



The Australian Brontë Association

Newsletter

Issue No 32

December 2013

Ponden Hall and the Brontës

The main body of the Hall was built in 1634 by the land-owning Heaton family, who had moved down the valley from Old Snap farm, and before that from Lancashire. Their first house here was built in the 1500s, and the east end of the house dates from then. In 1680 the so-called Peat Loft was built at the west end of the house, and in 1801 was joined to the house in a huge modernisation, which also saw the library created and a grand new entrance built.

Emily Brontë's association with the Heaton family at Ponden is well documented: one of the Heatons served as a churchwarden to Patrick, and we know she used the library, reputedly the finest in West Yorkshire.

A catalogue of the books still exists, and contains volumes of law, local history and Gothic romances, all or any of which might have influenced *Wuthering Heights*. The library also contained a Shakespeare First Folio.

The books were sold at Keighley marketplace in 1898 after the last of the Heatons died. Unsold books were reportedly

torn up and used to wrap vegetables. No-one knows what became of the Shakespeare



First Folio – the first published edition of his plays, published in 1623, seven years after the playwright's death. Today there are only 219 copies extant; one changed hands in 2007 for £2.8 million.

There has been a tradition that Ponden Hall is identifiable with the Linton's home, Thrushcross Grange, in *Wuthering Heights*, although none of the sisters left evidence of such a link themselves. In part this is due to its situation, on the way up to the moors; in part to the fact there were so few larger houses in this area.

The house may well have seemed grand to the Brontës, and the tree-lined drive, stretching across the middle of where the reservoir is today, down to Ponden Mill on the beck, may have made it seem more of a 'great house' like Thrushcross Grange. Actually, the fairly humble Ponden Hall is





far more identifiable with the house Wuthering Heights, and recently opinion tends to identify Ponden Hall more with the home of Heathcliff for more information (see www.wuthering-heights.co.uk).

Branwell wrote a ghost story about a 'black dog' spectre, 'Thurstons at Darkwall', originally entitled 'Heatons at Ponden', and clearly based at the-Hall. He also sketched a hunting party apparently gathered in front of the fireplace in the main hall, and it is known that he frequently attended pre-hunt gatherings here.

The date plaque above the main entrance identifies the rebuilt house as dating from 1801, the date that begins the story in *Wuthering Heights*. It has also been noted that R Heaton is an anagram of Hareton, although that may be pushing similarity too far.

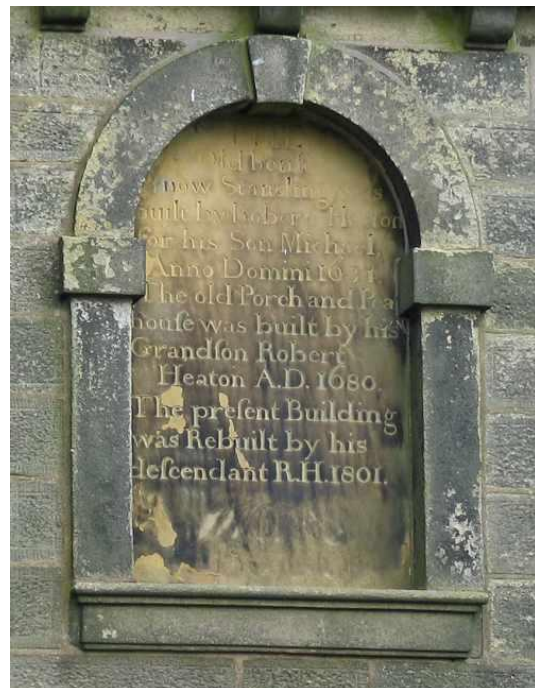
An important link between Wuthering Heights and Ponden Hall comes in an account by William Davies (published 1896) after a visit he made to Haworth in 1858. He tells how, after meeting Patrick Brontë (“a dignified gentleman of the old school”), he was taken on a tour of the area:

On leaving the house we were taken across the moors to visit a waterfall which was a favourite haunt of the sisters... We then went on to an old manorial farm called 'Heaton 's of Ponden', which we were told was the original model of Wuthering Heights, which indeed corresponded in some measure to the description given in Emily Brontë 's romance.

