Vernon), his children (who are destined to repeat their father's disastrous relationships), friends, and political associates. Zamorna also surrounds himself with artists and writers (based

on British cultural society), all of whom record their own versions of his life and character.

Northangerland has an equally colourful coterie, ranging from former pirates, cattle thieves, and revolutionaries (for example Naughty, Caversham, Simpson, and O'Connor) to French noblemen (like Montmorency) and the Ashantee leader Quashia. As with Zamorna, Glass Town's authors constantly analyse Northangerland's character as it develops from the early pirate and republican revolutionary 'Rogue' ('Rougue' to Branwell) into a sinister and embittered aristocrat on his marriage to Zenobia Ellrington ('Elrington' to Branwell), and finally evolves into the Luciferian villain-hero of Romantic literature. His marriages (to Maria di Segovia, Maria Henrietta Wharton, and Zenobia Ellrington) and mistresses (especially Harriet O'Connor and Louisa Vernon) are as confusing and difficult to reconstruct from individual stories as those of Zamorna. His pathological hatred for his sons, however, contrasts with Zamorna's love for his children. Despite their cruel abandonment as babies, Edward and William Percy work their way back into aristocratic society and continue the theme of rivalry between two brothers, begun by Wellington's two sons—a theme that continues to play itself out in *The Professor* and *Shirley*.[23]

The driving force of the Glass Town and Angrian saga is the complex love-hate relationship between Northangerland and Zamorna. Zamorna's early conflicting attitudes to the 'vile demagogue' are complicated by his marriage to Northangerland's beloved daughter Mary. She becomes a pawn in their political rivalry during the Angrian Wars, for which Northangerland is basically responsible. The wars originate in the republican Northangerland's inability to work for long with any constitutional leader, even his own son-in-law. Their struggle is that of two gigantic personalities fascinated by each other but both lusting for the same power. Resolution of their relationship is impossible and only old age finally subdues their fiery antagonism. Branwell traces Northangerland's career relentlessly to the doors of Pandemonium, in a series of unstructured chronicles. Charlotte at first moves her ideal hero (the early Arthur Wellesley) closer to Northangerland's ruthlessness, indulging in the Byronic personality she now creates for Zamorna (Arthur's new name not only reflects his new title but also his modified personality); but she maintains a realistic attitude towards her egotistical hero through her cynical narrator Lord Charles. In 'Caroline Vernon', her final Angrian tale, Zamorna is viewed as a comic figure, a spent

[23] See 'Two Rival Brothers', in Alexander, *The Early Writings of Charlotte Brontë* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1983), 219–33.



womanizer and despotic ruler; and Charlotte's conventional heroines are beginning to be superseded by the independent Elizabeth Hastings, a prototype of Jane Eyre. Yet it is the flamboyant Zenobia Ellrington, the devoted mistress Mina Laury, and the adolescent Caroline Vernon struggling with her emotions that characterize the heroines of the juvenilia. It is through such women and their relationships with Zamorna that Charlotte can test various responses to men well beyond her likely range of experience, just as 'Northangerland' enabled Branwell to test boundaries.

Charlotte made a formal repudiation of her Angrian writings at the age of 23 and, although she struggled against its influence for several more years and continued to draw on elements of her early creative life in her later writing, her first novel *The Professor* represents a distinct break with her juvenilia. Branwell never made this break: until his death at the age of 31, his poetry and prose remained within the sphere of Angria, his mind imprisoned in and his behaviour largely circumscribed by his early fictional world. Although he published a review of the artist Thomas Bewick and translated at least six Odes of Horace, his final poems, published in local newspapers, were all signed 'Northangerland', the character that had fascinated and obsessed him since the age of 12.

### *The Gondal Saga: Emily and Anne*

Unlike the Glass Town and Angrian saga, the Gondal saga cannot be easily reconstructed. The prose chronicles have disappeared and all that survives to indicate their former existence is a few passing references in Emily and Anne's Diary Papers and fragmentary lists of characters (see Appendices A and B). The Diary Papers were designed to take stock of life and contemplate the future: the sisters agreed to write a paper every three or four years, usually on Emily's birthday, to lock it away in a tin box (rather like a time capsule) and then open it only before writing the next one to assess what changes had taken place in their lives. The papers are particularly significant in revealing the way the imaginative world of Gondal formed an integral part of the sisters' everyday existence. They also indicate, as do the poems, that the plot and characters of Gondal owed much to Glass Town and Angria.

These few brief manuscripts, together with the poetry, are the only evidence we have by which to trace the events and nature of Gondal. Several attempts have been made to detail Gondal's history (these are discussed below); but without the prose manuscripts we can only

glimpse the broad outlines. Even names remain confused and uncertain: the same Gondal character may be referred to in different ways, by initials, titles, Christian or full name, or the same initials may stand for more than one person. There are few narrative clues since the poems represent moments in the Gondal epic, points of intensity or crisis that lend themselves to expression in poetry rather than prose. Only the barest framework can be safely pieced together from available evidence, but it is arguable that this is all that is needed for an appreciation of Emily and Anne's Gondal poetry.

### ORIGINS AND NATURE OF GONDAL

We know from Charlotte and Branwell's manuscripts that Emily and Anne were not always happy with their secondary role in the Glass Town saga. Their characters and tastes were different: their heroes Parry and Ross were a blunt, unpolished Yorkshireman and a sour Scot, and their palaces were square stone buildings with slate roofs. The younger sisters preferred the cold-climate northern hemisphere they knew so well to the balmy African landscape and the high life of the Verdopolitan nobility. Charlotte told her publisher that she had 'always liked Scotland as an idea';[24] and for Emily, in particular, the northern landscape of lakes and mountains—filtered through the pages of Sir Walter Scott's highland romances and James Hogg's writings on Scottish folklore in *Blackwood's*—had a special appeal. The Yorkshire beginnings of Parry's and Ross's Lands were gradually transformed first into the Scottish northern provinces of Glass Town and then into the setting so often evoked in the Gondal poems. Even the names of Gondal heroes were predominantly Scots (see Appendix B), although the influence of the oriental tales of Thomas Moore and Lord Byron are also evident in the poems (see, for example, Emily's 'And now the housedog stretched once more', and Anne's 'Verses by Lady Geralda' and 'Alexander and Zenobia', where the more exotic landscape may reflect the warmer climate of southern Galdine in the Gondal saga). The supreme importance of nature, whether Scottish or Yorkshire, in the Gondal poems, however, owes as much to Emily and Anne's close affinities to Wordsworth as to their own childhood experience of the moors.

From the beginning of the four children's collaborative plays, Emily appears to have asserted her independence. Charlotte's 'History of the Year' records 'Emily's and my bed plays', a secret collaborative

[24] Charlotte Brontë to W. S. Williams, 20 July 1850: M. Smith (ed), *The Letters of Charlotte Brontë* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995–2004), 2. 427.



venture that was probably the origin of much of the Islanders' Play in which Emily seems to have assumed a major role, again in league with Charlotte. Anne performs a role as one of the 'Little Queens' but is not mentioned by name in any of the tales. In 'Tales of the Islanders', the young authors enter their own dramas, interacting with the characters and experiencing their adventures. One of these escapades involves Charlotte and Emily alone, amid the landscape so often evoked in Emily's poems, where 'the wind sweeps with more fearful blast over this wild bleak moor', where mountain sheep graze on the heath and find shelter among the rocks, where the lark springs from his mossy bed as the authors approach. Further, when Charlotte had grown tired of the Islanders' Play (recorded by her in volume 2, October 1829), it was Emily who took the lead, initiating the School Rebellion that looks forward to a central theme of Gondal. There is mutiny at the Palace School and the ringleaders are her characters, 'little Johnny Lockhart' and the Princess Victoria.

The concept of a female authority figure seems to have been peculiar to Emily. Her early fascination with the Princess Victoria, only ten months younger than herself, informs the Gondal saga, setting it apart from the male-dominated power structures of Glass Town. Suddenly thrust into the limelight in 1830 as heir to the British throne, Princess Victoria was adopted as a central player by Emily and her character and fortune reconfigured with that of another Brontë heroine, Mary, Queen of Scots, whose tragic life of suspicion, murder, lovers, imprisonment, and death permeates the Gondal saga.[25] Seven years later Emily's interest in Victoria had not abated: she recorded the young queen's imminent ascension to the throne in her Diary Paper of 26 June 1837, and transposed the event into her Gondal setting (Appendix A).

When Emily and Anne established their own imaginary world in 1831, after Charlotte's departure for Roe Head, they took with them much of the Glass Town formula: the concept of islands, the wild moorland scenery, a powerful princess, the struggles of a predominantly royalist world, and even some names. The name 'Almeida', for example, reappears in Gondal as 'Almeda' (sometimes even spelt 'Almeida'), and 'Augusta' suggests not only Byron's half-sister 'Augusta' but Augusta di Segovia, Branwell's wicked femme fatale in the Glass Town saga. Much of Zamorna's early 'Scottish' past, derived from Byron's Gordon relations, is replayed in Gondal. The Gondalian 'Unique Society', wrecked on a desert island, recalls the secret society of Glass Town

[25] For Mary, Queen of Scots as a Brontë heroine, see Alexander and Smith, *Oxford Companion to the Brontës*, 322.

nobles on Philosopher's Island. As in the Islanders' Play, the 'Princes & Princesses' of Gondal are besieged within the Palace of Instruction, some kept as prisoners in vaulted dungeons. In the Islanders' Play, it was Emily who kept the key to the cells for 'naughty school children': 'These cells are dark, vaulted, arched and so far down in the earth that the loudest shriek could not be heard by any inhabitant of the upper world, and in these, as well as the dungeons, the most unjust torturing might go on without any fear of detection.'[26] Dungeons proliferate in Gondal. Savage passion, imprisonment, murder, and rebellion were to be the hallmarks of the new saga.

Other habits from the early plays also influenced Gondal. The methods of acting out events and of writing episodes in random order are particular features of Gondal. Even at the age of 27, during a train journey to York, Emily persuaded Anne to join her in playing at being a variety of characters 'escaping from the palaces of instruction to join the Royalists who are hard driven at present by the victorious Republicans' (Diary Paper, 30 July 1845). In the same Diary Paper, Emily mentions that she is writing the First War that took place at the beginning of the saga dated elsewhere in the 1820s. There was once a detailed chronology of Gondal, as the dating on the various poems confirms, but they are not written in the saga's chronological order. As in the Gondal and Angrian saga, the same events could be recalled and rewritten at different times. They function as a storehouse for the young authors to plunder as the occasion arises.

### THE KINGDOM OF GONDAL AND ITS RECONSTRUCTION

The central focus of the saga is the island of Gondal in the North Pacific, divided into four kingdoms and ruled by rival families, suggestive of the Shakespearean rivalries in *Romeo and Juliet*. In a landscape of wild moorland, harsh winter winds and snows, a drama of rebellion and betrayal in love and war is played out, as the enmity between the central characters is explored. The poems focus especially on the violent passions of the strong-willed heroine Augusta Geraldine Almeda (A.G.A.) and on the power struggle of Julius Brenzaida, who at one time was either her husband or lover.[27] The action moves between Gondal,

[26] Alexander *EEW* 1. 24.

[27] Lara Hinkley adds a third and less plausible possibility, suggesting two generations of Gondal history (see Derek Roper, *The Poems of Emily Brontë* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), App. 7): the first dominated by Julius Brenzaida and the second by his daughter, whom she identifies as A.G.A.; a reading endorsed by Robert and Louise Barnard in *A Brontë Encyclopedia* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2007), 126–7.



whose capital is Regina, and the recently discovered Gaaldine, an island in the South Pacific, also divided into kingdoms but with a contrasting tropical climate and verdant landscape. After friction between the Royalists, civil war breaks out and the Republicans gain the upper hand. A.G.A. becomes Queen of Gondal, but is murdered during the civil war, the topic of Emily's final poem.

The heroine A.G.A. is the subject and speaker of many of Emily's poems. She is a passionate dark beauty, ruthless in both political and personal relationships, a female alternative to the Byronic heroes of Glass Town and Angria. When she tires of Amedeus, the lover of her childhood friend Angelica, she sends them both into exile. After an affair and marriage with Alfred Sidonia of Aspin Castle, she abandons him to die of a broken heart. Her relationship with Alexander, Lord of Elbë, also ends in his violent death by Lake Elnor. Fernando De Samara meets a similar fate: A.G.A. loves, imprisons, then drives him into exile and suicide. And when her 'passionate youth was nearly past', she is murdered by the outlaw Douglas at the instigation of Angelica, while alone on Elmor Hill. The faithful Lord Eldred contemplates her tempestuous life that inspired both hate and devotion but never fulfilled its promise.

Julius Brenzaida, Prince of Angora, is equally ambitious and ruthless. He is educated with Gondal's other nobles, but imprisoned in 1825 (Gondal chronology) for his involvement with the ambitious Rosina Alcona, whom he probably married. Other lovers include Geraldine Sidonia, whom he left grieving over their child in Zedora. He conquers Almedore in Gaaldine and, as King, he breaks his promise of union with Gerald Exina, warring against him for the throne of Gondal. Eventually Julius is made emperor, but soon assassinated (possibly by Amedeus) in his palace, where Rosina lies ill. Fifteen years later, Rosina laments his loss over his grave 'on Angora's shore', probably on his estate ('Cold in the earth').

