THE POEMS OF CHARLOTTE BRONTË

A New Text and Commentary

Edited by
Victor A. Neufeldt

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Volume 1

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For Audrey

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List of Abbreviations

The following abbreviations for frequently cited works are used throughout:

Alexander	**A Bibliography of the Manuscripts of Charlotte Brontë**, by Christine Alexander, The Brontë Society in association with Meckler Publishing, 1982.
Alexander EW	**The Early Writings of Charlotte Brontë**, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1983.
Benson 1915	**Brontë Poems, Selections From the Poetry of Charlotte Brontë**, edited by Arthur C. Benson, London: Smith Elder Co., 1915.
BPM	The Brontë Parsonage Museum Library.
BST	**Brontë Society Transactions** 1895-1983.
Christian Census	"A Census of Brontë Manuscripts in the United States," by Mildred Christian, **The Trollopian** II (1947) and III (1948).
Dodd Mead 1902	**Poems by Charlotte, Emily, and Anne Brontë**, New York: Dodd, Mead and Co., 1902.
Gérin CB	**Charlotte Brontë. The Evolution of Genius**, by Winifred Gérin, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1967.
Gérin Five Novelettes	**Five Novelettes**, by Charlotte Brontë, ed., Winifred Gerin, London: Folio Press, 1971.
Hatfield Papers	The papers of the late C. W. Hatfield at the BPM, containing notes, transcriptions, and correspondence.
Poems 1846	**Poems by Currer, Ellis, and Acton Bell**, London: Aylott and Jones, 1846.
Ratchford Legends	**Legends of Angria: Compiled from the Early Writings of Charlotte Brontë**, by Fannie E. Ratchford, with the collaboration of William Clyde DeVane, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1933.

Ratchford Web	**The Brontës' Web of Childhood**, by Fannie E. Ratchford, New York: Columbia University Press, 1941.
SHB C and B	**The Poems of Charlotte and Patrick Branwell Brontë** (The Shakespeare Head edition), ed. Thomas J. Wise and John Alexander Symington, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1934.
SHB LL	**The Brontës: Their Lives, Friendships, and Correspondence** (The Shakespeare Head edition), ed., Thomas J. Wise and John Alexander Symington, 4 volumes, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1932.
SHB Misc	**The Miscellaneous and Unpublished Writings of Charlotte and Patrick Branwell Brontë** (The Shakespeare Head edition), ed., Thomas J. Wise and John Alexander Symington, 2 volumes, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1936 and 1938.
Shorter 1923	**The Complete Poems of Charlotte Brontë**, ed., Clement Shorter, with the assistance of C. W. Hatfield, London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1923.
Shorter EJB 1910	Volume I, **Poetry**, of **The Complete Works of Emily Jane Brontë**, ed., Clement Shorter, London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1910.
Shorter 1918	**Latest Gleanings: Being a Series of Unpublished Poems Selected From Her Early Manuscripts**, by Charlotte Brontë, Privately printed by Clement Shorter, 1918.
Symington Collection	The papers of John Alexander Symington in Special Collections, Rutgers University Library, containing transcriptions made by Davidson Cook of Brontë manuscripts in the library of Sir Alfred Law.
Winnifrith	**The Brontës and Their Background**, by Tom Winnifrith, London: Macmillan, 1973.
Winnifrith PCB	**The Poems of Charlotte Brontë**, ed., Tom Winnifrith, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1984.

Wise Collection	The Stockett-Thomas J. Wise Collection, Special Collections Division, Library of the University of British Columbia, containing, along with works by and about Wise, Hatfield's proof copy of Shorter 1923, and correspondence concerning the Brontës by Hatfield, Davidson Cook, Alice Law, and J. A. Symington.
Wise Orphans 1917	**The Orphans and Other Poems**, By Charlotte, Emily, and Branwell Brontë, London: Printed for Thomas J. Wise, 1917.
Wise RCK 1917	**The Red Cross Knight and Other Poems**, By Charlotte Brontë, London: Printed for Thomas J. Wise, 1917.
Wise Saul 1913	**Saul and Other Poems**, By Charlotte Brontë, London: Printed for Thomas J. Wise, 1913.
Wise SER 1917	**The Swiss Emigrant's Return and Other Poems**, By Charlotte Brontë, London: Printed for Thomas J. Wise, 1917.

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List of Manuscript Locations

A The Houghton Library, Harvard University

B (1) The British Library: Ashley Collection
(2) The British Library: Additional Manuscripts

C Library of William Self, Los Angeles, California

D (1) Brontë Parsonage Museum: Bonnell Collection
(2) Brontë Parsonage Museum: Bronte Society's Collection
(3) Brontë Parsonage Museum: Seton-Gordon Collection

E Library of Roger W. Barrett, Chicago, Illinois

F (1) Pierpont Morgan Library, New York: Bonnell Collection
(2) Pierpont Morgan Library, New York: General Collection

G Princeton University Library: Robert H. Taylor Collection

H New York Public Library: Berg Collection

I Carl H. Pforzheimer Library, New York

J Wellesley College Library: Special Collections

K Brotherton Library, University of Leeds: Brotherton Collection

L Humanities Research Center, University of Texas at Austin

M University of Missouri Library--Columbia: Special Collections

N Henry E. Huntington Library, San Marino, California

O Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University

P University Library, State University of New York at Buffalo: Poetry and Rare Books Collection

R Newnham College Library, Cambridge University

In addition there are the manuscripts held by the descendants of Sir Alfred Law, transcriptions of these manuscripts by Davidson Cook in the Symington Collection and the Hatfield papers, and transcriptions by C. W. Hatfield in the Hatfield papers.

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Editions Containing Previously Unpublished Poems by Charlotte Brontë

The following publications, listed in chronological order, contained previously unpublished verse by Charlotte Brontë. Where a poem has first been partially, then completely published, both publications are included.

Poems by Currer, Ellis, and Acton Bell, London: Aylott and Jones, 1846.

Jane Eyre. An Autobiography. Edited by Currer Bell, London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1847.

The Manchester Athenaeum Album, 1850.

The Life of Charlotte Brontë, E. C. Gaskell, London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1857.

The Professor, A Tale. By Currer Bell, London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1857.

The Cornhill Magazine (December 1860).

The Cornhill Magazine (August 1861).

Scribner's Monthly, II (May 1871).

Whitehaven News, February 17, 1876.

The Cornhill Magazine (February 1893).

The British Weekly, March 28, 1895.

The Adventures of Ernest Alembert: A Fairy Tale. By Charlotte Brontë, ed., T. J. Wise, London: Privately printed, 1896.

The Woman at Home (December 1896).

Poet Lore, IX (Spring 1897).

Poet Lore, IX (Autumn 1897).

Poems by Charlotte, Emily, and Anne Brontë, New York: Dodd, Mead & Co., 1902.

Meditations of An Autograph Collector, Adrian H. Joline, New York: Harper & Bros., 1902.

TLS, January 4, 1907.

The Complete Poems of Emily Brontë, edited by Clement Shorter, London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1910.

Cosmopolitan Magazine (October 1911).

Richard Coeur de Lion and Blondel: A Poem by Charlotte Brontë, London: Printed for T. J. Wise, 1912.

Saul and Other Poems By Charlotte Brontë, London: Printed for T. J. Wise, 1913.

Brontë Poems. Selections from the Poetry of Charlotte, Emily, Anne and Branwell Brontë, edited by Arthur C. Benson, London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1915.

BST (1916) 5:26.

The Cornhill Magazine (August 1916).

The Violet. A Poem written at the Age of Fourteen by Charlotte Brontë, London: Privately printed by Clement Shorter, 1916.

A Bibliography of the Writings in Prose and Verse of the Members of the Brontë Family By Thomas J. Wise, London: Privately printed, 1917.

The Orphans and Other Poems by Charlotte, Emily, and Branwell Brontë, London: Printed for T. J. Wise, 1917.

The Red Cross Knight and Other Poems, By Charlotte Brontë, London: Printed for T. J. Wise, 1917.

The Swiss Emigrant's Return and Other Poems, By Charlotte Brontë, London: Printed for T. J. Wise, 1917.

Voltaire's "Henriade," Book I Translated from the French by Charlotte Brontë, London: Privately printed by Clement Shorter, 1917.

The Four Wishes. A Fairy Tale. By Charlotte Brontë, London: Privately printed by Clement Shorter, 1918.

Latest Gleanings: Being a Series of Unpublished Poems Selected from Her Early Manuscripts, by Charlotte Brontë, London: Privately printed by Clement Shorter, 1918.

BST (1919) 5:29.

Napoleon and the Spectre: A Ghost Story, By Charlotte Brontë, London: Privately printed by Clement Shorter, 1919.

Darius Codomannus. A Poem by Charlotte Brontë, London: Printed for T. J. Wise, 1920.

The Complete Poems of Charlotte Brontë, edited by Clement Shorter, with the assistance of C. W. Hatfield, London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1923.

BST (1924) 6:34.

The Bookman (November 1925).

The Twelve Adventurers and Other Stories, by Charlotte Brontë, edited by Clement Shorter, with the assistance of C. W. Hatfield, London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1925.

The Bookman (December 1926).

BST (1926) 7:36.

BST (1931) 7:41.

Legends of Angria: Compiled from the Early Writings of Charlotte Brontë, by Fannie E. Ratchford, with the collaboration of William Clyde DeVane, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1933.

BST (1934) 8:44.

The Poems of Charlotte Brontë and Patrick Branwell Brontë (The Shakespeare Head Brontë), edited by Thomas James Wise and John Alexander Symington, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1934.