On the east gable end of the house, a tiny single-paned window is said to where Cathy's ghost, memorably, scratched furiously at the glass, trying to get in.

I muttered, knocking my knuckles through the glass, and stretching an aim out to seize the importunate branch; instead of which, my fingers closed on the fingers of a little, ice-cold hand!

Behind the Hall are the withered remains of a now-dead pear tree, supposedly the gift of a lovesick teenage Heaton to an older, uninterested Emily. And there is a family story that Emily was visiting, drinking tea at the table in the main hall, when a litter of puppies was born at her feet. Robert Heaton, who was with her, was



apparently embarrassed by this occurrence, but Emily laughed and thought nothing of it.

Ponden Hall is now for sale through estate agents Charnock Bates of Halifax (01422 380100). For more details of the sale see the website:

www.pondenhall.moonfruit.net.

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

As we reflect on the past 12 months we have celebrated the Brontës and their work, we would like to pay tribute to our Patron, Professor Christine Alexander, and will be awarding her with Life Membership of the Australian Brontë Association at our Christmas luncheon on 7 December.

Christine was the Keynote Speaker at the Literary Juvenilia Conference held at Durham University, UK in September. ABA committee member, Michelle Cavanagh, attended the conference. To read her excellent commentary and see photos from the event, I encourage you to view the link to her travelblog:

<http://www.travelblog.org/fred.php?id=806767>

ABA members participated in the Penguin Books/Google Hangout On Air discussing the book of the month for July – *Jane Eyre*. The video may be viewed via <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wbo3ra9L23s>. I have suggested Anne Brontë's *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall* for discussion in 2014 and, in anticipation of the Country Weekend we are planning with the NSW Dickens Society from 31 October to 2 November, Mrs Gaskell's *North and South*. Members will be advised of the dates for these and other classics for this popular book club in due course.

Having read an article we featured in our December 2012 newsletter regarding a portrait of the three Brontë sisters sold at auction earlier in the year, I was recently contacted by the vendor, James Gorin, who wrote:

I really enjoyed your article - the original 'morning sketch' of the Russell sisters was not lost per se - the auctioneer assured me it was, according to the vendors, the same lot 127 'Three Sisters'- in fact the anticipated portrait was unframed. Whether there was a mix-up or it was damaged or 're-valued' by someone who knows.

The remaining contents of the Russell's country house Endesleigh (Eden's side) were disposed of in the epic 'Woburn Sale' 2005 and the building sold (now hotel). It likely items were disposed of prior to the grand sale, perhaps memento gifts to former staff? This is likely because another Landseer drawing appeared on the day I went to collect the 'booby prize'. It's his preparatory drawing for 'Dignity and Impudence'- before the 'dignity' and impudent tongue were applied. It was made in the same year as the group portrait- and features pencil-work indistinguishable from gestures on the verso of the present portrait. It's an important picture because, following the catastrophic advice of the dog's owner, Jacob Bell, it undoubtedly contributed to the artist's breakdown of 1839.

Most interestingly, the silver reber beading on the inner frame is deeply worn from decades of dusting- either by a house-servant or generations who loved it very much.

Thank you for your original open-minded and comprehensive report.

Best wishes, James Gorin

We look forward to seeing you in 2014. With best wishes for Christmas and the New Year.

Sarah Burns

COMMITTEE

Our Patron is Professor Christine Alexander, University of NSW

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SYDNEY GIRL'S FASHION COLLECTION WAS INSPIRED BY JANE EYRE

From the St George & Sutherland Shire Leader 9 November 2013

It was a fascination with the character Jane Eyre from the novel of that name which captured Lillian Chan's imagination. The honours student from Beverly Hills is studying fashion and textile design combined with international studies at the University of Technology, Sydney.