This brief structure of events, woven around two central characters, can be gleaned from available evidence; other attempts to provide a detailed chronology are more speculative. Some critics have seen all of Emily's poems as part of a single epic, arranging them in a sequence to show Gondal representing '*Wuthering Heights* in the making'.[28] Others

[28] Fannie Ratchford, *Gondal's Queen* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1955), 27. C. W. Hatfield (*Complete Poems of Emily Jane Brontë*) endorsed Ratchford's influential reconstruction, much of which has proved correct; but problems remain with her identification of three characters as the single heroine A.G.A. and the grouping of all Emily's poems to fit this pattern.

focused on the imaginative transformation of Gondal characters into Catherine, Heathcliff, and Edgar.[29] Yet other critics maintained a rigid separation between Gondal and non-Gondal poetry, reducing the importance of Gondal and arguing its regressive influence on the quality of both Emily and Anne's work. They condemned Gondal verse as 'Byronic melodrama' and 'pseudo-martial rubbish'.[30]

Emily herself appears to give support to the idea of separation since she copied her work into two notebooks in February 1844, one initialled 'E.J.B.' (E.J.B. Notebook; also referred to as the Honresfeld manuscript) and the other headed 'Gondal Poems' ('Gondal Poems' Notebook). In the 'Gondal Poems' Notebook the verse appears to follow a chronology and to be grouped around certain characters, whereas the E.J.B. Notebook includes essentially personal lyrics with no specific Gondal references. From 1844 on, Emily added new poems to each notebook, ostensibly making a distinction between Gondal and non-Gondal verse. However, a third notebook she copied poems from, known as the Ashley MS, made no distinction between 'personal' and Gondal poetry. One poem in particular ('O Dream, where art thou now?') was transcribed without change into the E.J.B. Notebook and four others were copied into the 'Gondal Poems' Notebook.[31] The fact that not all the poems were copied suggests that Emily was selecting the best, perhaps for future anonymous publication[32] and that she was selecting from poetry that in her mind had a unified vision but that needed to be 'deGondalized' for other readers. The distinction between Gondal and non-Gondal, then, may not be so clear-cut as is generally believed, and its persistent use seems designed to discourage biographical readings.[33]

More recent critics, while often acknowledging an ostensible Gondal and non-Gondal division, prefer to see Emily's work as a whole. They argue that the same preoccupations occur in all her poetry, the same

[29] See esp. Mary Visick, *The Genesis of Wuthering Heights* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1958). Further summaries of Gondal reconstructions can be found in Derek Roper, *The Poems of Emily Brontë* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1992), App. 7, and in Janet Gezari; *Emily Jane Brontë: The Complete Poems*, xxix–xxxii.

[30] Derek Stanford, in Muriel Spark and Derek Stanford, *Emily Brontë: Her Life and Work* (London: Peter Owen), 143–4.

[31] 'Lord of Elbë, on Elbë hill', 'O wander not so far away!', 'To the bluebell', and 'From our evening fireside now'.

[32] Fannie Ratchford first put forward the view that Emily probably thought of publication before Charlotte suggested it to her (*Gondal's Queen*, 31–2).

[33] See e.g. Lucasta Miller, *The Brontë Myth* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2003), 252, where Virginia Moore's 'sensationalist' 1936 personal reading of 'The Prisoner' is countered by the narrative Gondal context; although Miller concedes that the poem 'does have a penumbra of metaphorical meaning'.



exploration of the constraint and limitation of human existence, and the same element of dramatization.[34] Seemingly personal poems, like 'Well some may hate and some may scorn', need not refer specifically to a dead person in Emily's experience. It is not hard to imagine that many of the poems classified as 'personal' might have originally been spoken by Gondal characters, whose views reflect those of their creator ('Shall Earth no more inspire thee', for example); certainly a number of these personal poems either discuss the source of Emily's imaginative experience ('Alone I sat' and 'I'll come when thou art saddest') or directly address her 'God of Visions' (as in 'To Imagination'). Her poems are chiefly dramatic lyrics, spoken by imagined characters at particular moments in time. Gondal allows Emily a lyric impersonality: she can participate in different scenarios, write with abandon and yet write intensely out of her own experience.

Thus when Emily came to select poems for the sisters' joint publication of *Poems* in 1846, after Charlotte's dramatic discovery of one of her manuscript notebooks, she needed to alter only the occasional Gondal word to make her poems appear personal (see the Explanatory Notes to Emily's poems). Even the simple removal of the Gondal speaker's initials might suggest the poem is personal, as in 'Song' (beginning 'The linnet in the rocky dells'). And even after the publication of *Wuthering Heights*, Emily still found in her epic world a source of inspiration for her personal concerns. As late as May 1848, seven months before her death, she was working on a Gondal civil war poem: she never abandoned her imaginary world. As she stated in her Diary Paper of 1845: 'We intend sticking firm by the rascals as long as they delight us.'

In Emily's case, then, it is more constructive to see her poetic vision whole. Although her poems selected for this edition are generally her more obvious Gondal ones, other important poems (such as 'To Imagination') are included because they express the same concerns as those of the Gondal saga or have been inspired by similar powerfully imagined situations.

There is no such problem with Anne's Gondal poems; they can be clearly distinguished. Comparatively few poems by Anne exist, approximately fifty-three compared to some two hundred by Emily, and of these just under half were composed within a Gondal context. Anne's Gondal poems can be divided into two groups, based on periods when she was at home: her earliest extant poems written

[34] See e.g. Lyn Pykett, *Emily Brontë*, (London: Macmillan, 1989), 69. Louise and Robert Barnard point out that 'the personal or confessional note is comparatively rare' in the so-called 'personal' poems (*Brontë Encyclopedia*, 272).

between 1836 and 1838, when she was aged 16–18, and those written between late 1845 (after she left Thorp Green) and 1846. This does not appear to have been accidental. From the beginning she seems to have followed Emily's lead, writing about Gondal almost entirely under her influence (with the sole exception of her 30 July 1841 Diary Paper). Like Emily, Anne continued to exploit the Gondal context throughout her life, but her involvement with the saga was never as intense or as committed as that of her sister.

As Anne matured and gained a greater experience of the outside world than Emily, she seems to have deliberately distinguished, in a way that Emily never did, between the fantasy she wished to retain for Emily's sake and her own increasingly personal concerns about her role in life and her relationship with God. Comparisons between her few letters and her personal poetry reveal that her practice was that of her heroine Agnes Grey, who considered her poems as 'relics of past sufferings and experience, like pillars of witness set up in travelling through the vale of life, to mark particular occurrences' (*Agnes Grey*, ch. 17). The heroine of Anne's earliest poem ('Verses by Lady Geralda', 1836) reflects keenly her author's endurance and determination: despite a profound sense of loss and sadness, this Gondal heroine leaves home, as Anne herself did two months before, happy in the prospect of activity. Even in her Gondal poetry, Anne was already articulating the personal concerns that were to become the hallmark of her philosophical and religious poems.

Ellen Nussey noted that Emily and Anne were 'like twins' during their early years, but as they grew older Emily's obsessive desire for privacy, particularly from her family whom she felt might misunderstand her, meant that even Anne was increasingly excluded from a knowledge of what she had written. Emily's pen-and-ink sketch that fills approximately a third of the Diary Paper manuscript of 26 June 1837 shows the sisters in a collaborative venture. Anne is seated at the top left of a table, leaning on her elbows thinking. Emily is facing Anne with her back to the viewer and on the table are books, papers, and 'The Tin Box', in which the papers were kept. Yet the accompanying text makes clear that despite this proximity, the two writers were not fully aware of the content of each other's work. Anne knows that Emily is writing 'the Emperor Julius's life', since she has heard some of it and wants 'very much to hear the rest', but Emily is silent about the poetry she is writing and Anne is left to record 'I wonder what it is about?' Furthermore, only a few character names were used by both sisters, suggesting they were responsible for different characters and kingdoms in the saga.



Although Emily and Anne both used the same memorandums and chronologies, drawn up in the early stages of Gondal, their compositions appear to have been independently conceived.

## THE SIGNIFICANCE OF GONDAL

The importance of collaboration in the early writing lives of the Brontës cannot be underestimated in its contribution to their literary development.[35] Anne's first novel *Agnes Grey* follows a straightforward linear structure strongly suggestive of the autobiographical Gondal chronicles she and Emily were writing: 'Augustus-Almedas life 1st v.', 'the Emperor Julius's life', 'the 4th volume of Sofala Vernon's life', and 'the third volume of passages in the life of an Individual' (Appendix A). Although preceded and followed by references to Gondal, it is thought that the latter may refer to an early draft of *Agnes Grey*.

Gondal is of particular importance, however, in relation to Emily Brontë's only novel, *Wuthering Heights*. The relationship between the two is inescapable: not only do we find similar themes, associations, and images which strongly suggest that the novel grew out of the saga,[36] but Emily continued writing about Gondal after her novel was completed. Numerous parallels have been detected, such as a dark, inscrutable Gondal child similar to Heathcliff, and a theme of childhood contrast, recorded in the Explanatory Notes to this edition. More significant than detailed parallels, however, Emily's poetry can be seen as providing 'the emotional and spiritual context' for *Wuthering Heights*.[37]

For Emily, both poetry and novel were clearly 'hewn' in the same 'wild workshop'.[38] As in *Wuthering Heights*, the Gondal poetry is dominated by situations of isolation, exile, revenge, and death. Characters lament their separation and imprisonment, often from a loved one as a result of death. Like the relationship between Heathcliff and Catherine,

[35] In *The Birth of Wuthering Heights* (London: Macmillan, 1998), Edward Chitham extrapolates from Gondal poems Emily's working techniques in *Wuthering Heights* and supports his detailed chronology for the composition of the novel by showing how Gondal was transposed into *Wuthering Heights*.

[36] Mary Visick's *Genesis of Wuthering Heights* provides a useful list of 'possible parallels' between Gondal and the novel.

[37] Janet Gezari, *Last Things: Emily Brontë's Poems* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 4. Gezari's fascinating study examines Emily's poetry in relation to her overwhelming preoccupation with Death and its relation to the joy of life and to eternity; she makes no distinction between Gondal and non-Gondal poems, focusing instead on the way the poetry works as Romantic lyric and philosophical statement. Her notion of 'intentional dreaming' (p. 7) is helpful in understanding the personal nature of the 'Gondal' poems.

[38] Charlotte Brontë, Preface to 1850 edition of *Wuthering Heights*.

their loyalties are strong and their emotions violent. The beauties of nature, especially the wind and the moors, console and bring spiritual release to Gondal's prisoners. Life in Gondal is dominated by a pervading sense of confinement, sometimes physical and sometimes spiritual, where the speaker is chained by powerful emotions, memories, and the consequences of action. In such a world, death becomes a liberating alternative. Unlike the Glass Town and Angrian saga, where relationships can be redeemed and lives remade, events in Gondal are final and players in 'Earth's dungeon tomb' must reconcile themselves to a life of 'change and suffering' ('Cold in the earth').

In 'Julian M. and A.G. Rochelle', vision and imagination offer the captive a means of transcending the 'living grave' of prison bondage. Paradoxically, A.G. Rochelle is rescued from her dungeon existence by a nightly 'messenger of Hope', who presages a visionary experience that raises her to a reality beyond her physical restriction. Immured instead within this recurring vision that is 'divine', she is reconciled to the 'unapproved' sentence of this world's 'gloom and desolate despair'. Again, in the more simple lyric 'I'm happiest when most away', the speaker rejoices in the soul's transcendence of mortal limits. The sense of liberty expressed in this poem represents the same need that Charlotte documented so urgently in her *Roe Head Journal*; and the wind brings the same small voice that would herald relief from 'this world's desolate and boundless deluge'. Emily's visionary world became habitual and sustaining, a form of practised meditation that could free the poetic mind from the confines of a circumscribed and bigoted world.

Anne, too, found relief in Gondal from the limitations imposed on the lives of young Victorian women. Like Emily she came to see her own condition as a kind of imprisonment, with few alternatives of escape. Her prisoners glimpse in dreams the consolation of love—a physical love grounded in reality, unlike Emily's visionary consolation—but, denied such human joys, they resign themselves to the permanence of captivity. Their loved ones are equally constrained, denied the emotional sustenance of their relationship. In 'Weep not too much, my darling', acceptance of this 'dungeon gloom' and possible delivery from 'fruitless yearnings' comes in an imaginative identification with the loved one's experience of nature, drawn as it is from the memories of past pleasures of 'Nature's bounties'. For Anne, the natural world does not alter; it is the speaker's perception that changes and that can be changed again by memory and (particularly in her later and more personal poems) by belief in an all-loving God, author of the natural landscape that provides so much consolation. Even within the world of



Gondal, Anne's faith and hope in life contrasts with Emily's dogged stoicism and points towards the high ideals expressed in *Agnes Grey* and in Anne's last brave poem where she still desires to do good in the world despite the news of devastating illness.[39]

Gondal has been called 'the secret room in Emily Brontë's imagination'.[40] The poetry allows us only glimpses of a creative space occupied by stories of personal resilience, powerful love, and tragedy that would find their ultimate expression in Emily's great novel *Wuthering Heights*. Yet Gondal, like Glass Town and Angria, was not so much an alternative to the actual world as 'a way to write about that world';[41] it provided 'occasions for powerful poems'. Through Gondal both sisters discovered the resources of poetry for spiritual and emotional expression. As the sisters grew older, Anne—once as close as a twin—gradually ceased to share Emily's personal vision of the saga, just as the partnership between Charlotte and Branwell slowly disintegrated as their interests and aesthetic vision changed with maturity. There can be no doubt, however, that their early collaboration provided a unique imaginary world that was both workshop and playground. Using the biblical images of the mustard seed and almond rod, both planted in youth, Charlotte describes the momentous effect Glass Town, Angria, and Gondal had on the lives of herself and her siblings:

> The mustard-seed on distant land
> Bends down a mighty tree,
> The dry unbudding almond-wand
> Has touched eternity.