The Miscellaneous and Unpublished Writings of Charlotte and Patrick Branwell Brontë (The Shakespeare Head Brontë), edited by Thomas J. Wise and John Alexander Symington, 2 volumes, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1936 and 1938.

The Brontës' Web of Childhood, Fannie E. Ratchford, New York: Columbia University Press, 1941.

BST (1942), 10:52.

Five Novelettes, by Charlotte Brontë, edited by Winifred Gérin, London: Folio Press, 1971.

Jane Eyre, ed. Margaret Smith, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975.

Two Tales by Charlotte Brontë: "The Secret" & "Lily Hart," transcribed and edited by William Holtz, Columbia: The University of Missouri Press, 1978.

BST (1980) 17:90.

Something about Arthur, by Charlotte Brontë, transcribed and edited by Christine Alexander, The University of Texas at Austin: Humanities Research Center, 1981.

Studies in Romanticism, 20 (Winter 1981).

The Early Writings of Charlotte Brontë, by Christine Alexander, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1983.

The Poems of Charlotte Brontë, edited by Tom Winnifrith, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1984.

INTRODUCTION

> It is one of the hateful characteristics of a degenerate age, that the idle world will not let the worker alone, accepting his offering of work and appraise it for itself, but must insist upon turning him inside out, and knowing all about him, and really troubling itself a great deal more about his little peculiarities and personal pursuits, than his abiding work.[1]

One might well wish to quarrel with James A. H. Murray's equation of a strong interest in biography with degeneracy, and with the implication that the critic and scholar ought to restrict himself solely to an author's work. Yet, when one surveys the history of Brontë scholarship, Murray's condemnation of an undue emphasis on biography is justified. Because the Brontë story is deeply moving in both its tragedy and its pathos, it has lent itself to sensationalism, sentimentality and myth-making. "Their lives are so literally improbable," writes R. B. Martin, "as to tease one into considering the lives of the Brontë's themselves as some wild metaphorical statement of the Romantic conception of the world."[2] As a result, the line between fact and fiction has often become fatally blurred, and Charlotte in particular has suffered from "The Purple Heather School of Criticism and Biography."[3] Yet when one heeds Murray's advice and turns from the Brontës' lives to their works, one is confronted with a major anomaly: more than a century after their deaths the text of their work is still not available in its entirety. In fact, as both Mildred Christian and Herbert Rosengarten have pointed out, there is still no complete bibliography of the writings of the Brontë family.[4] Thus the torrent of biographical and critical activity that began with Mrs. Gaskell's **Life** has far too often been based on unreliable and incomplete texts, or none at all. Even the most recent biographies still contain highly erroneous statements. For example, Winifred Gérin attributes 400 lines of poetry to Charlotte for 1834 (CB, p. 87); the actual figure is approximately 1,350. Clearly the definitive biography of Charlotte Brontë has not yet been written, and cannot be until we have complete and reliable texts of her works and correspondence.

The availability of reliable texts of primary materials has improved recently, but the task is far from finished. With the completion of the Clarendon edition we will have a reliable text of all the novels. Emily's poetry was quite well edited by C. W. Hatfield in 1941, and a new edition which will correct errors in Hatfield's text is being prepared by Edward Chitham, who produced the first complete and reliable edition of Anne's poems in 1979. This edition of Charlotte's poems, though not "complete" (see **Appendix B**), provides a reliable text of all of her available verse. Christine Alexander is at present editing Charlotte's juvenilia, and soon, one hopes, we will also have reliable editions of Branwell's work and of the letters.[5]

The obvious question is why it has taken so long to produce a reliable edition of Charlotte's poems. Much of the answer to that question is contained in the activities of two men--Clement K. Shorter and Thomas J. Wise. Of the 206 poems, fragments, and verse translations in this volume,[6] only twenty-two were published in Charlotte's lifetime (Nos. 185-203; 208-209; 215). After her death in 1855, two additional poems appeared in 1857 (Nos. 110, 205) and one poem in each of 1860, 1861, 1871, 1876, 1895 (Nos. 148; 128; 104, 177; 98). Not until after 1895, when Shorter, acting on behalf of Wise, purchased a large collection of Brontë manuscripts from Charlotte's husband, The Reverend A. B. Nicholls, did Brontë readers even begin to get some sense of the extent of Charlotte's poetic activity.[7] Although Wise did not obtain all the Brontë manuscripts, as he had hoped, the subsequent activities of Shorter and Wise so confused and muddled the situation that only after the painstaking efforts of such scholars as Fannie Ratchford, Davidson Cook, C. W. Hatfield and Mildred Christian has it become possible to prepare this edition. In the meantime, the reader has had to rely for the most part on printed texts of Charlotte's poems produced by Shorter and Wise. Yet Wise's bibliographies in 1893, 1917 and 1929 were incomplete and inaccurate, sometimes attributing material to the wrong author. Similarly, the expensive limited editions produced by both Wise and Shorter between 1896 and 1920 (see pp. xvii-xix) grouped poems in a random piecemeal fashion, and were textually inaccurate, with poems sometimes incomplete and attributed to the wrong author. The same strictures also apply to Shorter's biographies in 1896 and 1908, his editions in 1923 and 1925, and to the Shakespeare Head edition (1931-38), edited by Wise and J. A. Symington. For a discussion of the reasons for the poor editing, see pp. xxvii-xxxii below. The Shakespeare Head included all of Charlotte's previously published poems as well as much new material and has remained the closest thing we have to a definitive edition, yet it contains only 141 of the 206 items in this edition, spread over three volumes, with some poems in facsimile reproduction only. As recently as 1964, Mildred Christian lamented, "The authoritative air of the publications by Wise continues to mislead students who do not go directly to the Brontë manuscripts."[8] Unfortunately, for reasons that will be explained shortly, going directly to the manuscripts has been extremely difficult, if not impossible. Since the publication of the Shakespeare Head edition thirty-four additional poems (in whole or in part) by Charlotte have appeared in various journals and books, twenty of these in 1984 in Winnifrith PCB. Even so, this new edition contains twenty-seven items never before printed or only partially printed, and that total does not include earlier variant forms included in the Commentary.

Because of the unreliable nature of existing texts of Charlotte's poems, any new edition had to be based on new transcriptions of all available manuscripts. In addition to the manuscripts noted in

Appendix B, manuscripts for seventeen items I have included are lost or inaccessible. Of these, eleven were last known to be in the library of Sir Alfred Law of Honresfeld. After Sir Alfred's death in 1939, his descendants moved to Jersey, and scholars have been denied all access to the manuscripts for many years now.[9] Fortunately, Davidson Cook visited Sir Alfred's library in 1925 and 1926, and was able to make meticulous transcriptions, which are preserved in the Symington Collection and among C. W. Hatfield's papers at the BPM,[10] and provide the texts for Nos. 44, 58-61, 100-101, 169-172. The location of the manuscripts for the remaining six items is unknown; their texts are based on the photograph of a manuscript preserved at the BPM (No. 68), transcriptions made by Nicholls (No. 67) and Hatfield (Nos. 50, 148, 150), and the most reliable published version (No. 177). Of the remaining 207 items, 22 are based on Charlotte's published text, 174 on my own transcriptions of the manuscripts, and 11 on transcriptions made from high-quality photographic reproductions (Nos. 3-5, 18, 104, 107-112).[11] Making these transcriptions necessitated visits to fifteen libraries and private collections in the U. S. A. and Britain. When one adds the three locations I was unable to visit (see n. 11) and the Law Collection, the number of known repositories of manuscripts of Charlotte's verse alone totals nineteen. Clearly, this edition would have been impossible without the generosity of librarians and collectors in granting me ready access to their manuscripts, some of which are in very fragile condition.

The majority of Charlotte's manuscripts are in a minute printed script which must in many cases be read with a magnifying glass. The difficulty of transcribing such minute script, often badly blotted, has been compounded not only because the known manuscripts are spread over nineteen locations, but also because leaves of single poems (see Nos. 51, 54, 120) or of related poems (see Nos. 51-57, 65-66, 87, 94, 99, 104, 105) have been scattered over various locations on two continents, as have different drafts of the same poem (see Nos. 94, 104, 166, 192, 193, 195, 196, 197, 199, 201, 202, 205, 209, 216). Naturally these factors have exacerbated problems of establishing complete texts, of making correct attributions, of dating, and of defining interrelationships. The responsibility for the unreliable editions and for the fragmentation and dispersal of the manuscripts rests primarily with T. J. Wise.

On the death of Charlotte in 1855, all the manuscripts and letters in her possession passed to her husband. The only items Nicholls did not have were letters and autographs she had sent to her friends, the manuscripts of novels and letters she had sent to her publishers, and the manuscripts she had left in Brussels, which Professor Ernest Nys discovered and sold to the British Library (see Nos. 91, 92, 98, 102, 103).[12] In August 1856 Nicholls allowed Mrs. Gaskell to carry away "a whole heap of those minute writings" (Gérin, CB, p. 579) in preparation for her life of Charlotte. In her biography Gaskell recorded: "I have had a curious packet confided to me, containing an immense amount of

manuscript, in an inconceivably small space; tales, dramas, poems, romances, written principally by Charlotte" (Chapter V). Just what was in the packet we do not know; with the exception of the one poem Gaskell transcribed, all of the samples she included date from 1829-30. The poem, **The Wounded Stag** (No. 110), was probably composed in January 1836.[13] In 1861 Nicholls returned to Ireland and took all the manuscripts with him, where they remained until Shorter purchased a large portion of them in 1895.