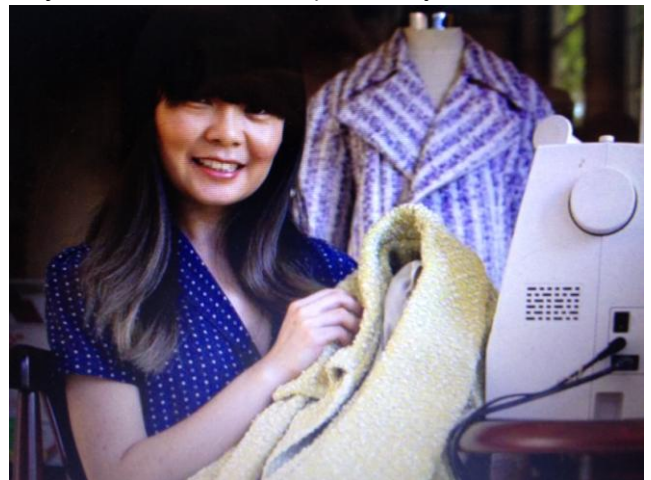
For her final design project, Lillian, 25, showcased her 20-piece creations across six looks at her university's "Future of Fashion" runway show last week.

Her style "icon" was none other than Miss Eyre herself. "*Jane Eyre* is my favourite novel — I've read it a couple of times," Lillian said. "The main character Jane is such a strong role model, despite her oppression. I like to think of her as the original feminist."

Lillian's collection, "Thornfield", was named after the Thornfield House in the novel. "People expected me to do a Victorian collection but it's not that at all," she said. "I've added a supernatural element — a ghostly feeling by using sheer and pastel-coloured fabric, lots of layering and ivory silk organza contrasted with textural fabrics like leather and tweed. "It's quite a contemporary collection but still classic because I wanted to keep that sophistication."

Her modern muse for the collection was Australian-Polish actress, Mia Wasikowska. "I've seen a few of her movies, and she played Jane in a modern adaptation," she said.

Lillian, who no doubt has inherited some of her skills from her mother who was a dressmaker in Hong Kong, hopes to gain international experience. "Ideally next year I'd like to intern overseas with a designer I admire, like Christopher Kane or Simone Rocha in London. But I would like to eventually stay in Australia, to help the industry out and be the next generation of designers."



FROM THE PRIVIES OF HAWORTH TO THE GOLDFIELDS OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA: B.H. BABBAGE

Based partly on *Haworth in the Brontë Era* by E. Atkinson

We probably know many more details of the lives of the Brontës than we do of our own families. There have been papers written on the eyesight of the Brontës, on their medical histories, their domestic arrangements, what food they ate and so on. It can be argued that such information does not help us understand their literary works, and yet we are fascinated by little details of their lives.

To some extent this interest lies in wanting to know about the conditions of life in that part of the world in the early Victorian era. As members of the Australian Brontë Association we are interested not only in their writing, but also in the social history of which they were part.

We like to be reminded that they were not simply disembodied muses who wrote some of the greatest English novels. They were real people, with bodies. Charlotte was short-sighted. Emily was tall. They got sick. And, of course, like all of us they had to perform certain bodily functions that are rarely referred to in biographies of famous people.

The privy at the Haworth Parsonage was a two seater – one for adults and a smaller one for children. This was situated above a cess-pit. I remember reading a fictionalised history of the Brontës in which Aunt Branwell is depicted shuffling in her patens to the privy in the back garden.



I have visited the Parsonage many times but I don't recall seeing the privy. No doubt it is no longer there, but even if it was I am sure it would be considered to be "off limits".

The Brontës were fortunate in having their own privy. Most families in the village had to share a privy. One group of 24 houses at the lower end of Main Street had just one toilet between them. Another group of 24 houses in Guager's croft also had to share a single privy. There were seven houses in Main Street that had no access to a privy at all. They had to share one of a couple of public privies that were in public streets, open to the gaze of passers by. One was at the top of Main Street and had magnificent views right down Main Street!