The young Brontës nourished each other's imaginations and developed in their youthful writings the independent styles and themes that can be seen fully developed in their mature poetry and famous novels.

[39] 'A dreadful darkness closes in' (Chitham (ed.), *Poems of Anne Brontë* (London: Macmillan, 1979, repr. 1987), 163–4), written after news of her incurable tuberculosis.

[40] Nina Auerbach, 'This Changeful Life: Emily Brontë's Anti-Romance', in Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar (eds.), *Shakespeare's Sisters: Feminist Essays on Women Poets* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1970), 49.

[41] Gezari, *Last Things*, 59.

# NOTE ON THE TEXT

This selection from the Brontës' writings is designed to illustrate the collaborative nature of their early creative life, and the progression of their youthful plays into the elaborate sagas of Glass Town and Angria, and Gondal. The Brontës continued to write poems and stories associated with their childhood creations well into their twenties and even beyond, making subject matter rather than the authors' ages the most useful basis for selection from their so-called juvenilia.[1] I have therefore chosen material that is clearly related to their imaginary worlds. In Emily's case the choice is nuanced: because it is important to view all Emily's poetry as the product of a single imaginative source, several of her most significant poems that are often considered 'personal' are also included, since they too can be seen as articulating both her Gondal characters' and her own concerns. The volume of Charlotte's early writings is greater than all her novels, and Branwell's juvenilia are equally voluminous. In the case of Emily and Anne, only six early Diary Papers with brief references to Gondal and a few notes survive in prose (see Appendices A and B), and selection must be made from their body of surviving poetry. I have tried to keep in check the temptation to include more of the larger sample of Charlotte's and Branwell's juvenilia, and to concentrate on texts that are most representative of their shared nature and intertextuality. Above all this edition seeks to convey the frenetic family activity, the sheer mass and literary allusiveness of the young Brontës' all-encompassing imaginative world.

The text of this edition has been prepared from the surviving holograph manuscripts, with the exceptions of the 'E.J.B.' Notebook poems (also known as the Honresfeld Manuscript and available only in facsimile) and 'Two Romantic Tales' (available in an early transcription). All sources and manuscript details, including significant variants in early drafts, are recorded in the Explanatory Notes. Although eight of Emily's and four of Anne's poems in this edition were published in the 1846 edition of *Poems* arranged by the Brontë sisters themselves, I have chosen to include the manuscript versions that were composed as part of the Gondal saga rather than the published versions where all Gondal references were removed for a general audience; the changes made on

[1] In the case of the Brontës, the term 'juvenilia' is generally extended beyond its common meaning of works produced in an author's youth.



publication are listed in the Explanatory Notes.[2] The text follows the manuscripts closely (including the layout of headings and signatures), while recognizing that a printed transcription must diverge from a handwritten source in certain ways and that the aim of this edition is to produce an accessible version of the Brontës' early writings for general readers and students.

The Brontës' original grammar (including errors) and their often idiosyncratic word division have been retained; for example *up-stairs*, *upstairs*, and *up stairs*, which the *OED* notes were all in common usage in the nineteenth century. Other idiosyncrasies and inconsistencies, which form part of the texture of the writing, such as capitals in display print and abbreviations (for example, the use of initial letters for names, *&c* for *etc*, and ampersand—except where it begins a sentence) have also been preserved. Archaisms, which often reflect the Brontës' sources, are preserved in the texts (for example, *devine* for *divine*); all four Brontës were inclined to use both modern and obsolete spellings of the same word indiscriminately. They also frequently used alternative spellings of the same word (for example, *inquire* and *enquire*); both spellings for such words can be found in this edition, often in the same story. It may be surprising to discover that apparently incorrect words like *cheif*, *accuratly*, *deafning*, and *untill* are used in the King James Version of the Bible and in editions of Shakespeare, Milton, and other writers read by the Brontës; and the past tense of common verbs like *to eat* could still be rendered alternatively *ate* or *eat* in the nineteenth century. However, spelling errors (including the common confusion of *their* for *there*, *were* for *where*, *whos* for *whose*, *you're* for *your*) have been corrected, and occasional letters left off the beginning or end of a word owing to speed of writing have been replaced as in a spelling correction (for example, where *the* should be *they*, *of* should be *off*, *as* should be *has*). Less perfunctory omissions of words and parts of words have been inserted and signalled by square brackets (for example, proceed[ed]). French accents and spelling errors have been corrected or noted. The occasional repeated or redundant word mistakenly left in the text when an authorial change was made has been omitted. The spelling of historical names and places has been corrected; but the variant spellings

[2] In most cases these variants illustrate the removal of Gondal references for publication, often altering the context to such an extent that it could be argued that several manuscript poems revised for the 1846 edition represent different versions rather than early drafts of the same poem (as in the case of Emily's 'Julian M. and A.G. Rochelle').

of names and places in the sagas have been preserved, except for inconsistent hyphenation and where spellings are inconsistent in the same manuscript. The variant spellings of names and places reflect different usage by the authors. For example, the spellings *Ellrington*, *Wellesley*, *Rogue*, *Sdeath*, *Jibbel Kumri* generally identify Charlotte's manuscripts, whereas Branwell often uses the spellings *Elrington*, *Wellesly*, *Rougue* or *Rouge*, *Sdeath*, and *Jibbel Kumrii*. And Charlotte's spelling of *Free-Town* in 'The Spell' indicates an earlier manuscript than 'Caroline Vernon' where her predominant spelling is *Freetown*, as in the capital of Sierra Leone (then a British Colony) on which the imaginary town is based.

A distinction has been made between prose (including poems occurring in a prose text) and poetry texts in the treatment of punctuation. In the prose the erratic manuscript punctuation has been altered and missing punctuation supplied while still preserving much of the original, including some idiosyncratic punctuation in display headings. In Charlotte's manuscripts, for example, her habit of indicating punctuation with dashes has been retained where possible but dashes that simply fill the end of a line have been omitted. Generally her dashes are used indiscriminately but occasionally they represent her headlong style, as when she is keen to reflect her narrator's excitement or a character's thoughts, rather like Jane Austen's indirect narrative style. Paragraphs have been introduced where necessary (including a new line for a new speaker) in what would otherwise frequently be pages of unbroken prose text. In the poetry, where the layout is clearer for the reader and the rhythm and syntax more idiosyncratic, manuscript punctuation has been preserved even where ambiguities exist since they may indicate meaning. The sole exceptions are where I have felt it necessary to complete quotation marks, remove or add very occasional punctuation (recorded in notes), and regularize apostrophes for possessives, contractions, and elisions (as, for example, in Emily's use of *o'er* and *'twas*). In line with this policy, capitalization has been regularized in the prose manuscripts since it appears not to show nineteenth-century practice but to have been used indiscriminately, making the preservation of irregular capitals meaningless. In poetry manuscripts, however, decisions about capitalization are less clear-cut and may indicate emphasis. I have therefore preserved the idiosyncratic capitalization within poems since it is less frequent and again may carry meaning; but I have added capitals in a few titles and at the beginning of lines where necessary. Nevertheless, because of the minuscule scripts, distinguishing



in transcription between some capital and lower-case letters (such as *s*, *f*, *m*, and *w*) remains problematic.

Despite the use of a magnifying glass to assist in deciphering the minuscule script of the Brontës' early writings, some readings must remain conjectural; all such readings are noted in square brackets with a question mark. Editorial insertions are made in square brackets, as indicated above, and have been kept to a minimum; these are used chiefly in Branwell's stories to replace parts of words that have been torn or crumbled away at the edge of a manuscript where the paper has deteriorated. In several of Charlotte's early manuscripts, too, parts of words are obliterated by ink blots and the ends of words are missing at the edges of the page because of the way the little booklets have been divided and the pages mounted by early book collectors. Branwell's relatively neat but minute hand is difficult to decipher (letters like *t* and *l*, *r* and *v* can be easily confused); and his rapid composition resulted in little or no punctuation, random pen marks and dashes that are easily confused with possible punctuation, and sporadic paragraphing.

Sample facsimile pages from Charlotte and Branwell's earliest works have been included (p. 2) to illustrate the editorial problems and the difficulty of transcription and also to demonstrate the highly developed sense of design and 'publication' implicit in their attitudes towards their writing. Their concern for the layout of their text was developed in imitation of adult magazines and books, and this has been reproduced in headings, signatures, and general format in this edition, with only occasional minor alterations. For example, I have used italics to represent Charlotte's longhand script where she has deliberately distinguished her own signature and date of composition from the minuscule printed script of her pseudonymous signature 'Charles Wellesley'. In her later novelettes where she was less concerned with layout, I have introduced the headings 'Part 1' and 'Part 2' to clarify the divisions she indicates by her chapter headings. Most of Anne's poems are fair copies, written in a neat, clear longhand, unlike her siblings who were less amenable to Mr Brontë's admonitions to write 'in a good, plain, and legible hand'.[3] She used minuscule script only for drafts and for occasional signatures, dates, and line numbers (represented in the text in italics); her manuscripts exhibit few of the problems encountered in the transcription of Emily's untidy minuscule script. A facsimile page is included to represent Emily and

[3] Comment by Mr Brontë at the top of the first page of one of Anne Brontë's notebooks, Princeton University Library.

Anne's collaborative Diary Papers (p. 486); this particular manuscript, written by Emily, demonstrates her lack of concern for mechanics that is perhaps as significant as her siblings' concern for neatness and design, suggesting her lack of interest in public performance and the more private nature of her imaginary world. The first page of her 'Gondal Poems' Notebook, with its decorated heading (illustrated on p. 392), however, is an exception that recalls the pride in book-making she shared with her siblings.

# SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

There is a mass of published material on the Brontës and yet surprisingly little has been written on their early writings, apart from chapters in biographies or critical volumes. In the following list I have tried to indicate the most useful titles, arranged chronologically within each category.

Readers are also advised to consult Christine Alexander and Margaret Smith, *The Oxford Companion to the Brontës* (2003), which contains feature articles on juvenilia, Glass Town and Angrian saga, Gondal saga, Diary Papers, devoirs, and poetry; detailed entries on characters and places in the sagas; and further guidance to other sources.

The Oxford World's Classics editions of the Brontë novels are also recommended; they include the text of the authoritative Clarendon Edition produced under the general editorship of Ian Jack.

## EDITIONS OF THE JUVENILIA

Alexander, Christine (ed.), *An Edition of the Early Writings of Charlotte Brontë*, vol. 1. *The Glass Town Saga 1826–1832* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1987); vol. 2. *The Rise of Angria 1833–1835*: part 1, *1833–1834*, part 2, *1834–1835* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1991); vol. 3 (forthcoming).

Barker, Juliet (ed.), *Charlotte Brontë: Juvenilia 1829–1835* (London: Penguin, 1996).

Gérin, Winifred (ed.), *Five Novelettes* (London: Folio Press, 1971).

Glen, Heather (ed.), *Charlotte Brontë: Tales of Angria* (London: Penguin, 2006).

Neufeldt, Victor (ed.), *The Works of Patrick Branwell Brontë: An Edition*, vol. 1 (New York: Garland, 1997), vols. 2 and 3 (1999).

Shorter, Clement, and Hatfield, C. W. (eds.), *The Twelve Adventurers and Other Stories* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1925).

Wise, Thomas James, and Symington, John Alexander (eds.), *The Miscellaneous and Unpublished Writings of Charlotte and Patrick Branwell Brontë* (The Shakespeare Head Brontë), 2 vols.: 1 (1936) and 2 (1938).

## EDITIONS OF THE POETRY

Barker, Juliet R. V. (ed.), *The Brontës: Selected Poems* (London: Dent, 1985).

Bell, Currer (ed.), *Wuthering Heights and Agnes Grey* (London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1850).

[Brontë], *Poems by Currer, Ellis, and Acton Bell* (London: Aylott & Jones, 1846).

Chitham, Edward (ed.), *The Poems of Anne Brontë: A New Text and Commentary* (London: Macmillan, 1979; repr. 1987).

Gezari, Janet (ed.), *Emily Jane Brontë: The Complete Poems* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1992).

1846 *Poems* by Currer, Ellis, and Acton Bell published by Aylott & Jones (May), only two copies sold. Charlotte offers 'three tales' (*The Professor*, *Wuthering Heights*, and *Agnes Grey*) to Aylott & Jones for publication; they decline but offer advice (6 Apr.). During the next year the MSS are rejected by five more publishers. Patrick Brontë's sight restored by cataract operation and, while nursing him in Manchester, Charlotte begins *Jane Eyre*. Anne writes her final Gondal poem 'Gloomily the clouds are sailing' (Oct.).

1847 Thomas Cautley Newby accepts Emily's *Wuthering Heights* and Anne's *Agnes Grey* for publication but not Charlotte's *The Professor*; Smith, Elder and Co. also reject it but accept *Jane Eyre* which is published to immediate acclaim (19 Oct.). Newby hastily publishes *Wuthering Heights* and *Agnes Grey* together in 3 vols., confusing the Bell authorship (beg. Dec.).

1848 Emily writes her final poem 'Why ask to know' (13 May). Anne's second novel *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall* by Acton Bell, published in three volumes by Newby (*c.*June). Charlotte and Anne travel to London to prove there is more than one author named 'Bell' and are entertained by publisher George Smith (7–11 July). Branwell dies of chronic bronchitis and marasmus (24 Sept.) aged 31. Emily dies of pulmonary tuberculosis (19 Dec.) aged 30.

1849 Anne dies of pulmonary tuberculosis at Scarborough (28 May), aged 29. Charlotte's novel *Shirley* published by Smith, Elder (26 Oct.).