Sometime between Charlotte's death and Shorter's purchase, Nicholls transcribed some of the poems of all three sisters, including twenty-four of Charlotte's (see Alexander, items 12 and 13). In all likelihood these transcriptions were made before his departure for Ireland.[14] Unfortunately, Nicholls was not only a careless copyist, he also 'edited' poems at times. For example, he copied Nos. 136 and 137 as one poem, and in a letter to Davidson Cook, Hatfield wrote: "I was able to point out [to Sir E. A. Brotherton] that not only had Mr. Nicholls omitted two stanzas (without indicating the omission) doubtless because he found them undecipherable, but that he had inserted a most unsuitable word in one line where the author [Anne] had left a blank space." In another letter to Cook, Hatfield notes that many of the errors in Shorter's 1910 edition of Emily's poems resulted from his use of Nicholls' transcriptions.[15] Unwittingly, therefore, Nicholls himself became the source of some of the unreliable texts Brontë scholars have had to deal with, and one has to view the text of No. 67 with reservation.

Thus the manuscripts had not rested undisturbed in Nicholls' possession, as Shorter believed.[16] Not only had Nicholls made transcriptions, he had also given a number of manuscripts to at least two of his cousins. One of them, a Mrs. Bolster, sold Mr. Henry H. Bonnell "nineteen scraps of manuscript in an envelope marked 'C. Brontë.'" Some of the scraps, Hatfield had to point out to Bonnell, were in fact Anne's and Branwell's.[17] Nor did Nicholls sell Shorter all the manuscripts in his possession, as the latter believed.[18] At least thirty-three of Charlotte's manuscripts, some of them manuscript volumes containing collections of poems, were sold after Nicholls' death at Sotheby's in 1907 and 1914.[19] Hatfield notes that the Nicholls family disposed of one long poem (No. 116) "in three separate parts and fortunately all three were bought (at separate times) by Mr. Bonnell who did not discover that they were parts of the same poem until he had made transcripts of them for me" (Letter to Cook, April 7, 1926, Wise Collection). Thus, again unwittingly, Nicholls also bears some of the responsibility for the scattering of the Brontë manuscripts.

The details of Shorter's negotiations and purchase have been well covered, as have the discrepancies over the price he paid, and need not be repeated here.[20] Whatever the actual sum paid, the more important question here is what happened to the manuscripts once they were in the

hands of Shorter and Wise. According to Shorter, Wise became the actual possessor of the documents, while Shorter retained the copyright. Tom Winnifrith's indictment of Wise is scathing:

> Once it has been established that financial gain rather than the disinterested pursuit of knowledge was the mainspring behind Wise's activities, a whole area of uncertainty is opened up, since Wise exercised such a monopoly in Brontë affairs . . . . By selling Branwell's manuscripts as Charlotte's, by selling manuscripts which he had promised to bequeath to the nation, by binding manuscripts together which had no connection, but which might result in a more profitable sale, and by editing inefficiently the Brontë manuscripts he had squandered Wise has surely won himself an immortal place in Brontë studies.[21]

These are serious charges indeed, yet when one pieces together information supplied by Shorter, Hatfield, Christian, and Wise himself, they are justified. In a letter to Hatfield in 1917, Shorter wrote, "Mr. Wise obtained the whole collection, which he distributed from year to year, doubtless to his own great commercial advantage."[22] As early as 1899 Wise himself wrote to J. H. Wrenn:

> This MS. [one of Charlotte's] was once my property. At $48 you got it very cheaply . . . . I had them [manuscripts purchased in 1895] all arranged and bound, and they are detailed in Shorter's book [**Charlotte Brontë and Her Circle**, 1896]. When that book had been published, and the MSS. finished with, I selected a series for my own library. From the remainder I let all my friends have a representative series, and some of the rest I sold. Those which turned up in New York were among those I sold, and I don't think they brought enough . . . . But the demand for such things as MSS of the Brontë sisters can only increase . . . . and you'll find your purchase good enough even at $48.[23]

Some of the remaining unbound manuscripts Wise used for exchanges or gifts; the rest he sold through London booksellers, among them Herbert Gorfin. Clearly, then, Wise's dispersal of the manuscripts was already well under way by the turn of the century, within five years of his purchase. It was further augmented by the Sotheby's sales of Nicholls' property in 1907, 1914, and 1916, at which Wise was also a purchaser, and one has to assume that he continued his previous practices with these purchases. Thus all but one or two of the many editions produced by Wise and Shorter in the first two decades of this century, including Shorter's **Life and Letters**, 1908, were based on the highly unreliable transcriptions (see p. xxiii) Wise had made before he dispersed the manuscripts. He retained some manuscripts for his own collection, but in

the case of Charlotte, the manuscripts for only seven of the poems published by Wise and Shorter were in the Ashley Library at the time of Wise's death. In his 1924 letter to the **TLS** Shorter could state that the manuscripts were "scattered all over the world among Brontë enthusiasts."

But the wide-spread dispersal was only a small part of the problem, and Wise's comments require a certain amount of interpretation. In having the manuscripts "arranged" and expensively bound, he not only misattributed authorship, but also broke up manuscripts. Some of the results, which have frustrated and confused Brontë scholars ever since, are:

(a) manuscripts divided and sold in parts to different collectors (see p. xxiii). By 1926 Hatfield was already commenting to Cook:

> the Harvard catalogue mentions that one of the above manuscripts is incomplete and I have just discovered among Mr. Bonnell's transcripts what I am fairly certain is a copy of the missing fragment. If that is so, I shall try to get Mr. Bonnell to present the missing part of the MS to Harvard. I doubt whether he will for I have always been unsuccessful in attempting to get different parts of the Brontë manuscripts brought together. That is one of the reasons why I look upon my collection of transcripts as of particular value, because they contain complete copies of manuscripts obtained from fragments in different collections and of manuscripts which have been divided and sold in sections.[24]

(b) manuscripts attributed to the wrong author or leaves from various Brontë manuscripts bound together and attributed to one author (see Nos. 18, 62, 90, 116, 120, 153, 179, 211, and **Appendix C**). Both Branwell's and Charlotte's manuscripts were ascribed to Emily, and Branwell's to Charlotte.[25] At the end of the final volume of the Shakespeare Head edition, produced after Wise's death, even Symington hinted his unease about the accuracy of some attributions in the earlier volumes, and included many facsimiles in the final two volumes.[26]

(c) collections of unrelated manuscript leaves, all by the same author, randomly bound together (see Nos. 11, 12, 20, 22, 23, 64, 72, 97, 118, 119). Hatfield wrote to Cook in 1926, "I now learn from him [Bonnell], and am not at all surprised, that his Branwell Brontë manuscripts, which are beautifully bound and which he thought to be complete, are really made up of odd sheets from various manuscripts" (November 17, 1926, Wise Collection).

(d) bound collections in which the leaves have been cut and tipped in with few or none of the poems dated; although it is clear that the

leaves belong together, one cannot be sure what their original order was (Nos. 107-112, 154-160, 163-164, 167-168).[27]

(e) dealers and collectors deceived and defrauded, among them the greatest American collector of Brontë manuscripts, H. H. Bonnell. As early as 1926 Hatfield warned Bonnell that parts of manuscripts had been sold to him as complete, "so I sent him copies of all the complete transcripts which I had as a check upon possible future purchases. He had bought a lot of Branwell's poems as Emily's, but both the dealers and he were deceived."[28]

By 1916, ten years before Hatfield's letters to Cook, Shorter already understood the likely implications of scattering the manuscripts in this fragmented and incoherent fashion--"vandalism for the sake of profit."[29] He wrote:

> One has to go to all these four volumes, in many of which the poems are repeated in Emily Brontë's handwriting, to get at the real text of Emily's work; and a reason why there cannot be a perfectly satisfactory edition of Emily Brontë's poems is due to the circumstance that no editor will ever manage now to obtain access to all the original manuscripts. The bulkiest of all the volumes of manuscript poems is that owned by Mr. Reginald Smith, the other three having been originally in the possession of Mr. Wise and by him taken to pieces and rebound.[30]

Fortunately, because of the meticulous detective work of such scholars as Cook, Ratchford, Christian, Alexander, Chitham, and especially Hatfield, Shorter's predictions have not been fulfilled. As far as the poetry is concerned, after many decades of locating, unraveling, and piecing together, the canon of each Brontë is now, with a few minor exceptions (see Appendix C), established, and sound editions have become possible if funds for all the traveling required are available. Nevertheless, every Brontë editor, for obvious reasons, uses the word "complete" with trepidation.

Before leaving the sad tale of Wise and Shorter, however, one further source of confusion must be dealt with. The last of Winnifrith's accusations cited earlier is that Wise edited the manuscripts "inefficiently." Winnifrith's term is more than kind. Before Wise arranged, bound, and sold the manuscripts, he had many of them transcribed in part or in whole. The quality of those transcriptions is apparent from Shorter's description of them as "rough typewritten copy" and Hatfield's comment that "none of them is in the handwriting of either Mr. Shorter or Mr. Wise. They are in half a dozen different kinds of handwriting and it is clear that some of the scribes exercised great care and that some were careless and inefficient" (Letter to Cook, January 9,

1926, Wise Collection). Shorter, who also made some transcriptions, seems to have been more conscientious. After obtaining transcriptions of Charlotte's **The Search after Hapiness** from both Shorter and Wise, Hatfield commented: "That from Mr. Shorter is almost an accurate transcript of the manuscript in the possession of Mr. Wise, while the transcript from the latter contains so many differences that it seems impossible for it to have been made from the same manuscript" (Letter to Cook, December 10, 1925, Wise Collection). Hatfield's comment is quite consistent with Partington's description of Wise's carelessness and irresponsibility as an editor.[31] Not only were Wise's transcriptions full of errors, but there were also blank spaces for words and phrases his scribes had been unable to decipher (Hatfield letter to Cook, January 12, 1926, Wise Collection), and in some instances manuscripts were only partially transcribed (Hatfield letters to Cook, January 25, February 19, May 18, 1926, Wise Collection). Even worse, in some cases the scribes had conflated manuscripts. Hatfield wrote to Cook that he was "particularly pleased to get the photograph copy of Arthuriana because I knew the transcript I had was incomplete and I now find that it also includes one poem which is not in the manuscript, and does not include one of the poems that is" (July 25, 1927, Wise Collection).