Dickens London must have been pretty unhealthy, but it doesn't compare with the unsanitary conditions of Haworth in the time of the Brontës. At the time of the Brontës there were 2500 people living in Haworth and they had to share 69 toilets.

There were no sewers. Liquid waste ran out into covered drains or open gutters. Solid waste, or 'night soil' had to be emptied into a container next to the privy, called a 'midden-stead'. These remained exposed for months until they were emptied. One had a surface area of 16 square metres. There were about 50 midden-steads in the town and in addition to human waste they contained kitchen garbage and the entrails of animals from a slaughter house.

These midden-steads were often overflowing. In one case there was a midden-stead against the back wall of the druggist's house where the waste was piled up to the level of the larder window.

An even bigger problem was the water supply. There were eleven pumps,

two of which did not work, and seven wells. The Brontës were fortunate in having their own well. Well, perhaps not so fortunate when you consider that the pump drew water that had filtered down through the graveyard.

In the dry season water was scarce. Some wells ran so slowly that the inhabitants had to start queuing at two or three o'clock in the morning to get enough water for their Monday wash. And sometimes the water was so green and slimy that even the cattle refused to drink it.

Overcrowding and poor ventilation added to the unhealthy conditions in Haworth. At the time there were two main occupations in the town, mining stone in Penistone quarry and wool-combing. Wool-combing required the room to be kept warm and, except at the height of summer, stoves were kept burning day and night. The windows were seldom opened.

For example, the upper portion of a cottage in Back Lane consisted of three rooms opening into each other. In one there were four beds in which eight quarrymen slept. In a second room, six men and boys who worked at the wool combing business slept. In the third room, they carried on their wool-combing work, which required a constant fire to be kept alight day and night.

In some cases, wool-combing was carried on in bedrooms, which consequently became very close and unhealthy from the high temperature maintained by the stoves and the want of ventilation.

In Guager's Croft, there was a cellar dwelling consisting of two rooms; one of them a woolcomber's shop, the other a living room and kitchen. The family, seven in number, slept in two beds in the shop which was very hot and close, even in the



daytime.

Not surprisingly, the death rate in Haworth was alarmingly high – one of the highest in England. Other places with comparable death rates were in crowded cities, such as in the East End of London. The following table gives the mortality figures for Haworth in the period 1838 – 1849.

Year	0 – 1	1 – 15	15 – 45	> 45	TOTAL	Average age at death
1838	24	19	8	14	65	19.6
1839	25	9	15	18	67	25.4
1840	17	10	14	9	50	20.8
1841	18	12	14	16	60	28.4
1842	19	12	21	21	73	27.0
1843	16	12	18	14	60	23.8
1844	14	13	11	14	52	25.5
1845	21	11	19	20	71	26.5
1846	16	12	20	24	72	30.8
1847	25	10	18	26	79	29.8
1848	22	12	12 ¹	14	60	21.7
1849	13	10	11 ²	16	50	29.8

¹ These include Branwell and Emily.

² Anne died and was buried in Scarborough and so is not included in this figure.

For some years Patrick Brontë had been concerned about the unsanitary conditions in Haworth. He organised a petition to the General Board of Health in London. On October 9th 1849 this petition was sent, requesting that a Superintendent Inspector should visit Haworth to enquire into the sewerage and water supply facilities. They believed that these unsanitary conditions were behind the low life expectancy in the area.

The General Board of Health sent Benjamin Babbage. He was born in London, the eldest son of Charles Babbage, the renowned Cambridge mathematician who built the world's first computer, called a Difference Engine. This was a mechanical device, made of brass, that carried out certain mathematical calculations.

At the age of 18 the young Babbage became a pupil of an engineer and architect with whom he worked on waterworks projects. In the 1840s, he also worked with Brunel on planning railways.

Babbage opened his enquiry on 4 April 1850 in the vestry of the Parish Church. But so many people came to give evidence that he had to relocate to the nearby school room. The enquiry took three days. Babbage began his report by describing Haworth.