1850 Charlotte's 'edited' edition of *Wuthering Heights* and *Agnes Grey*, published with 'Notice' about her sisters and a selection of their poems (10 Dec.).

1853 *Villette*, Charlotte's final novel, published by Smith, Elder (28 Jan.).

1854 Charlotte marries Revd Arthur Bell Nicholls, her father's curate (29 Jan.).

1855 Charlotte dies in early stages of pregnancy (31 Mar.); outlived by her father (d. 1861) and husband (d. 1906).

1857 Elizabeth Gaskell's *Life of Charlotte Brontë* published in two volumes (25 Mar.). *The Professor, A Tale* by Currer Bell, published in two volumes by Smith, Elder and Co., with a preface by Nicholls (6 June).

# CHARLOTTE BRONTË

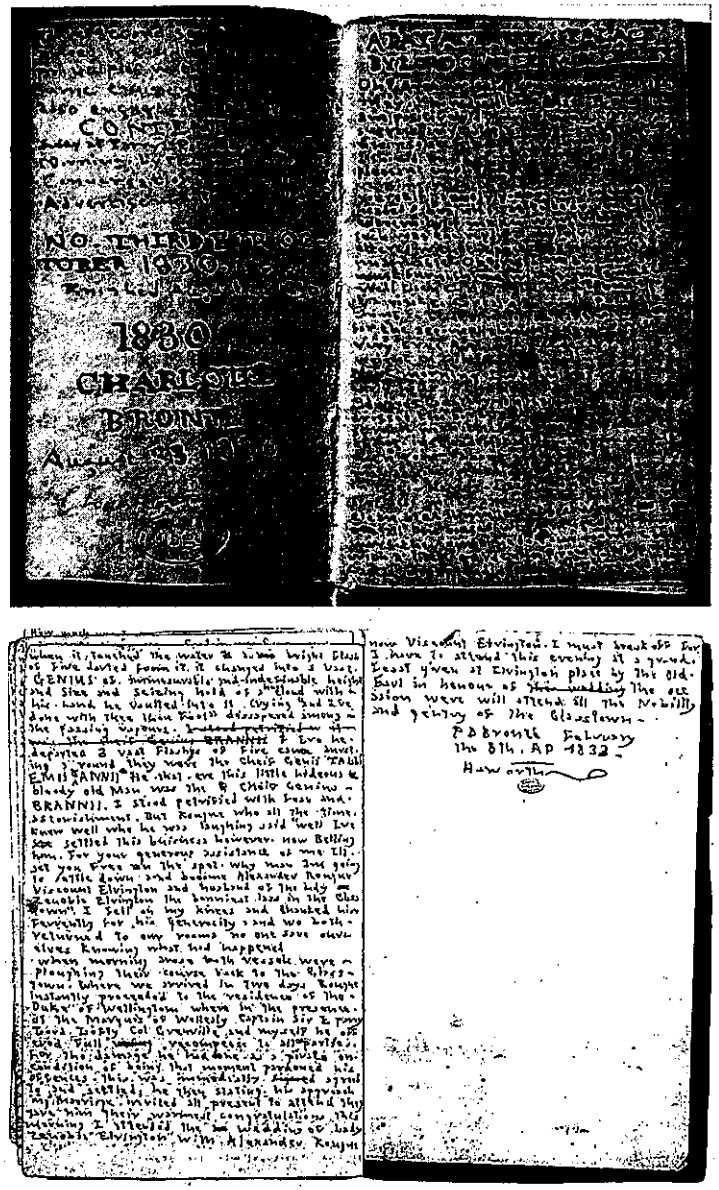



**Plate 1:** (a) The *Young Men's Magazine* for October 1830, 'edited' by Charlotte Brontë; and (b) the final pages of Branwell Brontë's *The Pirate* (courtesy of the Brontë Parsonage Museum).

## The History of the Year

Once Papa lent my sister Maria* a book. It was an old geography and she wrote on its blank leaf, 'Papa lent me this book'. The book is an hundred and twenty years old. It is at this moment lying before me while I write this. I am in the kitchen of the parsonage house, Haworth. Tabby the servant* is washing up after breakfast and Anne, my youngest sister (Maria was my eldest), is kneeling on a chair looking at some cakes which Tabby has been baking for us. Emily is in the parlour brushing it. Papa and Branwell are gone* to Keighley. Aunt* is up stairs in her room and I am sitting by the table writing this in the kitchin.

Keighley is a small town four miles from here. Papa and Branwell are gone for the newspaper, the Leeds Intelligencer, a most excellent Tory news paper edited by M$^{r}$ [Edwa]rd Wood [for] the proprietor M$^{r}$ Hernaman.* We take 2 and see three newspapers a week. We take the Leeds Intelligencer, party-Tory, and the Leeds Mercury,* Whig, edited by M$^{r}$ Baines and his brother, son in law and his 2 sons, Edward and Talbot. We see the John Bull; it is a High Tory, very violent. M$^{r}$ Driver* lends us it, as likewise Blackwood's Magazine, the most able periodical there is. The editor is M$^{r}$ Christopher North,* an old man, 74 years of age. The 1st of April is his birthday. His company are Timothy Tickler, Morgan O'Doherty, Macrabin, Mordecai Mullion, Warrell, and James Hogg,* a man of most extraordinary genius, a Scottish shepherd.

Our plays were established: Young Men, June 1826; Our Fellows, July 1827; Islanders, December 1827. Those are our three great plays that are not kept secret. Emily's and my bed plays were established the 1$^{st}$ December 1827, the others March 1828. Bed plays mean secret plays. They are very nice ones. All our plays are very strange ones. Their nature I need not write on paper, for I think I shall always remember them. The Young Men play took its rise from some wooden soldiers Branwell had, Our Fellows from Aesop's Fables,* and the Islanders from several events which happened. I will sketch out the origin of our plays more explicitly if I can.

### Young Men's*

Papa bought Branwell some soldiers at Leeds.* When Papa came home it was night and we were in bed, so next morning Branwell came to our door with a box of soldiers. Emily and I jumped out of bed and I snatched up one and exclaimed, 'This is the Duke of Wellington! It shall be mine!'* When I said this, Emily likewise took one and said

it should be hers. When Anne came down she took one also. Mine was the prettiest of the whole and perfect in every part. Emily's was a grave-looking fellow. We called him Gravey. Anne's was a queer little thing, very much like herself. He was called Waiting Boy. Branwell chose Bonaparte.*

March 12 1829

## 'The origin of the O'Dears'*

The origin of the O'Dears was as follows. We pretended we had each a large island inhabited by people 6 miles high. The people we took out of Aesop's Fables. Hay Man was my cheif man, Boaster Branwell's, Hunter Anne's, and Clown* Emily's. Our cheif men were 10 miles high excep[t] Emily's, who was only 4. March 12, 1829

## 'The origin of the Islanders'

The origin of the Islanders was as follows. It was one wet night in December. We were all sitting round the fire and had been silent some time, and at last I said, 'Supose we had each an Island of our own.' Branwell chose the Isle of Man, Emily Isle of Arran and Bute Isle, Anne, Jersey, and I chose the Isle of Wight.* We then chose who should live in our islands. The cheif of Branwell's were John Bull, Astley Cooper, Leigh Hunt, &c, &c. Emily's Walter Scott, Mr Lockhart, Johnny Lockhart &c, &c. Anne's Michael Sadler, Lord Bentinck, Henry Halford, &c, &c. And I chose Duke of Wellington & son, North & Co., 30 officers, Mr Abernethy, &c, &c.* March 12, 1829.



# TWO ROMANTIC TALES

by Charlotte Bronte

April 28, 1829

## THE TWELVE ADVENTURERS*

Written April 15 1829

### CHAPTER I

The Country of the Genii

There is a tradition that some thousands of years ago twelve men from Britain, of a most gigantic size, and twelve men from Gaul* came over to the country of the Genii,* and while there were continually at war with each other and, after remaining many years, returned again to Britain and Gaul. And in the inhabited [parts] of the Genii country there are now no vestiges of them, though it is said there have been found some colossal skeletons in that wild, barren land,* the evil desert.

But I have read a book called 'The Travels of Captain Parnell', out of which the following is an extract.*

'About four in the afternoon I saw a dark red cloud arise in the east, which gradually grew larger till it covered the whole sky. As the cloud spread the wind rose and blew a tremendous hurricane. The sand of the desert began to move and rolled like the waves of the sea. As soon as I saw this I threw myself on my face and stopped my breath, for I knew that this was the tornado or whirlwind. I remained in this situation for three minutes, for at the end of that time I ventured to look up. The whirlwind had passed over and had not hurt me, but close by lay my poor camel quite dead. At this sight I could not forbear weeping, but my attention was soon diverted by another object. About one hundred yards further off lay an immense skeleton. I immediately ran up to it and examined it closely. While I was gazing at the long, ghastly figure which lay stretched upon the sand before me the thought came into my mind that it might be the skeleton of one of those ancient Britons who,

tradition tells us, came from their own country to this evil land and here miserably perished. While I was pursuing this train of meditation, I observed that it was bound with a long chain of rusty iron. Suddenly the iron clanked and the bones strove to rise, but a huge mountain of sand overwhelmed the skeleton with a tremendous crash, and when the dust which had hid the sun and enveloped every[thing] in darkness cleared away, not a mark could be distinguished to show the future traveller where the bones had lain.'*

Now, if this account be true—and I see no reason why we should suppose it not—I think [we] may fairly conclude that these skeletons are evil genii chained in these deserts by the fairy Maimoune.*

There are several other traditions, but they are all so obscure that no reliance is to be placed on them.

## CHAPTER II

### The Voyage of Discovery

In the year 1793 the Invincible, 74 guns, set sail with a fair wind from England. Her crew—twelve men, every one healthy and stout and in the best temper—their names as follows: Marcus O'Donell, Ferdinand Cortez, Felix de Rothsay, Eugene Cameron, Harold FitzGeorge, Henry Clinton, Francis Stewart, Ronald Traquair, Ernest Fortescue, Gustavus Dunally, Frederick Brunswick, and Arthur Wellesley.*

Well, as I said before, we set sail with a fair wind from England on the 1st of March 1793. On the 15th we came in sight of Spain. On the 16[th] we landed, bought a supply of provisions, &c. and set sail again on the 20[th]. On the 25[th], about noon, Henry Clinton,* who was in the shrouds, cried out that he saw the Oxeye.* In a minute we were all on deck and all eyes gazing eagerly and fearfully towards the mountain over which we saw hanging in the sky the ominous speck. Instantly the sails were furled, the ship tacked about, and the boat was made ready for launching in our last extremity.

Thus having made everything ready we retired to the cabin, and everyone looked as sheepish as possible and noway inclined to meet our fate like men. Some of us began to cry, but we waited a long time and heard no sound of the wind, and the cloud did not increase in size.

At last Marcus O'Donell exclaimed, 'I wish it would either go backward or forward.'



At this Stewart reproved him, and Ferdinand gave him a box on the ear. O'Donell returned the compliment. But just then we heard the sound of the wind, and Ronald bawled* out, 'The cloud is as big as me!'

Brunswick pulled Ronald away from the window and ordered him to hold his tongue. Ronald said he would not and began to sing. Felix de Rothsay put his hand over Ronald's mouth. H. FitzGeorge got Rothsay behind by the throat. E. Fortescue held his fist in O'Donell's face, and Marcus floored Ernest. Cameron kicked Clinton to the other end of the cabin, and Stewart shouted so loud for them to be quiet that he made the greatest noise of any.

But suddenly they were all silenced by a fierce flash of lightning and a loud peal of thunder. The wind rose and the planks of our ship creaked. Another flash of lightning, brighter and more terrible than the first, split our mainmast and carried away our foretop-sail. And now the flashes of lightning grew terrific, and the thunder roared tremendously. The rain poured down in torrents, and the gusts of wind were most loud and terrible. The hearts of the stoutest men in our company now quailed, and even the chief doctor was afraid.*

At last the storm ceased, but we found it had driven us quite out of our course and we knew not where we were.

On the 30[th], G. Dunally, who was on deck cried out, 'Land!'

At this we were all extremely rejoiced. On the 31[st] we reached it, and found it was the island of Trinidad. We refitted our ship and got in a store of provisions and water, and set sail once more on the 5[th] of May.

It would be endless to describe all our adventures in the South Atlantic Ocean. Suffice it to say that after many storms, in which we were driven quite out of our course and knew not in what part of the world we were, we at last discovered land. We sailed along the coast for some time to find a good landing-place. We at last found one.

We landed on the 2[nd] of June 1793.* We moored our battered ship in a small harbour and advanced up into the country. To our great surprise we found it cultivated. Grain of a peculiar sort grew in great abundance, and there were large plantations of palm-trees,* and likewise an immense number of almond-trees. There were also many olives and large enclosures of rice. We were greatly surprised at these marks of the land being inhabited. It seemed to be part of an immense continent.

After we had travelled about two miles we saw at a distance twenty men well armed. We immediately prepared for battle, having each of us a pistol, sword and bayonet. We stood still and they came near.

When they had come close up to us they likewise stopped. They seemed greatly surprised at us, and we heard one of them say, 'What strange people!'

The Chief then said, 'Who are you?'

Wellesley answered, 'We were cast up on your shores by a storm and request shelter.'

They said, 'You shall not have any.'

W[ellesley]: 'We will take it then!'

We prepared for battle; they did the same.

It was a very fierce encounter, but we conquered: killed ten, took the Chief prisoner, wounded five, and the remaining four retreated. The Chief was quite black [and] very tall. He had a fierce* countenance and the finest eyes I ever saw. We asked him what his name was, but he would not speak. We asked him the name of his country, and he said, 'Ashantee.'*

Next morning a party of twelve men came to our tents bringing with them a ransom for their Chief, and likewise a proposition of peace from their King. This we accepted, as it was on terms the most advantageous to ourselves.