Yet it was from these transcriptions that Wise and Shorter prepared their expensive limited editions, with poems in some cases attributed to the wrong author (Nos. 18, 62, 120, 179, 211 and **Appendix C**). Until Shorter's 1923 edition of Charlotte's poems, prepared with Hatfield's assistance, these editions provided the only printed text available for twenty-six of Charlotte's poems. These "manufactured rarities" certainly contributed to Wise's commercial advantage,[32] and there is evidence that he printed more than the number of copies he had certified for his limited editions.[33]

Although Shorter's transcriptions were more reliable, he made only a few; for the most part he relied on Wise's transcriptions, seemingly without question, and, as he indicates in his 1924 letter to the **TLS**, did not publish them "until long years afterwards." In 1925 Hatfield wrote to Cook about **The Twelve Adventurer's**, just published by Shorter:

> I welcome your suggestion to send your copy of THE TWELVE ADVENTURERS to me when you have made it agree with the manuscripts which we know do exist . . . . The fact is the whole book was prepared from transcripts made thirty years ago and sent to me six years ago by Mr. Wise and Mr. Shorter. I sent the transcript of the book five years ago to Mr. Shorter as he had long before promised to publish a volume of Brontë juvenilia . . . . When the proofs came along I was prepared with the necessary corrections in the text of two of the stories, the manuscripts of which I had in the meantime traced;

the others are copies of the old transcripts (December 10, 1926, Wise Collection).

When one examines the various editions prepared by Shorter it becomes clear that his editorial practises also contributed much to the unreliability of published texts of Charlotte's poems. Shorter was a journalist, and he was not overly concerned with accuracy and completeness.[34] Hatfield complains to Cook that the version he (Hatfield) printed of Anne Brontë's **Last Lines** in 1920 "came to me from Mr. Shorter and was supposed to be complete, but it was not" (May 18, 1926, Wise Collection). When Shorter prepared his error-filled 1910 edition of Emily's poems, he used the text in the privately printed edition issued by Dodd Mead in 1902 without checking the text against his own transcriptions made years earlier (Hatfield letter to Cook, January 12, 1926, Wise Collection).[35] Shorter, in the name of efficiency, obviously preferred any existing printed text over manuscripts and transcriptions, yet because of his status as a Brontë scholar his text was accepted by other editors. A. C. Benson's 1915 edition includes most of the errors in the 1910 volume, in addition to poems by Charlotte, Branwell, and Anne in the Emily section.

After helping Shorter prepare the 1923 editions of Emily's and Charlotte's poems, Hatfield complains of various problems he encountered:

(a) Shorter refused to make use of available manuscripts to check the accuracy of his transcriptions, including manuscripts in the British Museum (letter to Cook, April 7, 1926, Wise Collection), and even neglected to inform Hatfield of the existence of manuscripts--"With regard to that manuscript and the Honresfeld manuscript I find that Mr. Shorter knew of both of them, but he never mentioned them to me and I think he ought to have done so when he asked me to prepare the poems volumes" (letter to Cook, June 7, 1927, Wise Collection).

(b) Shorter refused Hatfield access to manuscripts in his possession--"Your news about the sale of the MS. of 'The Violet' is the first definite information I have been able to get about it since 1916. When I prepared the book of Charlotte Brontë's poems at the suggestion of Mr. Shorter I asked him to let me have the loan of the MS. and he sent me the poem in print. I asked him again, and again he sent me a printed copy. With that I came to the conclusion that he had probably sold the MS. and did not care to say so. Now I find that it must have been in his possession all the time and he could have let me satisfy myself as to the true text it contains" (letter to Cook, June 2, 1928, Wise Collection).[36]

(c) Shorter handled typescript sent to him by Hatfield carelessly, resulting in serious losses and delays--"You can imagine what an immense

task it was to prepare the Charlotte Brontë poems volume. It took me several months to arrange and type. I sent it to him and he lost it and so far as I know it has never been found. So I set to work and made another, and he managed not to lose that" (letter to Cook, January 9, 1926, Wise Collection). In another letter to Cook (October 29, 1926) he complains about his inability to get any word from Shorter about a typescript volume of Branwell's poems he had sent to Shorter, which it had taken him two years to prepare.

Thus, while Shorter was very industrious indeed in making Brontë materials available to the general public, that industry was governed by a principle noted in the **DNB**--"Shorter's biographies of the Brontës and of George Borrow were compilations of facts, governed much more by the novelty of their discovery, than by their importance, set forth with no literary grace, and with hardly any attempt at literary appreciation." Yet, despite their shortcomings, Shorter's contributions to Brontë scholarship were more scrupulous and more useful than Wise's.

But Shorter died in 1926, well before what should have been the great edition of the works of the Brontës, the Shakespeare Head, was begun. The intriguing question is why the editors, T. J. Wise and J. A. Symington, with a full knowledge of the problems inherent in the existing published texts of the poems, produced so little improvement.[37] Knowledgeable Brontë scholars were already raising that question before the final volume appeared in 1938 (see Helen Brown's letter to Hatfield, February 5, 1938, Hatfield Papers). That Wise and Symington decided to regularize spelling, punctuation, line length, and stanza form is not surprising. But why, one has to ask, did this edition repeat so many of the known errors of previous editions, and add new ones:

(a) poems for which the manuscripts were known to be extant omitted;

(b) poems attributed to the wrong author and misdated;

(c) words, lines, and whole stanzas omitted;

(d) many serious misreadings;

(e) uncanceled variants ignored completely or inconsistently noted--i.e. sometimes Charlotte's first version is given as the preferred reading, sometimes the later variant;

(f) notes referring to non-existent alternate drafts, or confusing the chronological sequence of alternate drafts.

These problems were further complicated by the decision to spread Charlotte's poems over three volumes: **The Poems of Charlotte and**

Patrick Branwell Brontë, 1934; **The Miscellaneous and Unpublished Writings of Charlotte and Patrick Branwell Brontë**, 2 vols., 1936 and 1938. Shorter's 1923 edition contained every poem by Charlotte previously printed, and forty-nine new ones. The SHB 1934 volume was to contain all of the poems in Shorter's edition (except those that were part of the Angrian manuscripts which were to be printed in the two later volumes), three poems recently printed in the **BST**, and twenty-eight new poems. However only a selection of the Angrian manuscripts was included in the Miscellaneous volumes, some in facsimile only, and the 1934 volume still contained a number of poems which had been lifted out of a prose context without any indication thereof. Nor is the "Bibliography of the Poems of Charlotte Brontë" at the end of the 1934 volume accurate. It does not contain at least three publications between 1923 and 1934 which contained previously unpublished poems by Charlotte,[38] although the poems were included in the two later volumes.

The failure to include poems for which manuscripts were known to be extant rests with both the editors of the SHB and with C. W. Hatfield. The editors of the SHB note that the manuscript of **The Wounded Stag** is included with several other poems in a small manuscript volume entitled **The Wounded Stag and Other Poems**. That volume, they note, is signed "C Brontë," and is dated January 19, 1836. Yet of the five other poems and fragments in the manuscript volume, only one, **Reason**, is included--in the "Undated Poems" section (in one of his earlier private editions, Wise dated it 1834). One has to assume that Symington simply accepted whatever text Wise provided. The manuscripts for the bulk of the omitted poems were at Harvard and in the Bonnell Collection, and Hatfield, who eventually assisted Wise and Symington, knew of them. In a letter to Cook, Hatfield had indicated that because of his lack of faith in Shorter's editorial policies, he had not revealed to Shorter in 1923 a large number of Charlotte's poems "only known to Mr. Bonnell and myself" (April 7, 1926, Wise Collection). In a letter to Helen Brown, March 9, 1938 (Hatfield Papers), he indicates that he similarly withheld material from Wise and Symington, again because he was disgusted with editorial policy. Wise, it was clear, wanted to produce an edition in the quickest and easiest manner possible--i.e. to rely without question on existing printed texts where possible. He simply reproduced Shorter's 1923 text, including Shorter's annotations. Anne's poems, Hatfield points out, were reprinted from Shorter's 1920 edition, with the addition of three poems found among Shorter's papers, purchased by Wise. "If I remember rightly the errors and omissions revealed by the Honresfeld manuscript (printed in facsimile in the volume) were disregarded by the editors" (Letter to Helen Brown, May 7, 1938, Hatfield Papers).[39] But Hatfield's most damning comment concerns the editing of the letters:

> Whether I made that correction for the Shakespeare Head Life and Letters I do not remember--I made many hundreds--perhaps

> thousands--of corrections and additions to the galley proofs of the four volumes. It surprised me to find the editors following so closely Shorter's two volumes of 1908, and if I had not added the material he and I had gathered from 1908 up to the time of his death, and what I had collected later, the volumes would have been almost a copy of the 1908 edition except for the previously unprinted parts of the letters of C. B. to Miss Wooler. My additions and corrections must have caused a good deal of trouble and expense; but I was very dissatisfied with the result. The 'editing' is as poor as in the other volumes; and I was disgusted to find the spurious Hartlepool letter in the finished volumes although I had cancelled it heavily in the proofs (letter to Helen Brown, March 1, 1938, Hatfield Papers).