The hamlet of Haworth consists of a large village and the rural district, forming part of the chapelry of Haworth, in the parish of Bradford, in the West Riding of the county of York.

The face of the country around Haworth is very hilly and bleak, as there are but few trees to arrest the wintry winds. The village, or town of Haworth as the inhabitants style it, is high up upon the hillside and very much exposed to the wind. At a few hundred yards above the village a very extensive tract of moorland commences, which extends

far and wide to the south-west, with nothing to relieve the unbroken surface of bog and peat, excepting at the end next to Haworth, where huge hollows and vast spoil heaps mark the spot where it has been worked to provide ashlar blocks and flagstones. The Penistone quarries, as they are called, furnish employment to a considerable

number of the inhabitants of Haworth, both in quarrying the rock and in hauling the stone to all parts of the surrounding country.

The town of Haworth consists chiefly of one long street, stretching up the hill for nearly three-quarters of a mile in a north-

easterly direction. At the lower end the houses are very straggling; proceeding higher up, a long continuous row of houses is met with upon the upper side of the road, which now becomes very steep until at the top of this row the most thickly inhabited portion of the town is arrived at.

Here, the main road separates into two others, running off at an acute angle: West Lane which joins the Colne Road and Lord's Lane which runs again down the hill. The lane called Back Lane cuts off a triangle from these two roads and it is within and about this triangle that the greater number of houses of Haworth are situated.

From the main street, the ground falls to the north-east towards a small brook in the bottom of the valley called the River Worth or Bridgehouse Beck, which after a short course runs into the River Aire.

Haworth and the country around it is situated upon the sandstones, coals



and shale, forming the lower part of the great carboniferous formation. In sinking wells in the town, beds of this sandstone are met with, but the thickest and finest beds of it are found in the Penistone quarries. The immediate subsoil below the town consists of clay with beds of sand in it.

The natural drainage of Haworth runs into the Worth Beck and, as the surface of the streets is very much inclined, the surface water runs off quickly.

When Mr Babbage visited the Parish churchyard, he found it to be almost an acre in extent and bordered by just two buildings, namely the Parsonage and the Black Bull. The churchyard was almost full of graves. During the previous ten years there had been 1344 burials according to the Parish registers. Had these been conducted according to proper health requirements they would have needed a much greater area than that already allowed.

Mr Babbage was of the opinion that given the size of the population, it would require at least an additional acre to allow corpses to be buried at appropriate distances from each other, so as to prevent too great a collection in one place of decomposing matter. Mr Babbage described the burial arrangements as follows.

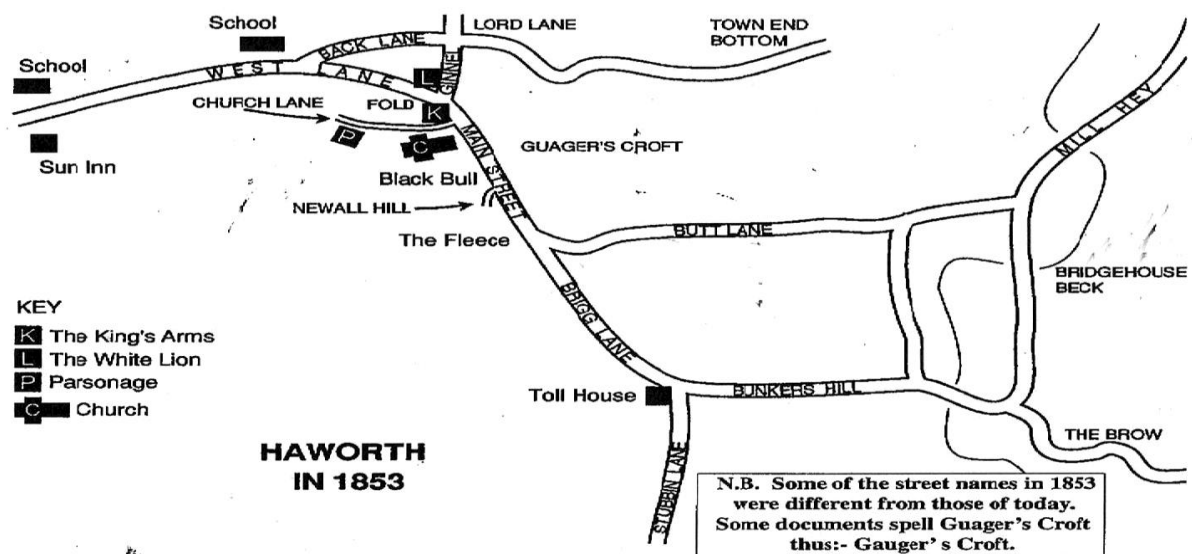
The practice at Haworth is to cover the grave with a flat stone, upon which is engraved the name, age etc., of the dead; and the churchyard presents one entire surface of flat stones, laid at different heights from the ground, some of them simply reposing upon the mound of earth which covers the grave, whilst others are supported on dwarf walls to form raised tombs.