Immediately after the treaty of peace was concluded we set about building a city. The situation was in the middle of a large plain, bounded on the north by high mountains, on the south by the sea, on the east by gloomy forests, and on the west by evil deserts.*

About a month after we had begun our city the following adventure happened to us.

One evening when all were assembled in the great tent, and most of us sitting round the fire which blazed in the middle of the pavilion, listening to the storm which raged without our camp, a dead silence prevailed. None of us felt inclined to speak, still less to laugh, and the wine-cups stood upon the round table filled to the brim. In the midst of this silence we heard the sound of a trumpet, which seemed to come from the desert. The next moment a peal of thunder rolled through the sky, which seemed to shake the earth to its centre.

By this time we were all on our legs and filled with terror, which was changed to desperation by another blast of the terrible trumpet. We all rushed out of the tent with a shout, not of courage, but fear, and then we saw a sight so terribly grand that even now when I think of it, at the distance of forty years from that dismal night when I saw it, my limbs tremble and my blood is chilled with fear. High in the clouds was a tall and terrible giant. In his right hand he held a trumpet, in his left, two darts pointed with fire. On a thunder cloud which rolled before



him his shield rested. On his forehead was written 'The Genius of the Storm'.* On he strode over the black clouds which rolled beneath his feet and regardless of the fierce lightning which flashed around him. But soon the thunder ceased and the lightning no longer glared so terribly.

The hoarse voice of the storm was hushed, and a gentler light than the fire of the elements spread itself over the face of the now cloudless sky. The calm moon shone forth in the midst of the firmament, and the little stars seemed rejoicing in their brightness. The giant had descended to the earth, and, approaching the place where we stood trembling, he made three circles in the air with his flaming scimitar, then lifted his hand to strike. Just then we heard a loud voice saying, 'Genius, I command thee to forbear!'

We looked round and saw a figure* so tall that the Genius seemed to it but a diminutive dwarf. It cast one joyful glance on us and disappeared.

## CHAPTER III

### The Desert

The building of our city went on prosperously. The Hall of Justice was finished; the fortifications were completed; the Grand Inn was begun; the Great Tower* was ended.

One night when we were assembled in the Hall of Justice, Arthur Wellesley, at that time a common trumpeter, suddenly exclaimed, while we were talking of our happiness, 'Does not the King of the Blacks view our prosperity with other eyes than ours? Would not the best way be to send immediately to England, tell them of the new world we have discovered and of the riches that are in it, and do you not think they would send us an army?'

Francis Stewart immediately rose and said, 'Young man, think before you speak! How could we send to England? Who could be found hardy enough to traverse again the Atlantic? Do you not remember the storm which drove us on the shores of Trinidad?'

A[rthur] W[ellesley] answered, 'It is with all due deference that I ventured to contradict the opinions of older and more experienced men than I am, and it is after much consideration that I ventured to say what I have said. Well do I remember that storm which forced us to seek refuge among foreigners. I am not so rash as to suppose we of ourselves could cross the ocean in the damaged and leaky vessel we

possess, or that we could build another [in] time enough to avert the danger which I fear is coming. But in what a short time have we built [the city] we now are in! How long has it taken to rear the Grand Hall where we now are? Have not those marble pillars and that solemn dome been built by supernatural power? If you view the city from this Gothic window and see the beams of the morn gilding the battlements of the mighty towers, and the pillars of the splendid palaces which have been reared in a few months, can you doubt that magic has been used in their construction?'

Here he paused. We were all convinced that the Genii had helped us to build our town. He went on, 'Now, if the Genii have built us our city, will they not likewise help us to call our countrymen to defend what they have built against the assaults of the enemy?'

He stopped again, for the roof shook and the hall was filled with smoke. The ground opened, and we heard a voice saying, 'When the sun appears above the forests of the east be ye all on the border of the evil desert. If ye fail I will crush you to atoms.'

The voice ceased, the ground closed, and the smoke cleared away. There was no time for us to consult. The desert lay ten miles off, and it was now midnight. We immediately set off with the Duke of York at our head. We reached the desert about 4 a.m.; there we stopped. Far off to the east the long black line of gloomy forests skirted the horizon. To the north the Jibbel Kumri, or Mountains of the Moon, seemed a misty girdle to the plain of Dahomey. To the south the ocean guarded the coasts of Africa. Before us to the west lay the desert.

In a few minutes we saw a dense vapour arise from the sands, which gradually collecting took the form of a Genius larger than any of the giants. It advanced towards us and cried with a loud voice, 'Follow me!'

We obeyed and entered the desert. After we had travelled a long time, about noon the Genius told us to look around. We were now about the middle of the desert. Nothing was to be seen far or near but vast plains of sand under a burning sun and cloudless sky. We were dreadfully fatigued and begged the Genius to allow us to stop a little, but he immediately ordered us to proceed. We therefore began our march again and travelled a long way, till the sun went down and the pale moon was rising in the east. Also a few stars might now be dimly seen, but still the sands were burning hot and our feet were very much swollen.

At last the Genius ordered us to halt and lie down. We soon fell asleep. We had slept about an hour when the Genius awoke us and ordered us to proceed.



The moon had now risen and shone brightly in the midst of the sky—brighter far than it ever does in our country. The night-wind had somewhat cooled the sands of the desert, so that we walked with more ease than before, but soon a mist arose which covered the whole plain. Through it we thought we could discern a dim light. We now likewise heard sounds of music at a great distance.

As the mist* cleared away the light grew more distinct till it burst upon us in almost insufferable splendour. Out of the barren desert arose a palace of diamond, the pillars of which were ruby and emerald, illuminated with lamps too bright to look upon.* The Genius led us into a hall of sapphire in which were thrones of gold. On the thrones sat the Princes of the Genii. In the midst of the hall hung a lamp like the sun. Around it stood genii, and fairies without, whose robes were of beaten gold sparkling with diamonds. As soon as their chiefs saw us they sprang up from their thrones, and one of them seizing A W and exclaimed, 'This is the Duke of Wellington!'

A W asked her why she called him D of W.

The Genius answered, 'A prince will arise who shall be as a thorn in the side of England, and the desolator of Europe. Terrible shall be the struggle between that chieftain and you! It will last many years, and the conqueror shall gain eternal honour and glory. So likewise shall the vanquished, and though he shall die in exile his name shall never be remembered by his countrymen but with feelings of enthusiasm. The renown of the victor shall reach to the ends of the earth. Kings and Emperors shall honour him, and Europe shall rejoice in its deliverer. Though in his lifetime fools will envy him, he shall overcome. At his death renown shall cover him, and his name shall be everlasting!'

When the Genius finished speaking we heard the sound of music far off, which drew nearer and nearer till it seemed within the hall. Then all the fairies and genii joined in one grand chorus, which rose rolling to the mighty dome and stately pillars of the Genii Palace, and reached among the vaults and dungeons beneath, then gradually dying away it at last ceased entirely.

As the music went off the palace slowly disappeared, till it vanished* and we found ourselves alone in the midst of the desert. The sun had just begun to enlighten the world and the moon might be dimly seen, but all below them was sand as far as our eyes could reach. We knew not which way to go, and we were ready to faint with hunger, but on once more looking round we saw lying on the sands some dates and palm-wine. Of this we made our breakfast and then began again to

think of our journey, when suddenly there appeared a beaten track in the desert, which we followed.

About noon, when the sun was at its meridian, and we felt weary and faint with the heat, a grove of palm-trees appeared in sight towards which we ran. And after we had reposed awhile under its shade and refreshed ourselves with its fruit, we resumed our march, and that same night, to our inexpressible joy, we entered the gates of our beautiful city and slept beneath the shadow of its roofs.

## CHAPTER IV

### News from Home

The next morning we were awoke by the sound of trumpets and great war-drums, and on looking towards the mountains we saw descending on the plain an immense army of Ashantees. We were all thrown into the utmost consternation except A W, who advised us to look to the great guns and to man the walls, never doubting that the Genii would come to our help if we of ourselves could not beat them off by the help of the cannon and rockets. This advice we immediately followed, while the Ashantees came on like a torrent, sweeping everything, burning the palm-trees, and laying waste the rice-fields.

When they came up to the walls of our city they set up a terrible yell, the meaning of which was that we should be consumed from the face of the earth, and that our city should vanish away, for as it came by magic it should go by the same. Our answer to this insolent speech was a peal of thunder from the mouths of our cannon. Two fell dead, and the rest gave us leg bail* setting off towards the mountains with inconceivable* swiftness, followed by a triumphant shout from their conquerors.

They come back in the afternoon and in the most submissive terms asked for their dead. We granted their request, and in return they allowed us to witness the funeral.

A few days after, on the 21st of Sept., Ronald came running into the Hall of Justice, where we all were, shouting out that there was a ship from England. The Duke of York immediately sent A W to ascertain the truth of this.

When he arrived at the seashore he found all the crew, consisting of fifty men, had landed. He then examined the state of the ship and found it was almost a complete wreck. He asked the men a few questions and



they seemed greatly surprised to find him here, and asked him how he contrived to live in such a country. He told them to follow him.

When he brought them to the Hall of Justice, the Duke of Y ordered* them to relate their story.

They cried, 'We were driven on your shore by a storm and request shelter.'

The Duke of York answered, 'Fellow-English,* we rejoice that you were driven on our part of the coast, and you shall have shelter if we can give it.'

Accordingly they remained with us about a fortnight, for at the end of that time the Genii had fitted out their ship again, when they set sail for England accompanied by A W.

For about ten years after this we continued at war with the blacks, and then made peace, after which, for about ten years more, nothing happened worth mentioning.

On the 16[th] of May 1816 a voice passed through the city saying, 'Set a watch on the tower which looks towards the south, for tomorrow a conqueror shall enter your gates!'

The Duke of York immediately despatched Henry Clinton to the highest tower in the city. About noon Clinton cried out, 'I see something at a great distance upon the Atlantic.'

We all of us ran to the watch-tower, and on looking toward the ocean we could discern a dark object upon the verge of the horizon which, as it neared the shore, we saw plainly was a fleet. At last it anchored and the crew began to land. First came 12 regiments of horsemen, next, three of infantry, then several high officers who* seemed to be the staff of some great general. And last of all came the general himself, whom several of us asserted had the bearing of Arthur Wellesley.

After he had marshalled the regiments he ordered them to march, and we saw them enter the gates of the city. When they arrived at the tower they stopped, and we heard the general in the tone of W say, 'Hill,* you may stop here with the army while I go to the Palace of Justice, as I suppose they are all there if they be yet in the land of the living. And Beresford,* you must come with me.'

'No, no, we are here, Arthur, almost terrified out of our wits for fear you shall burn the tower and sack the city!' exclaimed the Duke of York, as we descend[ed] from our hiding-place.

'What! Are you all here, and not one of you slain in battle or dead in the hospital?' said His Grace, as he sprang from his war-horse and we shook hands with him one at a time. 'But come, my brave fellows, let

# THE PIRATE

## A TALE.

By Captain John Flower*

I. Vol.

P B Brontē. February 1833.

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## THE PIRATE.

A Tale by
The Author of 'Letters from an Englishman'.*
Great Glass Town printed by Seargt Tree
P B Bronte Feb 8. 1833

### CHAP. Ist.

P B Brontē
January
30, 1833

Alexander Rougue has just returned from no one knows where.* He has bought a fine house in Georges Street, where he lives in the utmost style of magnificence. But what are his *means*, or from whence he draws his evidently princely income no one can guess. This is well known: that every acre of his paternal possessions has long, long ago bid adieu to him.*

Having several times in the course of my life been brought in to collision, though much against my will, with this singular and mysterious character, I fancied I might without offence pay him a visit of congratulation upon his arrival in the city. Ordering therefore my carriage, I drove off for Georges Street and alighted at the door of his splendid mansion. Upon delivering my card I was ushered by a foreign



servant through many noble passages and up a grand staircase to his study. I entered with the usual compliments. He was seated alone on his sopha.

But before I describe the master, let me glance round the apartment. It was spacious as most drawing rooms; the ceiling painted in arabesque and the walls lined with books. 2 fine bay windows curtained with velvet lighted the apartment and opened a gorgeous view of the vast Glasstown harbour, with its endless shipping, crowded quays and mighty expanse of blue water stretching away till one might fancy they beheld, towering over its horizon, the hills of Stumps Land and the towering heights of Monkey's Isle. Over the rich Persian carpet were scattered a vast number of naval maps, plans and charts. The table groaned beneath a profusion of atlases and treatises on navigation, while round the room in rosewood stands and cases were placed the rarest and most valuable curiosities from every shore and ocean.

In the midst of this princely confusion sat Rougue upon his sofa, intently perusing a folio of maps and sipping incessantly from a bottle of the most fiery liquers. The moment I entered he started hastily, but recovering himself arose and welcomed me forward with his usual insidious and serpentlike smile. How much was I shocked to behold the ravages which I know not what had made upon him since I last saw him. True, his tall and statly form still stood as erect as ever, but his hair once a bright auburn, now looked thin and even grey. His eagle eye gleamed dully and glassily under his pale, high forehead, now covered with scars and wrinkles. His cheeks were hollow and bloodless, while as he shook my hand his felt cold and clammy. He trembled constantly and started at the slightest sound or motion. He bade me sit down and, himself taking a seat, began as follows in his usual careless scoffing manner.