In his "Conclusion" to the 1938 volume, published after Wise's death, even Symington expresses his discomfort over the unreliability of the edition.

How, one might well ask, in the face of this textual history, is it possible to produce reliable editions today? The answer is by a good bit of luck and much hard work by many people. Even though the known manuscripts of Charlotte's poems are scattered among nineteen locations, this represents considerable consolidation; many of the manuscripts originally in private collections have moved to major collections and institutions: Harvard, Princeton, the Pierpont Morgan, the New York Public Library, SUNY at Buffalo, the Huntington, the University of Texas, the Brontë Parsonage.[40] Then there has been the detective work of the scholars mentioned above, especially that of Hatfield. Not only do we have his bibliography of Charlotte's manuscripts in the BST (1922-24) and his many other publications, but when one goes through his papers at the Parsonage, one comes to realize what an enormous amount of Charlotte's and Branwell's manuscript material he had managed to piece together and transcribe with great care as a result of his access to the major collections of manuscripts and transcriptions, including the Bonnell Collection, the University of Texas, Harvard, the British Library, the Law Collection, the transcriptions of Shorter and Wise, and the Parsonage. From his papers it is clear that but for his untimely death in 1942, shortly after the publication of his edition of Emily's poems, he was in a position to add major editions of Charlotte and Branwell. He was "one of the most accurate of all students of the Brontë's [sic]."[41] Finally, four recent works appeared just in time to corroborate and supplement the research that went into the preparation of this edition: **Index of English Literary Manuscripts**, Vol IV, 1800-1900, ed., Barbara Rosenbaum and Pamela White, New York: Mansell, 1982; **A Bibliography of the Manuscripts of Charlotte Brontë**, ed., Christine Alexander, The Brontë Society: Meckler Publishing, 1982; **The Early Writings of Charlotte Brontë**, by Christine Alexander, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1983; **The**

Poems of Charlotte Brontë, ed., Tom Winnifrith, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1984. With these resources it is possible to establish Charlotte's poetic canon with only a few very minor exceptions (see Appendix C). Despite Charlotte's collaboration with Branwell, Alexander is quite correct when she says that it is possible to distinguish between their early miniature script, and that problems of attribution have been largely resolved (p. xv). Thus while Rosenbaum and White are technically right when they state, "No study has . . . systematically corrected the traditional attributions, and the canon is not yet definitely established" (p. 46), those corrections have in fact been made through a process of accretion of which this edition is the end product.

CHARLOTTE'S POETIC CAREER

That it has taken so long to have a full picture of Charlotte's poetic career is ironic, for in 1830, at the age of fourteen, Charlotte was convinced that she was called to be a poet. Eighteen-thirty was the most productive single year of her poetic career and marked the culmination of her first period of intensive poetic activity (see pp. xxxiv-xxxv). Many of her 1830 poems dealt with such subjects as the nature of genius, the nature of art, and the craft of poetry. She wrote poems about the sort of inspiration she drew from nature, and the poor quality of her own verse, and lampooned Branwell's poetic posturings. In short, it was a year of self-conscious exploration of the conception of herself as poet and artist, culminating in a kind of Wordsworthian call to the divine vocation of poet, albeit not of the first rank. In **The Violet**, November 10, 1830 (No. 51), the speaker, stirred into thought by "Aeolian music," reviews the accomplishments of the great classical writers-- Homer, Sophocles, Euripides, Aeschylus, Tasso, Virgil--and laments the decline of the glory that once was Greece. But, all is not lost, for the "holy nine," though having forsaken Parnassus, "now in fair Britannia shine." There the "sons of Albion in that rank/ Shine crowned with honours they have won" because they have drunk deeply of "the sacred fount of Helicon." The speaker prays that he too might be allowed to march beneath the banners of that "army of immortals."

> Yet joy deep joy would fill my heart
> Nature unveil thy awful face
> To me a poet's pow'r impart
> Thoug[h] humble be my destined place

His prayer reaches the "Mighty Mother's ear," and after a series of portentous natural disturbances,

> Now dawned upon my awe-struck eyes
> A shape more beauteous than the morn

When radiant with a thousand dyes
The pearls of night her brow adorn

A woman's form the vision wore
. . . . . .
A gracious smile illumed her face
As throned she sate on clouds of light
In attitude of heavenly grace
Beneath an arch like rainbow bright

The visionary figure grants the speaker's "high request" with the proviso that "in humbler sphere thy fate is set." Little did the fourteen-year-old Charlotte realize how prophetic her modest disclaimer to poetic greatness was. In one of those ironies not altogether uncommon in the world of literature, she became famous as author of one of the best-known novels in English literature, but her poetry has been largely ignored and neglected, receiving almost no critical attention.

Yet over a span of twenty years (1829-49), she produced over 200 poems and verse fragments which in bulk exceed those of Emily and Anne combined by approximately 3,000 lines. Charlotte's earliest known poem is "in this fairy land of light" (No. 2)[42] from **The Search after Hapiness,** dated July 28-August 17, 1829. It was her first "published" poem in that the manuscript of sixteen pages is stitched in brown paper covers, has a title-page and a Preface, and is "Printed by Herself and Sold by Nobody." Already she saw herself as an editor--**The Young Mens Magazine**--a publisher, and a writer. Her last poem is No. 224 on the death of Anne, June 21, 1849, but she really ceased writing poetry with the publication of the 1846 volume of poems; other than the poems in **The Professor** and **Jane Eyre,** begun before 1846, there are only six poems and fragments between 1846 and 1849, three of them on the deaths of her sisters in 1848 and 1849. Her last two novels contain no poetry of her own.

Her poetic career is marked by three periods of intensive composition: 1829-30; 1833-34; 1837-38. The first of these commenced with her assumption of the editorship in July 1829 of **Branwell's Blackwoods Magazine,** now renamed **Blackwoods Young Mens Magazine,** and ended with her departure for Roe Head School in January 1831. During this period she produced sixty-five poems (twelve in collaboration with Branwell; the figure includes ten missing poems--see **Appendix B**) and seven other verse items including a verse translation of Voltaire's **Henriade.** Twenty of the sixty-five poems were included in the twelve issues of the **Young Mens Magazine** Charlotte edited, seventeen in "published" (as defined above) volumes of poems (see Nos. 34, 51-57, and **Appendix B**), and seven in a volume of fair copies (see Nos. 19, 21, 24, 25, 28, 32, 33). She also wrote a play entitled **The Poetaster,** in which, while mocking Branwell's literary posturing, she demonstrated

her sense of wit through her use of literary allusions to Elizabethan drama.[43] Charlotte was very much concerned with gathering poems that were not part of a larger prose context, and one would have to describe the manuscripts of her poems during this period as fair copies, for there are no uncanceled variant manuscripts, uncanceled variant readings in only four poems, and relatively few canceled readings. The poems range in length from 12 to 276 lines, and encompass a wide variety of stanza forms and rhyme schemes, including a pindaric ode and a blank verse drama. In 1829 all but two of the available poems are in quatrains, but even here Charlotte uses three different rhyme patterns. The two exceptions are wholly or partially in blank verse, perhaps reflecting her reading of Shakespeare and Milton.[44] Eighteen-thirty, however, was a year of great experimentation. In addition to the usual quatrains, one finds open and closed couplets; five, six, and eight-line stanzas; and poems with mixed stanza forms. Similarly there is a variety of rhyme patterns and line lengths, ranging from trimeters to a seven-foot line (No. 56), and the ballad stanza.

Alexander's statement (EW, p. 66) that all Charlotte's early poems relate to the Glass Town saga needs to be qualified, for not all the poems signed by Charles Wellesley or Douro are directly related. In fact, only just over half of the poems of this period relate directly to the activities of the genii and the development of Glass Town. Significantly, most of the "gathered" poems noted above are distinctly non-Glass Town, including Charlotte's two earliest "collected" volumes. It would seem that she was intent on setting up a "non-Glass Town stream" to provide the necessary flexibility for poetic experimentation.

From January 1831 to May 1832, while a student at Roe Head, Charlotte wrote only three poems, all during vacation time, and all concerned with the imaginary world of the genii and Glass Town. During her absence, Emily and Anne decided to branch off on their own to create Gondal;[45] their decision is reflected in the dissolution of the imaginary kingdom the four had shared as recorded by Charlotte in No. 63. While her next poem expresses her sense of regret, Charlotte seems to have taken this dissolution seriously, for although she returned home in May 1832, she produced only two Glass Town poems that year, and those not until July and August. Her two other poems for 1832, one in August and one in November, seem to be determinedly non-Glass Town: one is on a Biblical subject, the other on the death of Bewick, whose work she was so fond of. Winifred Gérin records that at Roe Head Charlotte was determined to make the most of her educational opportunity and quotes Ellen Nussey's recollection "that she [Charlotte] must use every moment to attain the purpose for which she was sent to school i.e. to fit herself for governess life." "The twilight hour," continues Gérin, "had been for her a time of poetic imaginings and extravagant invention; it was now dedicated to the ideal of learning" (CB, p. 66). For a time at least,

after her return home, she seems to have maintained her dedication.[46]

However, in 1833-34 Charlotte returned to the development of the Glass Town saga in collaboration with Branwell. With the creation of the Kingdom of Angria, Arthur Wellesley, Marquis of Douro, became the Duke of Zamorna and King of Angria, and the focus of Charlotte's creative energies. She began the development of all his domestic infidelities--the casting off of his first wife (Marian Hume) and his marriage to Mary Percy--and of the political intrigues centering on Zamorna and his father-in-law, Alexander Percy, Earl of Northangerland. This return marks the second period of intensive poetic activity: thirty-two poems and three other bits of verse totaling over 2,200 lines. All but four of the poems are related to the Glass Town/Angrian saga, and the great majority are embedded in prose narratives. Thus there is a greater narrative emphasis in the verse and a general increase in length. Charlotte's handling of verse form and meter becomes much surer and more sophisticated, with much less reliance on the quatrain, and much greater use of more complex five, six, seven, and nine-line stanzas, including the Spenserian (Nos. 94-96). There is also a poem in Yorkshire dialect. The manuscripts are still fair copies--most carefully signed and dated, with only minor uncanceled variants in two poems--but in two instances (Nos. 88, 94) we have earlier uncanceled drafts of the poems, providing the first opportunity to see something of Charlotte's process of composition. However, it is not until 1837-38 that we begin to get substantial numbers of uncanceled variant readings and manuscripts; until then Charlotte seems to have left behind only fair copies, and to have destroyed whatever earlier drafts existed.