This practice is a very bad one, as it prevents the access of atmospheric air



to the ground, which is necessary for promoting decomposition, and besides, the stones take the place of those shrubs which, if planted there, would tend to absorb the gases evolved during decomposition and render the process less likely to contaminate the atmosphere.

Mr Babbage proposed that the sewerage should be divided into three separate systems. A nine inch pipe should be



laid to collect waste from the top of the town, running down to Town End Bottom, where it would be discharged over the low-lying fields below all the houses.

A second similar pipe should collect waste from the Ginnel and Guager's Croft to just below Newall Hill. This would also be discharged on the fields below. The third pipe would collect waste from the rest of Main street as far as the toll bar, again to be released on to the fields.

Mr Babbage suggested that an efficient sewerage system should be constructed to enable cesspools in the town to be eliminated. He suggested that all existing privies should have syphon basins adapted to them and a water supply laid on. In addition he suggested that sufficient privies should be constructed to provide at least one to every three houses.

He also requested that water should be piped to each house which should have a proper sink put in and drains to carry the waste water away. He proposed that one of the numerous abandoned stone quarries, with very little additional excavation, would make an ideal reservoir, but a suitable supply of clay would first have to be found to make such a reservoir water-tight.

He also recommended that stand pipes should be fixed into the main pipe at fifty yard intervals in order to attach hoses in case of fire or for watering and cleansing the streets.

Since the churchyard was full of graves, Mr Babbage requested that no more burials should be allowed there. He proposed that a new cemetery be provided a short distance from the town. He also recommended that only one body should be laid to rest in each grave.

In order to construct a complete sewerage system and provide an adequate water supply for the town Babbage calculated that it would require weekly instalments over a thirty year period. The amount to be levied against each house would be $\frac{3}{4}$ d for sewerage and $\frac{1}{4}$ d for water.

Babbage concluded that the benefits of carrying out his recommendations would be an improvement in the general health of the town, bringing home to each family a diminished loss of time from sickness. There may be expected to be a diminution in the amount of the poor rates. Any profit which may be obtained from the employment of liquid sewerage for agricultural purposes, will go towards an actual diminution of the sewer rates.

The following year the Colonial Secretary Earl Grey sent Babbage out to Australia to perform a geological and mineralogical survey of the colony of South and he arrived there on 27 November 1851. Over the next few years he worked on a number of government projects, first setting up the Government Gold Assay Office in Victoria Square.

In January 1853 he was appointed Chief Engineer by the company undertaking the railway from Port Adelaide to the city. In 1855, Babbage served as President of the Adelaide Philosophical Society and in 1857 he was elected to the South Australian House of Assembly in the inaugural election, representing the electorate of Encounter Bay. He resigned later in the year after being appointed to lead an expedition to explore the north of the colony between Lake Torrens and Lake Gardner.