'Well freind, I have taken, you see, to the navy since you last saw me. Why man, I've been on my voyages! Ha! I've turned merchant, you see. No, not so, I am Admiral. But I've not hit it yet. I'm more—I'm Rougue. I am all three. I'm three in one,* you know! Ha! Don't you? Look, my man, if you've money and want it in safe hands (here he took a long pull from a flagon of claret)—I say, if you've money and love it, let me have an hand on it and it'll stick to you for ever. Yes, I tell you, I'm not one of your pitiful land louping merchants who, when they send out their vessels, can never make sure of being able to send them back again. No, no! Bankruptcies and tempests and losses can never hurt Rougue. Ha! Nor *piracies* neither, ha? (Here he drank again and, turning suddenly round, he fixed his eyes upon me—I feared he would fall into some fit, but he continued.)

'Sir, Sir, I say! Did you ever know of a man whose wealth was in danger of being lessened by the very means he uses to get wealth? You don't understand me. How should you? (He paused.) It's all long of this (laying his hand on his forehead). I say, sir, I'm as near foundering as life can be. Be I say, I'm a perfect wreck. Why (drinking again largly), why, I couldn't keep body and soul together if it wasn't for this. Body and soul did I say? Fool! Who in the name of nonsense ever heard of two things seperating that were never together?* Ha! Now, sir, I'll lay 10 to 1 that I cannot walk without help from this fire to the door. (He tried but stopt at the window, where he stood ernestly gazing on the sea and, apparently forgetful of my presence, began soliloquizing to himself in such words as these.) Oh how I wish they would heave in sight! Surely with him on board they could never either founder, strike! No. He promised me a dozen prizes and (pulling out his watch) this is the hour in which he vowed to bring their goods in. Let me see. There's Grenville's 2, Luckyman's 2, Macadam 2, Bellingham and Co. 4, Cotterel* 3. In all, 13. Oh, how I wish they would heave in sight! If he deceives me!'

The reader may guess how I was surprised to hear him mention the name of my firm and myself in these suspicious transactions. I started involuntarily, at which he, recollecting himself, turned hastily round and looked at me keenly, but with evident embarrassment, as if to see whether I guessed his meaning or heard his words. I feigned a careless inattention and appeared to gaze upon Warder's Atlas.

At this moment several vessels bore up the harbour. He lighted up and took a vast draught from a bottle of raw brandy then, going again to the window, stood silently watching them unload. In about a quater of an hour the study door opened without notice being given or servant appearing. A little old man entered of decrepid figure and, wearing a vast slouched hat over his brow, a much worn great coat on his back and a stout stick in his hand. Without any salutation he began, first fixing his little keen grey eyes upon me as if he would read my inmost soul.

'Rougue Rougue do you doubt me now?'

'Oh,' he answered, 'I can't tell yet! You are an eternal deceiver. I'll wait till I see and handle the—the—you guess what.'

'Why don't you name them?' returned the old man.

'Why don't I name you?' asked Rougue.

'You dare not!' he replied.

'Why,' answered Rougue again, 'an' you begin your impudence I'll blow your brain out. If you take me and light me like a match just after—. Sit down and here's the waters of life.* Drink, drink!'



The old man drew a chair to the table and commenced drinking glass after glass of raw brandy with utmost indifference as if it had been cold water. Rougue stood against the mantel peice. Eyeing him with looks of mingled scorn, hatred, contempt and slavish obedience, the old man, shutting his eyes, continued drinking with an unearthly smile upon his haggard features.

At this moment the ponderous knocker rung below and some one was announced by a servent. He was ordered to be admitted. There accordingly entered the study a stout little old man wrapped in a military surtout and wearing a cocked hat on his head. He bowed politely to the company and, with his hands placed behind his back, began to pace rapidly round the apartment. He seemed agitated. Rougue smiled, but put on a behaviour of the utmost politeness. The stout little man stopping suddenly short, looked Rougue full in the face and, with much grimace, broke out as follows.

'What, in the name of wonder, is he about? What does he mean? Why is *he* to be insulted and defied by such a robber as him? Is the name of L'Empereur, the terror of Europe, to be set at naught and scorned by him? He tells him that Talleyrand* has informed of the loss of 3 ships of the French nation, which were reported to be taken by a pirate carrying scarlet colours, which he is informed are those carried by the ships belonging to the firm of Rougue and—and—he knows not what. But it does not matter! The circumstance is reported to your government, and he shall see what will follow.'

The Emperor Napoleon—for him it was here—turned round and, without speaking another word, left the apartment. Shortly we heard his carriage depart from the yard.

When he had shut the door behind him, Rougue burst out in to a loud laugh and, taking a full glass of spirits, said, turning to the little old man,

'Well Mr Sdeath* what now think you?'

'Why,' returned Mr Sdeath, if such was his title, 'I think him a bigger fool than yourself.'

At this moment the knocker rung again, and another visitor was announced. He entered: a tall military looking man, plainly dressed, with eagle eyes and aquiline nose. The moment Rougue beheld him, his face turned as black as death but preserved its usual effrontery. It was the Duke of Wellington! His Grace, bowing to me and biting his lip at Mr Sdeath adressed Rougue thus.

'Sir, I have this morning received information from several persons that a number of armed vessels carrying scarlet colours have been

recently infesting these seas and comitting the most violent and wanton aggressions upon the vessels carrying the flags of this nation, as also upon those of France, Parry's, Ross's and my own. Now I have also learned that the ships employed by the concern of Rougue Sdeath and Co., of which you are a member, carry a scarlet flag, and report avers these to have been the identical vessels which comitted the piracies. Now, I am not qualified to judge upon this business, but, sir, you must know that your character does not stand perfectly free from reproach in the opinion of most. Therefore it is incumbent upon you to free yourself, if possible, from this new stain laid upon it. Sergeant Bud (here a sharp, thin lawyer like looking young ma[n] entered), I request you to make out a writ calling upon Alexander Rougue to present himself to morrow before the court of Admiralty to clear up some aspersion which at present rest[s] upon his character.'

The writ was executed in a twinkling and ready for Rougue's signature who, as he took up the pen said, 'I am sensible, Your Grace, that I have many enimies and it is these who have raised and propagated this infamous slander upon my own character and the honour of my firm. However, to morrow I shall not fail to clear them both in the eyes of the world and to my own content.'

His Grace then saying 'Very well, sir,' bowed to me, touched his hat to Rougue, and departed. I also took my leave, having more calls to make and much business to do.

## CHAPTER. II.d.

That night, as I was sitting in my study looking over our clerk's accounts and musing upon the strange news I had gathered that morning relating to Rougue and his proceeding—news both strange and unpleasant to me—[I] liked not the mention of four of our vessels among the number of those he mentioned to himself as having taken, there suddenly burst in to my apartment 6 tall stout men wearing black cloaks, swords and visors. Without a word being spoken on either side, they seized & bound me. Then, taking me upon their shoulders, they hurried out of the house and plunged into a set of dark, narrow alleys or lanes. After rapidly threading these for some time, they stopped before the back door of a large house, where they gave a peculiar whistle, thrice repeated. The door was opened and they hurried me up a flight of stairs—breathless and unable to speak—into a large lighted apartment,



which I was astonished to find was that identical Rougue's study, which I had left that morning. He himself I saw walking with hasty strides through the apartment, his hat and gloves on, with a sword under his arm. Around him were 9 or 10 tall dark looking men, armed and like himself equipped for a journey. The old dwarf Mr Sdeath was seated at a sideboard taking a long drink of his favorite liquors.

The moment I entered the reason for my forcible capture flashed across my mind. I cried out in a fit of terror. 'Oh Rougue let me go, and I will never divulge what I have heard this morning! I never will!'

Rougue answered, drinking off a glass of brandy, 'Well, sir, it's all as one. Divulge or not divulge, I have you! Come gentlemen, follow me. Our time is almost out.'

They all prepared to move, taking me with them, but Mr Sdeath cried out in a passionate, screech owl voice, 'Dogs, stop till I've finished! Fools! What are ye so slippery for?'

They waited with great deference till he had drained off the contents of a stone bottle of distilled waters. Then they, forcing me along with them, moved down the steps. Mr Sdeath following—reeling along and muttering curses to himself—we plunged at a running pace down a narrow lane till we arrived at the great quay of the harbour. Here lay a long, suspicious looking vessel with unfurled sails and grinning portholes. We all, Rougue and Sdeath taking the lead, mounted on to the deck, where the crew received us in the utmost silence. At a signal given by Rougue, the cables were loosed, the anchor drawn up and the vessel pushed off from shore, gliding swiftly down the harbour into the open sea. All this was the work of a minute and done almost ere I was aware of being on board.

The moment I found the vessel was at sail, I flung myself on a heap of cables and gave vent to my greif in a fit of groans and weeping. I could scarcely credit my senses to think that I, in the space of a few minutes, had been dragged from my quiet home thro[ugh] half the city at the command of a merciless and cruel man and, without the slightest show of reason, thrown bound on board of this unknown and suspicious vessel—probably a pirate or privateer—there perhaps [to] die a violent death or be carried and sold in foreign lands. My second thought was to inquire of my self what could possibly be the reason why I was thus treated. In a little while the result of my cogitations left me no doubt that this was the truth of this cruel transaction.

Rougue had probably for some time past been in the habit of scouring the Glasstown seas with vessels armed and manned by his dependant desperadoes, and with these assaulting and capturing all the unarmed

and laden merchant vessels he could meet with. By this means, he had amassed those riches and obtained that splendid house which I had just left. When he had gained money enough by this illegal system to procure that palace, he resided in it and, under the title of the firm of Rougue Sdeath and Co., continued to send out these armed vessels as if for the purpose of peaceful trading and on their return sell the goods taken by them as if they were those lawfully bought by the ships of his company. This practice he had continued till it got wind and was rumored in all the Glasstowns. This morning when I visited him he was in suspense, expecting the arrival of the ship I was now in, and while gazing for it in a fit of abstraction had uttered some sentences in my hearing which were too plain for me not to guess their meaning. This, joined with my being present at the conference between him, the Duke of Wellington and the Emperor, both of whom had heard of his conduct, determined him at once to take me prisoner and stop me from reporting what I had heard by violent means. The circumstance of the Duke's commanding him to prove his innocence to morrow at the Admiralty, where Rougue knew well he could never prove it, determined him upon decamping that very night on board one of his vessels and conveying me along with [him] too, probably to sell as a slave in a foreign country* while he commenced anew his acts as a pirate.

While employed in these conjectures and lamentations, I took no notice of anything, but lay down upon the cables on the deck unheeding and unheeded. When, therefore, I lifted up my eyes again, what was my anguish to find myself far out upon the rolling sea! No trace of the Glass Town remaining, save the great Tower of Nations* standing black and huge against the long red lines of light which, stretched in the west, betokened the early dawn. The fast receding shores looked dark and gloomy in the twilight, while a cold raw breeze swept over the ocean, raising long undulating ridges of waves and howling with a mournful cadence amid the lofty masts and cordage of the gallant ship. The crew were all asleep and only the solitary watch remained pacing the deck with monotonous footsteps. With a mind and body exhausted by the events of the day and my eyesight lulled by the dead calm of nature, I at length fell into a deep sleep.

When I awoke it was mid day. The tropical sun glared hotly from a blazing sky, shooting his beams perpendicularly down upon the dancing and glancing waves. A thousand fish of the brightest and most varied dyes were playing and wallowing [around] the bows of the glowing vessel. The crew, tall, stern, dark looking fellows from the Northern Mountains, were all either lolling under the shade of the oil



cloth awnings [or], leaning over the bows of the ship, were basking in the sunlight. But all this was as nothing to me. I continued groaning on the deck incapable of exertion and wishing myself packed in mine own grave, a 1000 fathom below the keel of the pirate vessel. I passed the day in execrating Rougue and his ruthless crew and heaving heavy groans, as I saw one point of land after another sink beneath the horizon, untill at sunset Africa had vanished, and I beheld one melancholy waste of waters* heaving and rolling all round the sky. 3 days I passed in this miserable state. On the fourth Rougue came up and commanded my fetters to be knocked off and assigned me a hammock in the steerage, giving me liberty to roam where I would about the ship. This was no act of charity—he saw that I could neither escape or do harm without a freind or succor for 300 miles round, for we were now within an equal distance from the Glasstown and Monkey Island, toward which we were evidently tending.

This day toward evening the man from the mast had cried out that he saw a strange sail standing to westward. Rougue took his telescope, but it was too distant to decide with certainty its identity. He however affirmed it to be a large vessel from the Glass Town. It was gradually coming toward us, but the darkness soon wrapt it from sight. Rougue, Sdeath and Carey* were up all night consulting with each other. When the morning again revealed the vessel, it was seen coming up with a great press of sail, while its sides, bristling with cannon and its crimson colours showed it to be a fine Glass Town frigate of the first class.

Mr Sdeath came upon deck in a captain's uniform and winked to the men, who evidently understood what he ment. They all went below, stripped their daggers & cutlasses, coming up again transformed into plain merchant seamen with blue jackets and seal skin caps instead of their red pirate handkerchiefs on their heads. I observed that the scarlet flags had been taken down in the darkness, while the green colours of Wellington were waving aloft in their stead. Rougue appeared not as usual on deck, but old Sdeath often went into his cabin and, after communing with him som[e] time, came out with a malignant grin adorning his withered features. It was evident some infernal plot was on foot against the ill fated vessel.