The only non-Angrian poem Charlotte wrote in 1833, **Richard Cour de Lion & Bondel** (December 27) presents an intriguing puzzle. Although now bound separately by Rivière, the poem was originally the first in a manuscript volume of poems, for across the top of the page, above the title, appear the words "1833 All that is written in this book, must be in a good, plain and legible hand. P B." There are four other poems written on the same distinctively lined paper and in the same regular script rather than the usual miniscule print: **Death of Darius Codomanus** (May 2, 1834) again bound separately by Rivière; **Saul** (October 7, 1834) and **Memory** (August 2, 1835)[47] bound together by Rivière; and **Morning**, undated, but probably the last in the series as it is in pencil, has two uncanceled variant readings, and is followed by three blank pages. All of these poems must originally have been part of a single manuscript volume of distinctly non-Angrian poems. It would seem that the Rev. Mr. Brontë became aware of his daughter's feverish writing activity during 1833, saw something of the miniscule print, and demanded material written in a hand he could read. Charlotte continued the volume through 1834 and into 1835 until after her second departure for Roe Head, this time as a teacher. It served, one has to speculate, to show to

those who wanted to know what she was writing, and to keep prying eyes away from compositions that would have shocked them. But the last two poems also strike an intensely personal note, quite new in Charlotte's poetry, reflecting something of the loneliness and despair she experienced at Roe Head and the solace provided by escape into imaginary worlds.

Perhaps the poems in this volume were also a sop to a conscience that was still telling her to put her time and energy to more constructive use, for with her departure for Roe Head in July 1835, the composition of poems slowed noticeably, especially, ironically, of ones related to Angria, for matters there had reached a state of crisis (Alexander EW, p. 135). The three poems Charlotte produced in 1835 consist of the two personal poems just noted and the closely-linked, well-known "We wove a web in childhood" (December 19, 1835), in which she reviews the creation of her fantasy world, and recalls the solace it has provided her in the past in times of loneliness and despondency, only to be reminded of the debilitating division that exists between the life of her imagination and the demands of her teaching duties. The departure of Emily from Roe Head in October 1835, Branwell's failure in London, the drudgery of teaching, and the lack of time for writing produced in Charlotte a sense of desolation, guilt, and mental depression[48] that led to an agonizing reappraisal of her situation and purpose in life, reflected in a manuscript volume of six poems and fragments (bound by Rivière as **The Wounded Stag and Other Poems**) dated at the end January 19, 1836 (Nos. 107-112). In No. 108 we get the only overt reference in Charlotte's poems to the religious turmoil she was undergoing as described in her letters to Ellen Nussey between May and December 1836. The speaker in the poem laments the loss of childhood faith and piety and the bliss they brought, recalls the "grinding tyranny" of religious doubt and terror, then proceeds to describe those "other visions" that have replaced the dreams of infancy, visions that are comforting yet delusory and obsessive. But the most significant element in these poems is the conflict over the need to accept the dictates of "Duty" and "Necessity," and to abandon those imaginary worlds. In **Reason** (No. 111) the speaker dedicates her heart to "Reason-Science-Learning-Thought," and in the final poem (No. 112) a frantic note of panic builds as the speaker returns to her old comrades one more time, "For ancient friendship's sake," then bids "Farewell! & yet again farewell."

Not surprisingly, Charlotte's farewell to her old comrades was short-lived. By the spring of 1836 she was once more composing Angrian poems, and during the summer vacation she produced the longest, most ambitious narrative poem of her career (No. 116). Although perhaps more reminiscent of **Childe Harold**, it is in the Don Juan stanza, a verse form she was to use with some frequency over the next few years. With the addition of the last six stanzas to intensify the sense of Byronic anguish and despair, this is the most Byronic of all her poems. It also

marks the beginning of the third and last period of intensive poetic composition.

In December of 1836 Charlotte wrote to Southey to enquire about the possibilities of a woman earning her living by writing. His reply was not encouraging:

> The day-dreams in which you habitually indulge are likely to induce a distempered state of mind and, in proportion as all the ordinary uses of the world seem to you flat and unprofitable, you will be unfitted for them without becoming fitted for anything else. Literature cannot be the business of a woman's life, and it ought not to be. The more she is engaged in her proper duties, the less leisure will she have for it, even as an accomplishment and a recreation.

Charlotte replied, and received in turn a reply which again was not encouraging. This letter she endorsed "Southey's advice to be kept forever. My twenty-first birthday. Roe Head. April 21, 1837" (SHB LL, I, 154-59). Yet when one looks at the number and dates of poems she wrote in 1837, it is clear that she was already breaking her resolution as she wrote it. During the second school term in 1836, Charlotte produced only one short poem seemingly confirming her complaint that teaching left her no time for writing. Yet between January 1837 and July 1838 (she left Roe Head in December 1838) she produced sixty poems and fragments, with more than one draft extant in many cases. Approximately two-thirds are Angrian; but there is a decided shift from the long narrative to the short lyric, and in the latter the boundary between the fictional and the autobiographical is frequently blurred. A large number of the 1837 poems, a proportion that increased as the year went on, are personal recollections, often interior monologues, filled with a sense of loneliness, loss, regret, and frustration (see, for example, Nos. 121, 122, 128, 129, 121-37, 143, 144, 147, 153, 155, 156, 158).[49] Charlotte began 1837 with another long verse narrative in the Don Juan stanza (No. 118), closely linked to the one she had composed the previous summer, yet three-quarters of the way along, after an unfinished stanza, meter and stanza form change, altering the poem from a narrative to a personal lyric of longing and regret. In No. 133 one senses Charlotte's growing fear of the fantasy world she has delighted in, perhaps linked to continuing religious qualms she is experiencing over her obsession with Angria (No. 133-37). In contrast to the "finished quality" of the earlier poems, many in 1837 are fragmentary and unfinished; there are many more uncanceled drafts, trial lines, variant readings, and blank spaces, and the majority of the poems are undated and unsigned. Also many of the manuscripts are in pencil, consistent with the general pattern in Charlotte's manuscripts of fair copies in ink, early drafts, unfinished poems, etc. in pencil. Twelve of these poems and fragments were later reworked for the 1846 volume to constitute ten of her nineteen

poems. Significantly, only three poems (Nos. 148-150) are part of a prose narrative, written during the summer vacation, where previously most of the Angrian poems were embedded in prose narratives. In part, the change can be attributed to the lack of time and energy her teaching duties left her, but one also senses a rift developing between poetry and prose, and a waning of the poetic impulse as Charlotte came to realize more and more that prose fiction was her real métier. The quality of her poetry seems to me to decline noticeably from about mid-1837 on.

In 1838 the pattern becomes more regular again. The emphasis on the short lyric remains, but a great majority of the poems are relatively finished, signed and dated. All but one is Angrian and seven are part of prose narratives. But there are only eleven poems in all, composed during Christmas and summer vacation, and the spurt of writing during the summer shows a clear shift of emphasis from poetry to prose. Of the eight summer poems, all Angrian, six are embedded in prose narratives, as are all the 1839 poems. Winifred Gérin suggests that 1838-39 marks a change in Charlotte's work from unself-conscious dreaming to critical artistic composition and self-critical evaluation (CB, p. 118). It would seem that with the growth of critical awareness, the urge to write verse declined.

Over the next three years, before her departure for Brussels in February 1842, Charlotte produced only six poems and bits of verse. Four of these, all part of Angrian prose narratives, were composed in 1839, before Charlotte wrote her **Farewell to Angria**. In 1840, despite time and leisure at home, she produced only the "valentine" poem (No. 177). In 1841 there is also only one poem, but it suggests a bit of an Angrian relapse. In this early draft of **Passion** Charlotte returns to the Napoleonic Wars in Spain from which she had years ago taken the name of Douro for her hero. The speaker is a tyrannical male who very much resembles the Zamorna she has supposedly left behind.[50]

While she was in Brussels Charlotte did not entirely forego the composition of verse. In the fall of 1842 she wrote a poem on the death of her friend Martha Taylor. In addition to the manuscripts discovered by Ernest Nys (p. xxiii) she seems to have taken to Brussels the "Copy Book" in the Bonnell Collection at the Pierpont Morgan Library, into which she had been copying revised versions of earlier poems. Two of the poems (Nos. 164, 174) are signed "Copied at Bruxelles 1843." In addition, she translated poems from French and German into English and from English and German into French (see **Appendix A**).