Babbage began his exploration of South Australia in 1856 when sent to search for gold up to the Flinders Ranges, when he discovered the MacDonnell River, Blanchewater and Mount Hopeful (renamed Mount Babbage in 1857). Babbage also disproved the notion that Lake Torrens was a single horseshoe-shaped lake or inland sea, ascertaining a number of gaps in the lake, which were later traversed other explorers.

Babbage also discovered that Lake Eyre (sighted by Edward John Eyre in 1840) actually consisted of a large northern and a smaller southern lake. A peninsula on Lake Eyre North was named Babbage Peninsula in 1963.

Vale Robert Barnard (1936 – 2013)

On 19 September last, after a brief period of very indifferent health, Robert Barnard, the remarkably prolific English crime-mystery writer and twice Chair of the Brontë Society, died in Yorkshire, in the city of Leeds, where he had made his home for more than thirty years. He had lived for some time in Australia, married an Australian, and continued to admire the robust personal values he detected in this country—values that found their way into his writing.

Born in Essex in 1936, Robert Barnard read English at Oxford, then spent five years lecturing at the University of New England in Armidale, northern New South Wales, before taking up a British Council posting in Norway, and then becoming Professor of English in that country's most northern University, Tromsø. His first book, *The Death of an Old Goat*, published in 1974, builds on his Australian experiences at the University of New England. His novels *A Cry from the Dark*, published first in England in 2003 and then in New York by Scribner, in 2004, and *The Heart of the Land* focus largely on a small outback town, 'Bundaroo' (in reality, Walgett) in the North West of New South Wales, and, in briefer compass, on a pre-war Armidale to which his story's protagonist removes for a very brief period.

From early on in his continuously successful and diverse career, he had merited a fine reputation as a sensitive and intuitive historian of the English novel, and also of the more subtle detective fictions created both by Agatha Christie and by many other English crime writers. And, more particularly – and largely simultaneously – he was admired for his own considerable sequence of sensitive mystery fictions, their plots presented with great panache and considerable psychological

insight as to the seemingly unexpected patterns of motivation in his characters. These last were derived from and telling a mix of ingenious deductions, unravelled with his detective figures' intuitive insight and shrewdness, and always dealing with wicked comedy of manners pieces set in what were seemingly unremarkable situations. Such settings were often to be found in dull



English micro-societies, and, particularly, in pretentious/strangely secluded schools, or in apparently peacefully slumbering villages in the east and the north of England.

Such backgrounds/locales seemed to afford him a fascinating and counteracting range of detective types possessed of both a robust common sense and of a refreshing earthiness.

However, Australia — in particular, the current and inherited if dubious lifestyle in that once apparently 'British' Australia — was also to be a re-visited strand in his writings, both because of his early time spent here and because he had met and married Louise Tabor, a young Australian graduate of the same University in which he had taught for more than five years. Having no children, they had worked closely together throughout his career. They both became increasingly committed to their many cultural activities together, including their scholarly publications and their substantial support of the Brontë Society in its various responsibilities to English letters. He published more than 50 books including the Emily Brontë book of the British Library Writers' lives series and, with his wife Louise, *The Brontë Encyclopedia*, plus 47 crime novels and short story collections. The final achievement in all his fields was his

winning of the Cartier Diamond Dagger for Crime Writing, this being presented ceremonially to him at the British Museum in 2003.

Robert was a good man and long time friend, with a sharp eye, and an unerring ability to limn in the foolish, the wasteful and the unprofessional. This is to be found variously and subtly in the closer reading of all his writings. Such is the tone one will find

in his 'Australian' writings. It has been an immense privilege to have worked alongside him, even as it has been to interpret more closely some of his sharply etched 'Australian' situations and plotted dilemmas confronting the students in his subtly contrived mysteries, and now limned in for the more recreational general readers of his vast body of comedy of manners writings.

Prof J S Ryan, MA (NZ), PhD (Cambr), PhD & Hon D Litt (UNE)
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Haworth's Parsonage Museum buys rare Charlotte Brontë artwork

From the Telegraph & Argus 12 November 2013.