When she had bore up within speaking distance, an officer appeared upon her deck and commanded us to shorten sail. Our sailors obeyed with the utmost alacrity and stood to. The ship then lowered her boat and, placing about 20 men with an officer in it, came on our deck. Showing a warrant, signed Wellington and Grenville, for the apprehension of Alexander Rougue to answer for high crime and misdemeanours,

and authorising those bearing that warrant to search any or every vessel for his body or information conserning him, the officer accordingly demanded to see our captain. Mr Sdeath came up. He showed him his document. After glancing over it our sham captain, making a profound bow, said he was most happy to inform him tha[t] he was at present in possession of the person he sought for, disiring him at the same time to step down into the cabin where he would both see the prisoner and learn how he had been captured. The officer, suspecting nothing, expressed the utmost joy and, accompanied by his men, proceeded toward the cabin. I sighed involuntarily to see these poor fellows going to certain destruction, but Sdeath turning roun[d] gave me a horrid look, touching at the same time the hilt of his knife. They disappeared into the room. 20 of the pirates were beconed in after them by the new captain. In a few minutes I beheld with the utmost horror our sailors come out one after the other, each with the head of one of these devoted victims in his bloody hand. Rougue, in a genteel suit of black and with a smile of satisfaction on his countenance, led them up the ladder and, placing them in a row on the deck before the unhappy vessel, his crew raised a tremendous shout of 'Rougue and victory'.

When their ill fated comrades beheld this spectacle, they for a moment stood in mute consternation, and then all ran to their guns. Before they could fire old Sdeath, snatching up his musket, took aim at their captain. The ball whizzed true to its mark and that officer fell dead from his deck into the sea. Rougue cried out, 'To your guns & the pirates gave a tremendous broadside. This was returned with vigour, and many on each side rolled on the decks wounded and dying. Our vessel gave another broadside—with fatal effect. Every ball told. The contending ship was nearly dismasted and, being struck between wind and water, appeared rapidly sinking. Still her crew fought with determination, but Rougue, commanding his men to form with their pikes in hand, run his vessel straight under the prow of the enemy and, placing himself at their head, the[y] leapt on to its deck. A scene of dreadful confusion followed, and the sinking vessel be[c]ame the scene of a most bloody conflict. The superior skill and ferocity of the pirates soon prevailed. Their enemies lay dying round them and they, each man seizing his prisoner, lept again on board their own vessel. They had scarcely done this when the magazine* of the Glasstowner blew up with a horrid row and the ill fated vessel went to the bottom, almost drawing us along with her in the whirlpool occasioned by her sinking. This was followed by one loud yell from the dying wretches, and all for a moment was silent again. For a while the pirate crew stood on deck, astonished at the



speedy and decisive nature of their victory. This astonishment at length vented itself in rude jests and bursts of savage laughter. As for Rougue, he continued a while pacing the deck in silent abstraction. And Sdeath betook himself with vast zeal and fervor to the keg of rum, untill he fell grovelling and cursing on the floor like a crushed worm.

In the space of half an hour Rougue ordered the deck to be cleared and the prisoners brought onto it. They were led up bound and pinioned, 30 in number, all, fine, stout, heavy fellows. My very soul groaned for them. They shook hands with each other as they were placed in a square by themselves; they knew what would follow. A select number of the pirates were placed before them with loaded muskets. Rougue, with his usual stern, sneering look, commanded them to fire. They obeyed. The thirty prisoners all fell dead or dying on the deck. At this moment old Sdeath rushed forward with a large knife in his hand. Advancing to the bloody heap he plunged it into hearts of all those yet alive and then, wiping his nose with the cuff of his coat, looked round with a screech owl laugh. I saw all the crew at this action cast upon the old wretch a look of detestation. Even Rougue, hardened as his heart is to compassion, giving him a glance of scorn and hatred cried, 'Get down below you ugly brute! I did not tell you to do this!' Old Sdeath, gnashing at him his toothless jaws and muttering curses to himself, obeyed his leader, and retired in to the cabin. The dead bodies of these unhappy men were now taken up one by one and thrown into the hungry ocean without a groan or tear. The scarlet coulours were replaced on the mast head; the sails unfurled to the breeze and off flew the conquering vessel, with its ferocious crew, over the foamy billows towards its far off bourne.

## : CHAPTER. IIId.

PBB
Febry.
8th 1833

Two days we continued sailing after this dreadful event. On the morning of the 3d another strange sail hove in to sight. The pirates, by their leader's command, again played the old tricks, transforming their ship into a peaceful Glass Town merchant man, but I observed that this time our sham captain was Carey and not old Sdeath, who since the hateful part he had played in the last bloody tragedy and the reproof he

received from Rougue had continued sulky and intoxicated, muttering to himself all manner of curses and execrations.

The strange vessel on heaving to was observed to be a small ship carrying the Glasstown flag and bearing on board the Earl of Elrington and his family* on a visit to Stumps Island. When Rougue knew this he swallowed a vast bumper of claret and ordered the long boat to be launched. In it he placed Carey with 30 armed men bearing a warrant forged from the one brought by the unhappy crew of the former vessel, stated to be for the apprehension of Rougue. With this the 30 men hailed Elrington's vessel and, having all stepped on its deck, Carey proceeded to show his warrant, and while the master and the Earl were assuring him they had no such person on board, his pirate followers rushed forward, seized the guns and disarmed the crew, whose scanty numbers could offer no defence.

In spite of their offered resistance, the groans of the Earl, the cries of the young Elringtons and the remonstrances of Lady Zenobia, they were all led, but with the utmost civility and respect, from their own ship into ours. Rougue received them with an elegant dress and his best looks and, bowing to the Earl and young ones, he offered his hand to Zenobia. Leading them all into the best cabin, here they remained for some time when he appeared again and, calling for the captain of the captured vessel, held a long conference with him garnished with a seasonable bottle of wine, the result of which was that the Elringtons appeared again on deck with by no means that same expression with which they first trod it. I thought that Lady Zenobia especially seemed changed in her thoughts for the better. Rougue, with that winning, easy gentility which he well knows how to assume when he thinks it worth his while, conducted them all on board their own vessel. As they passed I heard Lord Aleana remark 'Sister, what a courtship!'

I and our crew were amazed to see the two vessels both tack round and sail back to the Glass Town side by side. The matter was soon guessed at, and ere night by their frequent interchanges of compliments and 'substantilities' the crews of both vessels were roaring drunk and merry. As for myself, I soon had an inkling of the matter, but how it was brough[t] a-bout I knew less of. I had often heard Rougue declare that of all the women in the world he most admired Zenobia Elrington. Her too I had not less often heard say that she thought Alexander Rougue in her mind, in spite of his conduct, had the form & spirit of a Roman hero.

I must now for a moment turn to another incident. My cabin lay between those of Rougue and Sdeath. That night, as I lay awake musing



on the incidents of the day, I heard an unusual stumbling and muttering in the passage between the beforementioned rooms. Suspecting I knew not what, I jumped up, opened the door silently, and peeped out. I there beheld old Sdeath, with his great knife between his teeth (the way he usually carried it) stealing softly toward Rougue's room muttering, 'I'll be up with him for what he did to me.' He opened the door and, clenching his weapon in his hand as he saw Rougue before him, sprung on him with a feindish yell.

I ran in after him. The old dwarf was striving to strike his knife into Rougue's heart, who was grappling with him. They were both on the floor. In my hurry I seized a poker and, running up, dashed it at the head of Sdeath. This stunned him. Rougue, then snatchin' a pistol from the table, clapt it to his head and fired. The skull was blown in peices and the brains scattered round the room. Rougue, without speaking, motioned me to take hold of his feet and, himself seizing his shoulders, we proceeded silently up the steps to the deck. Here Rougue, crying, 'I have done with thee, thou wretch,' took the ugly heap of mortality and hurled it into the sea. When it touched the water a bright flash of fire darted from it. It changed into a vast GENIUS of immesurable and indefinable height and size, and seizing hold of a huge cloud with his hand, he vaulted into it crying, 'and I've done with thee, thou fool!' [and] disappeared among the passing vapours. Ere he departed, 3 vast flashes of fire came bursting a round. They were the Cheif Genii TALLI, EMII & ANNII. He that [was] ere this little hideous bloody old man was the Cheif Genius BRANNII.* I stood petrified with fear and astonishment.

But Rougue, who all the time knew well who he was, laughing said, 'Well, I've settled this business, however. Now Bellingham, for your generous assistance of me, I'll set you free on the spot. Why man, I'm going to settle down and become Alexander Rougue, Viscount Elrington and husband of the Lady Zenobia Elrington, the bonniest lass in the Glass Town.'

I fell on my knees and thanked him fervently for his generosity, and we both returned to our rooms, no one save ourselves knowing what had happened.

When morning arose both vessels were ploughing their course back to the Glass Town, where we arrived in two days. Rougue instantly proceeded to the residence of the Duke of Wellington where, in the presence of the Marquis of Wellesly, Captain Sir E. Parry, Lord Lofty, Col. Grenville and myself, he offered full recompense to all parties for the damage he had done as a pirate, on condition of being that moment

pardoned his offences. This was immediatly agreed to and settled. He then stating his approaching marriage, invited all present to attend. They gave him their warmest congratulations. This morning I attended the wedding of Lady Zenobia Elrington with Alexander Rougue, now Viscount Elrington. I must break off, for I have to attend this evening at a grand feast given at Elrington Place by the old Earl in honour of the occasion where will attend all the nobility and gentry of the Glass Town.

P B Brontē February
the 8th, AD 1833.

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Haworth—



# THE. POLITICS. OF. VERDOPOLIS.

## A Tale By. Captain John Flower MP. In I. Vol.

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## CHAP. 1st.

From the title I have chosen one would expect the first chapter of this tale to place its scenes in Verdopolis, the seat of politics, in the House of Parliament, amid steam, noise and turbulence; in the Jacobin Club,* amid its darkness, muttering and treachery; or in the Cabinet council, amid flattery, scheming and discord. But, reader, I shall not so place my scene. I wish you to look to a spot different indeed from any of those just mentioned, a spot than which none could be more removed from the turmoils of political life: the Woodlands, 20 miles east of Wellington's Glass Town.*

The afternoon of the 1st September in this present year shone brightly over the noble parks of a majestic residence of ancient date, seated amid the forest grounds of Wellington's land. The sun, amid a blue and golden sky, was hanging over the western horizon, his bright beams shedding a splendid light upon the low fleecy clouds collecting round his resting place, the lower rays glancing and blazing among the leaves and boughs of the noble oaks which feathered over the smooth shaven lawns. These forest trees began to spread long shadows over the park, and amid the intervals of shade the ground seemed covered with broad lines of golden and glowing light. Above the great groups of trees, which at the upper end of the park stood dark against the sun, rose the several black stacks of chimneys and the many pointed gables of an ancient and noble old hall, with its well known accompanyments of curling smoke and weather cock above, walks, verdure, and sportive deer below. This was altogether a most serene and delightful sight, and it filled the beholder with soothing pleasure to turn his eyes toward the sun and follow up that golden lawn, those deep shadows, those mighty trees, up even to the grey hills appearing behind the alleys and the bright glorious heavens beyond. Little breeze could be felt in the balmy air, but over all things was diffused the calm spirit of evening, and though all this was in the wild burning land of Africa,* yet nothing

# EMILY BRONTË

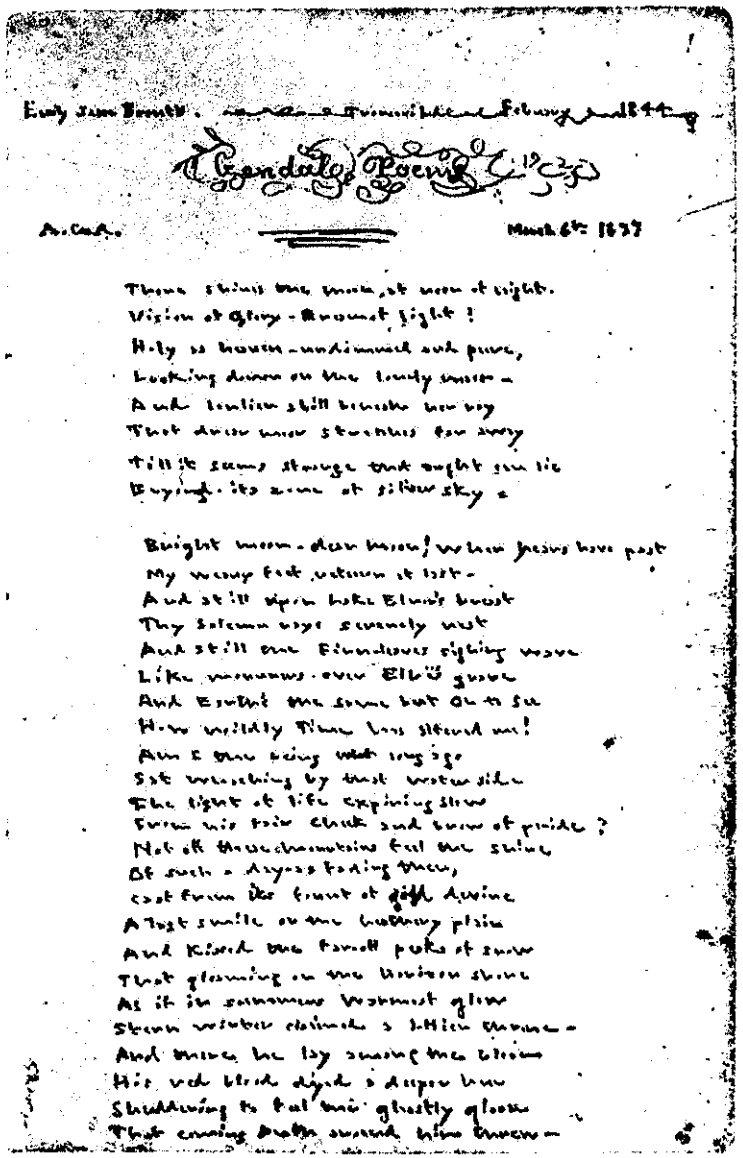

Plate 2: The first page of the 'Gondal Poems' Notebook, including the poem headed 'A.G.A.', beginning 'There shines the moon' (courtesy of the British Library).