On her return home from Brussels in January 1844 Charlotte was convinced that her writing career was over, and there is no evidence of any poetry composed that year. In July she wrote to Heger:

> Formerly I passed whole days and weeks and months in writing . . . but now my sight is too weak to write. Were I to write much I should become blind. This weakness of sight is a terrible hindrance to me . . . . The career of letters is closed to me--only that of teaching is open (SHB LL, II, 13).

Thus when in October she and her sisters abandoned the project of setting up their own school for lack of pupils, Charlotte did not have the consolation of either teaching or writing. To add to her frustration, Heger was not answering her letters, creating a growing sense of betrayal and anger, and a growing conviction that the enmity of Madame Heger was at least partially responsible. On January 9, 1845 she wrote the angriest of all her letters to her former teacher and colleague:

> I have a hidden consciousness that some people, cold and common-sense, in reading it [Charlotte's letter] would say--'She is talking nonsense.' I would avenge myself on such persons in no other way than by wishing them one single day of the torments which I have suffered for eight months. We should then see if they would not talk nonsense too.
>
> One suffers in silence so long as one has the strength so to do, and when that strength gives out one speaks without too carefully measuring one's words (SHB LL, II, 24).

Her anger and sense of betrayal seem to to have stirred her into a final flurry of poetic activity, culminating in the preparation of the 1846 volume of poems.

Although the dating of the poems ascribed to 1845 has to be tentative because the manuscripts are undated, the disjointed, head-long quality, the fervent declaration of love, the tone of anger and betrayal, and the presence of a hostile, scheming female rival in No. 180 all suggest that the poem was written soon after the January letter. The similarity of content and tone suggest that the revision of an Angrian fragment into what was to become **Francis** in the 1846 volume also belongs to this period. Sometime in the spring or summer of 1845 Charlotte composed the partial draft of **Gilbert**, the early draft of "I gave at first attention close," and the two other fragments (Nos. 183, 184) in the partially used exercise book retained from her Brussel's studies. The theme of vengeance wreaked on Gilbert for his betrayal of Elinor, who

> . . . loved me more than life;
> And truly it was sweet
> To see so fair a woman kneel,
> In bondage, at my feet

There was a sort of quiet bliss
To be so deeply loved,
To gaze on trembling eagerness
And sit myself, unmoved

suggests that the poem must have been completed, at least in draft form, before June 26, when Charlotte left to visit Ellen Nussey for three weeks, and returned to find Branwell distracted and in disgrace after his dismissal by the Robinsons, unless one speculates that the poem reflects her sense of having been betrayed by Branwell. Certainly the tone of Charlotte's last letter to Heger in November is much more calm and controlled perhaps, in part, because she was writing again.

In the autumn she made the now well-known discovery of Emily's manuscript volume of poems, that led, at Charlotte's insistence, to the publication of the 1846 volume of poems. The final revisions of the nineteen poems she included must have been largely completed by the end of 1845, for the approach to Aylott and Jones was made on January 28, 1846, and the manuscript was dispatched on February 7. The task must have been formidable; although she used nine items from her Copy-Book, in which the last item is dated August 30, 1845, some of the poems underwent substantial revision. For three poems--**Preference, The Missionary,** and **The Wood**--there are no manuscripts extant. The subject matter of the first two, with their themes of haughty defiance and submission to God's will, suggests that they may have been composed earlier in the year when **Gilbert** was completed, although **Preference** has enough Angrian overtones to suggest it may be a revision of an earlier draft no longer extant. This is certainly the case with **The Wood. Pilate's Wife's Dream** is likely also a revision of a longer manuscript of which only a small scrap now remains. Thus fifteen years after Charlotte decided that she was called to be a poet and "published" some of her little volumes, she actually became a published poet.

True to her prophecy in 1830, she was a very minor one. The volume attracted little attention and her career as poet had come to an end. By June 1846 she had revised the poem in **The Professor**; by August 1847, the poems for **Jane Eyre.** It is fitting, therefore, that her last four poems were all about endings: "He saw my heart's woe" (December 1847) in which she exorcised the ghost of Heger, two poems on the death of Emily in 1848, and one on the death of Anne in 1849.

In later life Charlotte did not hold her poetry in high regard. She commented that her poems in the 1846 volume were written "before taste was chastened or judgement matured--accordingly they now appear to me very crude" (SHB LL, III, 86). To Mrs. Gaskell, she described her 1846 poems as "chiefly juvenile productions; the restless effervescence of a mind that would not be still. In those days the sea too often 'wrought and was tempestuous,' and weed, sand, and shingle--all turned

up in tumult" (SHB LL, III, 162). With this edition it becomes possible for posterity to judge how accurately Charlotte evaluated her own work.

THE LAYOUT OF THE TEXT

For the twenty-two poems published by Charlotte the primary text given is her printed text. In all other cases the text follows the manuscripts as closely as possible. Her spelling, punctuation, and verse format have been reproduced, but canceled words, lines, etc., have been omitted. Where uncanceled variant readings occur, the primary text gives the latest variant, with earlier variants noted at the end of the poem. Similarly, where more than one draft exists, the primary text gives the latest; the earlier drafts appear in the commentary. Only titles provided by Charlotte are included. Editorial insertions appear in [ ], uncertain readings in < >.

The poems are arranged in chronological order, and Charlotte's signature and date have been reproduced when given. Where the date appears in square brackets, either the poem is undated but part of a dated manuscript, or the manuscript is undated. In the first case, the date and signature on the manuscript are provided in the commentary; in the second case, the reasons for the placement of the poem are given in the commentary. Although the last item in **Appendix A** is numbered 224, for the convenience of the reader eighteen early drafts of poems in the 1846 volume and **The Professor** have been included in the numbering at the chronologically appropriate place; thus the actual number of items is 206, excluding **Appendixes B** and **C**.

In the notes at the end of each poem the reader will find:

(a) The coded location of the manuscript(s) (for the key, see p. xv). Where more than one location is listed, either the manuscript has been split or more than one version is extant. In the latter case, the locations appear in chronological order and the copy text is the last one noted.

(b) The first publication of the poem keyed to the **List of Abbreviations**, pp. xi-xiii.

(c) Variant readings and other textual matters.

In addition to information about dating and variant drafts, the commentary includes other relevant information about the manuscripts, information about the context of the poems, and some glossing of literary and Biblical references and sources. For Angrian references, a glossary of Glass Town/Angrian names is provided in **Appendix D**.

Notes

1 K. M. Elizabeth Murray, **Caught in the Web of Words** (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), p. 2.

2 **Charlotte Brontë's Novels: The Accents of Persuasion** (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., Inc., 1966), p. 16.

3 **Ibid.**, p. 18. See also chapter one of Winnifrith.

4 "The Brontës," **Victorian Fiction: A Guide to Research**, ed. Lionel Stevenson, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1964; "The Brontës," **Victorian Fiction: A Second Guide to Research**, ed. George H. Ford, New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 1978. Two most welcome recent publications are Christine Alexander's **A Bibliography of the Manuscripts of Charlotte Brontë**, The Brontë Society in association with Meckler Publishing, 1982, and **The Early Writings of Charlotte Brontë**, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1983.

5 For good discussions of the inadequacy of existing editions of the letters, see Rosengarten, "The Brontës," Winnifrith (chapter two), and BST (1982). Tom Winnifrith's recent editions of Branwell's and Charlotte's poems (Oxford: Shakespeare Head Press, 1983 and 1984), though an improvement over the SHB, still do not provide a complete text in either case.

6 For an explanation of how this figure is determined, see **The Layout of the Text** at the end of the Introduction.

7 **A Reference Catalogue of British and Foreign Autographs and Manuscripts.** Part I. "The Autograph of Charlotte Brontë," London, 1893; **A Bibliography of the Writings in Prose and Verse of the Members of the Brontë Family**, London, 1917; **A Brontë Library. A Catalogue of Printed Books, Manuscripts and Autograph Letters By the Members of the Brontë Family**, Collected by Thomas James Wise, London, 1929.

8 "The Brontës," p. 215.

9 In the early part of this century Sir Alfred Law of Honresfeld, Lancashire, acquired a number of Brontë manuscripts, including at least twelve of Charlotte's poems, the eleven listed on p. xix, and a draft of **Mementos**. Some of the manuscripts were in the collection of Shorter purchased from Nicholls; therefore Law must have acquired them from Wise; others Law purchased in the Sotheby's sale of 1907, after Nicholls' death. Neither Shorter nor Hatfield seem to have known of the Law collection at the time they prepared the 1923 edition of Charlotte's poems, nor when Hatfield prepared his Bibliography of Charlotte's manuscripts in 1922-24 (BST 6: 32-34). For a more detailed discussion of

the collection see "Brontë Manuscripts in the Law Collection" by Davidson Cook, **The Bookman**, November 1925, pp. 100-104. It was Cook (see n. 10) who drew Hatfield's attention to the existence of the collection. Just how many manuscripts remain in the possession of the Law family it is impossible to say; sometime after Sir Alfred's death in 1939 all further access was closed off, and scholars' pleas for information continue to go unanswered. Apparently Sir Alfred did offer some manuscripts for sale in 1933. C. W. Hatfield notes in a letter to Helen Brown (June 23, 1938) "It is interesting to know that Sir Alfred Law is still in possession of some of C. B.'s early mss. They were in the sale rooms of Hodgson and Company on 31st March 1933 and were supposed to have been sold as follows: Two Romantic Tales, L250 to Rolleston; Characters of Celebrated Men, £270 (no record of name of purchaser); Visits in Verreopolis, £400 to Robson. I was informed soon afterwards that there was a doubt about the manuscripts having really been sold. According to the catalogue a number of other early manuscripts from the same collection were sold" (Hatfield Papers). The doubt seems to have been accurate, for Helen Brown states in a letter dated June 21, 1938 that she visited Honresfeld and saw the three manuscripts listed above, but at least one manuscript listed by Cook, **Mina Laury** (see No. 162), is now in the Taylor Collection in Princeton.