Report by Chris Tate

A prized miniature portrait painted by Charlotte Brontë and described as a "little gem" was snapped up by the Brontë Society for £30,000 before it could be auctioned and possibly gone to a foreign buyer.

The Society bought the 2.5ins tall painting shortly before a scheduled public sale by London art dealers Christie's, with the help of the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, the V&A Purchase Grant Fund and the Art Fund.

The distinctive sitter for the portrait is Mrs Hudson, of Easton Farm, Bridlington, referred to by Charlotte in a letter to her friend Ellen Nussey in 1839.

The portrait was given to Mrs Hudson by Charlotte and remained in the family, being passed on first to Mrs Hudson's niece, Fanny Whipp, who, in turn, left it to her son. In 1895 the tiny painting went missing, and nothing more was heard of it for more than 100 years.

It was feared lost until it appeared in a sale in 2001 where it was acquired by the late Mrs T. S. Eliot, a major collector of miniatures.

It will now return to Haworth to go on public display for the first time at the Brontë Parsonage Museum, the family's home.

Sally McDonald, chairman of the Brontë Society Council, said: "The Brontë Society is delighted to be bringing the item back to the Parsonage. "We would like to thank all those whose generosity has made the return of the miniature possible," she said.

Professor Ann Sumner, executive director of the Brontë Society, said: "We are thrilled to have acquired this significant and very fine example of Charlotte Brontë's miniature painting. The portrait will next year be on show in a new display on The Brontës and the Railways."

Experts say the present miniature is a rare example of portraiture in Charlotte's artistic catalogue. Although she dedicated herself to drawing, and had hopes early on of becoming a professional artist and miniature painter, Charlotte's skills are said to have been in copying and imitating landscapes, not portraits.





THE AUSTRALIAN BRONTË SOCIETY

The Australian Brontë Association meets in Sydney several times a year. Meetings are held at the Castlereagh Boutique Hotel (near Town Hall Station) at 10:30am, though we serve morning tea from 10:00am. Those who wish to do so, have a light lunch at the hotel. At each meeting, a paper on some aspect of the Brontës' life and work is presented. There is a meeting charge of \$5 (members and non-members).

2014 Meeting Program

Date	Details
1 Feb 10:30am	ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING Chester Porter QC – The Legal Aspects of <i>Wuthering Heights</i> – How was Heathcliff able to get away with it?
5 April 10:30am	Dr Beverly Sherry – John Milton
7 June 10:30am	Graham & Annette Harman – <i>Wuthering Heights: The Natural, the Unnatural, and the Supernatural</i> The question of “nature” pervades <i>Wuthering Heights</i> . Heathcliff has a “devilish nature”; Hareton is a “natural heir” whose life is saved by a “natural impulse”; and the Heights itself is embedded in the natural expanse of the moors. This paper draws on parallels between <i>Wuthering Heights</i> and <i>King Lear</i> , to examine Emily Brontë’s depiction of the “natural” through the lens of historical context.
2 Aug 10.30am	A/Prof Vanessa Smith – University of Sydney Topic to be announced
4 Oct 10:30am	Lee O’Brien – Macquarie University - <i>Shirley</i> Topic to be announced
31 Oct – 2 Nov	ABA/Dickens Conference – <i>North & South</i> – Blue Mountains
6 Dec Noon	CHRISTMAS LUNCH WITH THE NSW DICKENS SOCIETY Venue to be announced

MEMBERSHIPS DUE

Membership subscriptions are due. Payment will be accepted at the Christmas luncheon on 7 December and at the first meeting on 1 February 2014, or cheques can be posted to the Treasurer, Michael Links at 13 Greygum Place, Gymea Bay NSW 2227.

- \$30 standard membership
- \$40 two members at the same address
- \$25 for members of the UK Brontë Society
- \$20 for full-time students, concession card holders and overseas members
- \$15 for regional NSW and interstate members

ABA Website: www.ausbronte.net

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