I

December 13 1836

High waving heather 'neath stormy blasts bending
Midnight and moonlight and bright shining stars
Darkness and glory rejoicingly blending
Earth rising to heaven and heaven descending
Man's spirit away from its drear dungeon* sending
Bursting the fetters and breaking the bars

All down the mountain sides wild forests lending
One mighty voice to the life giving wind*
Rivers their banks in the jubilee* rending
Fast through the vallys a reckless course wending
Wider and deeper their waters extending
Leaving a desolate desert behind

Shining and lowering and swelling and dying
Changeing forever from midnight to noon
Roaring like thunder like soft music sighing
Shadows on shadows advancing and flying
Lightening bright flashes the deep gloom defying
Coming as swiftly and fading as soon

2

A.G.A. March 6th 1837

There shines the moon, at noon of night*—
Vision of Glory—Dream of light!
Holy as heaven—undimmed and pure,
Looking down on the lonely moor*—
And lonelier still beneath her ray
That drear moor stretches far away
Till it seems strange that aught can lie
Beyond its zone of silver sky—

Bright moon—dear moon! when years have past
My weary feet return at last—

And still upon Lake Elnor's* breast
Thy solemn rays serenely rest
And still the Fern-leaves sighing wave
Like mourners over Elbë's grave*
And Earth's the same but Oh to see
How wildly Time has altered me!
Am I the being who long ago
Sat watching by that water side
The light of life expiring slow
From his fair cheek and brow of pride?*
Not oft these mountains feel the shine
Of such a day—as fading then,
Cast from its fount of gold devine
A last smile on the heathery plain
And kissed the far-off peaks of snow
That gleaming on the horizon shone
As if in summer's warmest glow
Stern winter claimed a loftier throne—
And there he lay among the bloom
His red blood dyed a deeper hue
Shuddering to feel the ghastly gloom
That coming Death around him threw—
Sickening to think one hour would sever
The sweet, sweet world and him forever
To think that twilight gathering dim
Would never pass away to him—
No—never more! That aweful thought
A thousand dreary feelings brought
And memory all her powers combined
And rushed upon his fainting mind.
Wide, swelling woodlands seemed to rise
Beneath soft, sunny, southern skies*—
Old Elbë Hall his noble home
Tower'd mid its trees, whose foliage green
Rustled with the kind airs that come
From summer Heavens when most serene—
And bursting through the leafy shade
A gush of golden sunshine played;
Bathing the walls in amber light
And sparkling in the water clear



That stretched below—reflected bright
The whole wide world of cloudless air—
And still before his spirit's eye
Such wellknown scenes would rise and fly
Till, maddening with dispair and pain
He turned his dying face to me
And wildly cried, 'Oh once again
Might I my native country see!
But once again—one single day!
And must it—can it never be?
To die—and die so far away
When life has hardly smiled for me—
Augusta*—you will soon return
Back to that land in health and bloom*
And then the heath alone will mourn
Above my unremembered tomb*
For you'll forget the lonely grave
And mouldering corpse by Elnor's wave—'

3

A.G.A. to A.E.* E August 19th 1837

Lord of Elbë, on Elbë hill
The mist is thick and the wind is chill
And the heart of thy freind from the dawn of day
Has sighed for sorrow that thou went away—

Lord of Elbë, how pleasant to me
The sound of thy blithesome step would be
Rustling the heath that, only now
Waves as the night-gusts over it blow

Bright are the fires in thy lonely home
I see them far off, and as deepens the gloom
Gleaming like stars through the high forest-boughs
Gladder they glow in the park's repose—

O Alexander! when I return,
Warm as those hearths my heart would burn,

And I, who am so quick to answer sneer with sneer;
So ready to condemn to scorn a coward's fear—
I held my peace like one whose conscience keeps him dumb
And saw my kinsmen go—and lingered still at home.

Another hand than mine, my rightful banner held
And gathered my renown on Freedom's crimson field
Yet I had no desire the glorious prize to gain—
It needed braver nerve to face the world's disdain—

And by the patient strength that could that world defy;
By suffering with calm mind, contempt and calumny;
By never-doubting love, unswerving constancy,
Rochelle, I earned at last an equal love from thee!

## 31

14 September 1846

Why ask to know the date—the clime?*
More than mere words they cannot be:
Men knelt to God and worshipped crime,
And crushed the helpless even as we—

But, they had learnt from length of strife—
Of civil war and anarchy
To laugh at death and look on life
With somewhat lighter sympathy.

It was the autumn of the year;
The time to labouring peasants, dear:
Week after week, from noon to noon,
September shone as bright as June—
Still, never hand a sickle held;
The crops were garnered in the field—
Trod out, and ground by horses' feet
While every ear was milky sweet;
And kneaded on the threshing-floor
With mire of tears and human gore.



Some said they thought that heaven's pure rain
Would hardly bless those fields again.
Not so—the all-benignant skies
Rebuked that fear of famished eyes—
July passed on with showers and dew,
And August glowed in showerless blue;
No harvest time could be more fair
Had harvest fruits but ripened there.

And I confess that hate of rest,
And thirst for things abandoned now,
Had weaned me from my country's breast
And brought me to that land of woe.

Enthusiast—in a name delighting,*
My alien sword I drew to free
One race, beneath two standards fighting,
For Loyalty, and Liberty—
When kindred strive, God help the weak!
A brother's ruth 'tis vain to seek:
At first, it hurt my chivalry
To join them in their cruelty;*
But I grew hard—I learnt to wear
An iron front to terror's prayer;
I learnt to turn my ears away
From torture's groans, as well as they.
By force I learnt—what power had I
To say the conquered should not die?
What heart, one trembling foe to save
When hundreds daily filled the grave?
Yet, there *were* faces that could move
A moment's flash of human love;
And there were fates that made me feel
I was not to the centre, steel—
I've often witnessed wise men fear
To meet distress which they foresaw;
And seeming cowards nobly bear
A doom that thrilled the brave with awe;

Strange proofs I've seen, how hearts could hide
Their secret with a life-long pride,

And then, reveal it as they died—
Strange courage, and strange weakness too,
In that last hour when most are true,
And timid natures strangely nerved
To deeds from which the desperate swerved.
These I may tell, but leave them now.
Go with me where my thoughts would go;
Now all today, and all last night
I've had one scene before my sight—

Wood-shadowed dales; a harvest moon
Unclouded in its glorious noon;
A solemn landscape, wide and still;
A red fire on a distant hill—
A line of fires, and deep below,
Another dusker, drearier glow—
Charred beams, and lime, and blackened stones
Self-piled in cairns* o'er burning bones
And lurid flames that licked the wood
Then quenched their glare in pools of blood—
But yestereve—No! never care;
Let street and suburb smoulder there—
Smoke-hidden, in the winding glen,
They lay too far to vex my ken.*
Four score shot down—all veterans strong—
One prisoner spared, their leader young—
And he within his house was laid,
Wounded, and weak and nearly dead.
We gave him life against his will;
For he entreated us to kill—
But statue-like we saw his tears—
And harshly fell our captain's sneers!

'Now heaven forbid!' with scorn he said
'That noble gore our hands should shed
Like common blood—retain thy breath
Or scheme, if thou canst purchase death—
When men are poor we sometimes hear
And pitying grant that dastard prayer;
When men are rich, we make them buy
The pleasant privilege, to die—



O, we have castles reared for kings
Embattled towers and buttressed wings
Thrice three feet thick, and guarded well
With chain, and bolt, and sentinel!
We build our despots' dwellings sure;
Knowing they love to live secure—
And our respect for royalty
Extends to thy estate and thee!'

The suppliant groaned; his moistened eye
Swam wild and dim with agony—
The gentle blood could ill sustain
Degrading taunts, unhonoured pain.
Bold had he shown himself to lead;
Eager to smite and proud to bleed—
A man, amid the battle's storm;
An infant in the after calm.

Beyond the town his mansion stood
Girt round with pasture-land and wood;
And there our wounded soldiers lying
Enjoyed the ease of wealth in dying:

For him, no mortal more than he
Had softened life with luxury;
And truly did our priest declare
'Of good things he had had his share.'

We lodged him in an empty place,
The full moon beaming on his face
Through shivered glass, and ruins, made
Where shell and ball the fiercest played.
I watched his ghastly couch beside
Regardless if he lived or died—
Nay, muttering curses on the breast
Whose ceaseless moans denied me rest:

'Twas hard, I know, 'twas harsh to say,
'Hell snatch thy worthless soul away!'
But then 'twas hard my lids to keep
Night following night,* estranged from sleep.

Captive and keeper, both outworn,
Each in his misery yearned for morn;
Even though returning morn should bring
Intenser toil and suffering.

Slow, slow it came! Our dreary room
Grew drearier with departing gloom;
Yet, as the west wind warmly blew
I felt my pulses bound anew,
And turned to him—nor breeze, nor ray
Revived that mould of shattered clay,
Scarce conscious of his pain he lay—
Scarce conscious that my hands removed
The glittering toys his lightness loved;
The jewelled rings, and locket fair
Where rival curls of silken hair,
Sable and brown revealed to me
A tale of doubtful constancy.

'Forsake the world without regret;'
I murmured in contemptuous tone;
'The world, poor wretch, will soon forget
Thy noble name, when thou art gone!
Happy, if years of slothful shame
Could perish like a noble name—
If God did no account require
And being with breathing might expire!'*
And words of such contempt I said
Cold insults o'er a dying bed
Which as they darken memory now
Disturb my pulse and flush my brow;
I know that Justice holds in store,
Reprisals for those days of gore—
Not for the blood, but for the sin
Of stifling mercy's voice within.
The blood spilt gives no pang at all;
It is my conscience haunting me,
Telling how oft my lips shed gall
On many a thing too weak to be,
Even in thought, at enmity—
And whispering ever, when I pray,



'God will repay—God will repay!'
He does repay and soon and well
The deeds that turn this earth to hell
The wrongs that aim a venomed dart
Through nature at the Eternal Heart—
Surely my cruel tongue was cursed
I know my prisoner heard me speak
A transient gleam of feeling burst
And wandered o'er his haggard cheek
And from his quivering lids there stole
A look to melt a demon's soul
A silent prayer more powerful far
Than any breathed petitions are
Pleading in mortal agony
To mercy's Source but not to me—
Now I recall that glance and groan
And wring my hands in vain distress
Then I was adamantine stone
Nor felt one touch of tenderness*
My plunder ta'en I left him there
To struggle with his last despair*
Regardless of the wildered cry
Which wailed for death yet wailed to die
I left him there unwatched alone
And eager sought the court below
Where o'er a trough of chiselled stone
An ice cold well did gurgling flow
The water in its basin shed
A stranger tinge of fiery red.
I drank and scarcely marked the hue
My food was dyed with crimson too
As I went out a wretched child
With wasted cheek and ringlets wild
A shape of fear and misery
Raised up her [?helpless] hands to me
And begged her father's face to see
I spurned the piteous wretch away
Thy father's [face] is lifeless clay
As thine mayst be ere fall of day
Unless the truth be quickly told
Where thou hast hid thy father's gold

Yet in the intervals of pain
He heard my taunts and moaned again
And mocking moans did I reply
And asked him why he would not die
In noble silent agony—uncomplaining
Was it not foul disgrace and shame
To thus disgrace his ancient name?
Just then a comrade came hurrying in
Alas he cried sin genders sin
For every soldier slain they've sworn
To hang up five come morn.
They've ta'en of stranglers* sixty three
Full thirty from one company
And all my father's family
And comrade thou hadst only one
They've ta'en thy all thy little son
Down at my captive's feet I fell
I had no option in despair
As thou wouldst save thy soul from hell
My heart's own darling bid them spare
Or human hate and hate divine
Blight every orphan flower of thine
He raised his head—from death beguiled
He wakened up he almost smiled
I lost last night my only child
Twice in my arms twice on my knee
You stabbed my child and laughed at me
And so, with choking voice he said
I trust I hope in God she's dead
Yet not to thee not even to thee
Would I return such misery
[?Such is] that fearful grief I know
I will not cause thee equal woe
Write that they harm no infant there
Write that it is my latest prayer
I wrote—he signed and thus did save
My treasure from the gory grave
And O my soul longed wildly then
To give his saviour life again.*
But heedless of my gratitude
The silent corpse before me lay*



And still methinks in gloomy mood
I see it fresh as yesterday
The sad face raised imploringly
To mercy's God and not to me—*
The last look of that glazing eye
I could not rescue him his child
I found alive and tended well
But she was full of anguish wild
And hated me like we hate hell
And weary with her savage woe
One moonless night I let her go

## 32

May 13th 1848

Why ask to know what date what clime
There dwelt our own humanity*
Power-worshipers from earliest time
Foot-kissers of triumphant crime
Crushers of helpless misery
Crushing down Justice honouring Wrong
If that be feeble this be strong

Shedders of blood shedders of tears
Self-cursers avid of distress
Yet mocking heaven with senseless prayers
For mercy on the merciless

It was the autumn of the year
When grain grows yellow in the ear
Day after day from noon to noon,
That August's sun blazed bright as June

But we with unregarding eyes
Saw panting earth and glowing skies
No hand the reaper's sickle held
Nor bound the ripe sheaves in the field

Our corn was garnered months before
Threshed out and kneaded-up with gore*
Ground when the ears were milky sweet
With furious toil of hoofs and feet
I doubly cursed on foreign sod
Fought neither for my home nor God

# ANNE BRONTË