10 That Cook made meticulous transcriptions of the Law manuscripts is clear from the Hatfield-Cook correspondence, 1925-28, in the Wise Collection. On the fly-leaf of one of Cook's transcriptions in the Symington Collection, Symington has noted: "Davidson Cook--a man of great Literary Research achievement: He was an authority on R. Burns, Sir W. Scott, and did work on the Brontës. He was trusted by Sir Alfred Law to copy the Burns and Scott MSS & Letters, which led him to getting access to the Brontë MSS. The Brontë MSS in the Law Collection had not been previously copied [actually Wise had copied some and Shorter had used the transcripts]. D. C.'s transcripts and editing have been followed by writers on the Angrian Stories of the Brontës, including Hatfield, Ratchford, & J A S."

11 By the time I discovered the existence of the three manuscripts containing these items, time and money for travel were no longer available.

12 See BST (1916) 5:26, 137-43.

13 Mrs. Gaskell's dating of "before 1833" is incorrect and may well have resulted from the fact that the manuscript is undated, and may not have been combined with a dated manuscript as it now is (see comment for No. 110).

14 See Clement Shorter, **The Brontës: Life and Letters** (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1908), I, 19-20, and Shorter's letter in the **TLS**, April 3, 1924, p. 208.

15 May 8, 1926; November 17, 1926, Wise Collection. In another letter to Cook, dated April 21, 1926, Hatfield discusses some of Nicholls' errors in dating Emily's poems.

16 See n. 14.

17 Letters to Helen Brown, March 1, 1938 and May 23, 1938, in the Hatfield papers. According to J. A. Symington's catalogue of the Bonnell Collection, prepared for Mrs. Bonnell after the death of her husband (Symington Collection), Bonnell purchased at least one manuscript of Charlotte's (Nos. 40 and 41) from Miss Bell--"a niece of Mr. Nicholls"--and eight poems and fragments (Nos. 121, 122, 124-125, 135, 142) from Mrs. Bolster.

18 Shorter, **Life and Letters**, I, 19.

19 The total does not include a number of exercise books from Charlotte's Brussels' period.

20 For the various versions of the purchase, see Shorter, **Life and Letters**, I, 19-20; "The Four Wishes," ed. Shorter, **Strand Magazine**, LVI (December, 1918), 461; **TLS**, April 3, 1924, p. 208; Christian, Census, pp. 180-81; Fannie E. Ratchford, ed., **The Letters of Thomas J. Wise to John Henry Wrenn** (New York: Knopf, 1944), pp. 471 and 484.

21 Winnifrith, pp. 200-01.

22 Christian, Census, p. 180. See also Wilfred Partington, **Thomas J. Wise In The Original Cloth** (London: Robert Hale Ltd., 1946), pp. 101, 104-5, 116-17, 164-65, for some of Wise's other commercial transactions concerning manuscripts.

23 Ratchford, **Letters of T. J. Wise**, pp. 162-63.

24 September 9, 1926, Wise Collection. See also Christian, Census, p. 181 n. 16.

25 In letters dated June 15, 1926 (Wise Collection); March 9, April 12, April 16, August 6, 1938 (Hatfield Papers), Hatfield cites examples of Wise's deliberate attempts to pass off the work of Charlotte and Branwell as Emily's, in one case even after Hatfield had sent to Wise evidence to the contrary.

26 SHB Misc, II, 472-73.

27 Although I have confined my remarks to the effects on the manuscripts of Charlotte's poems, all these problems apply to the other manuscripts as well, including the letters. Christian notes that one type of "representative series" Wise prepared for his friends consisted of "taking a sample among the letters . . . of each type of signature that Charlotte used: 'C Brontë,' 'C B,' 'C Bell,' 'Charlotte Brontë,' and 'C. B. Nicholls'" (Census, p. 182).

28 Letter to Cook, December 24, 1926, Wise Collection. See also Hatfield's letter to Helen Brown, March 15, 1938 (Hatfield Papers).

29 The phrase is Partington's, p. 117.

30 "A Literary Letter," **The Sphere**, January 1, 1916.

31 See pp. 96-101, 257.

32 See Christian, Census, p. 181 n. 13, and Partington, **Thomas J Wise**, pp. 101-105.

33 "There must surely have been plenty of subscribers for such a small number of a purported Charlotte Brontë first edition. Yet we find Wise still selling the edition in 1910--disposing of a bundle of fifteen copies for only six pounds nineteen shillings, fourteen years after the production of '30 copies only'." Partington, **Thomas J Wise**, p. 108.

34 According to J. M. Bulloch, Shorter was too impatient to learn to collate and depended completely on Wise in editorial matters (**C.K.S. An Autobiography** (Privately printed, 1927), p. xvii).

35 In fact, all the new poems of Emily's in the 1902 edition were based on transcriptions made by Nicholls which had been bound and sold by Wise as original manuscripts. Shorter printed 67 of Emily's poems from the 1902 edition (Hatfield letter to Helen Brown, March 1, 1938, Hatfield Papers).

36 A similar problem obtained in the preparation of the 1920 edition of Anne's poems, which did not contain Anne's three earliest poems, yet the manuscripts for them were found among Shorter's papers after his death (Hatfield to Helen Brown, May 7, 1938, Hatfield Papers).

37 My remarks are restricted to the poetry volumes. For a discussion of the shabby treatment of the letters, see Winnifrith, pp. 7-27; 195-210.

38 **The Bookman**, 1925 and 1926; **The Twelve Adventurers and Other Stories**, 1925; **Legends of Angria**, 1933.

39 On Emily's poems, he comments, "I corrected a number of errors in the proof-sheets, errors fairly well known to the reviewers; but I left the others for the editors and other proof-readers to correct. When I saw the completed book, I came to the conclusion that I had been the only one to make any corrections in the text of the poems!" (Letter to Helen Brown, February 9, 1937, Hatfield Papers).

40 For more detailed information, see Alexander, p. xvii.

41 Christian, "The Brontës," p. 217.

42 I exclude No. 1 because it was written in collaboration with Branwell. Because of the collaboration with Branwell on the early poems, the number of lines can only be approximate.

43 For a discussion of Charlotte's use of allusion, see Melodie Monahan, "Charlotte Brontë's **The Poetaster**: Text and Notes," **Studies in Romanticism** 20 (Winter 1981), 475-96.

44 Gérin, CB, pp. 24-25.

45 Alexander (EW, p. 63) points out that the separation may have been underway by mid-1830.

46 See Charlotte's letter to Ellen Nussey, July 21, 1832 (SHB LL, I, 103), and Alexander EW, pp. 87-88.

47 Three versions of the poem are extant (see comment for No. 104). Wise had the second and third versions bound separately by Rivière, another example of how he "arranged" manuscripts.

48 Gérin, CB, p. 98.

49 Clearly, many of these poems relate to the hypochondria Charlotte suffered from in 1837-38--see Gérin, CB, pp. 113-15.

50 As late as May 1, 1843 Charlotte wrote to Branwell: "It is a curious metaphysical fact that always in the evening when I am in the great dormitory alone, having no other company than a number of beds with white curtains, I always recur as fanatically as ever to the old ideas, the old faces, and the old scenes in the world below" (SHB LL, I, 197).

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THE POEMS

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O when shall our brave land be free
when shall our castles rise
in pure & glorious liberty
before our joyful eyes

How long shall tyrants ride in state
upon the thundercloud
the arbiters of Englands fate
and of her nobles proud

Thou sun of liberty arise--
upon our beauteous land
terrible vengeance rend the skys
let tyrants feel thy hand

let tyrants feel thy hand we cry
& let them see thy gaze
for they will shrink beneath thy eye
& we will sing thy praise

the song of vengeance shall arise
before the morning sun
illuminates the arched skys
or its high course doth run

the song of vengeance shall not cease
when midnight cometh on
when the silver moon shines out in peace
to light the traveler lone

July the 24 U T

MS: A
Not previously published

2

in this fairy land of light
no mortal ere has been
and the dreadful grandeu[r] of this sight
by them hath not been seen

t'would strike them shudering to the earth
like the flash from a thunder cloud
it would quench their light & joyous mirth
and fit them for the shroud

the rising of our palaces
like visions of the deep
and the glory of their structure
no mortal voice can speak

the music of our songs
and our mighty trumpets swell
& the sounding of our silver harps
no mortal tongue can tell

of us they know but little
save when the storm doth rise
and the mighty waves are tossing
agains[t] the arched skys

then oft they see us striding
oe'r the billows snow white foam
or hear us speak in thunder
when we stand in grandeur lone

on the darkest of the mighty clouds
which veil the pearly moon
around us lightning flashing
nights blackness to illume

chorus the music of our songs
and our mighty trumpets
swell & the sounding of our silver
harp[s] no mortal tongue can tell

[August 1829]

Ms: B(1)
First Publication: Shorter 1923

3

Lo our mighty cheiftains come
clothed in glory infinite
with the sound of harp & drum
loud pealing their might

on they march in splendour
to their adamantine thrones
& there they sit in grandeur
while our high melodious tones