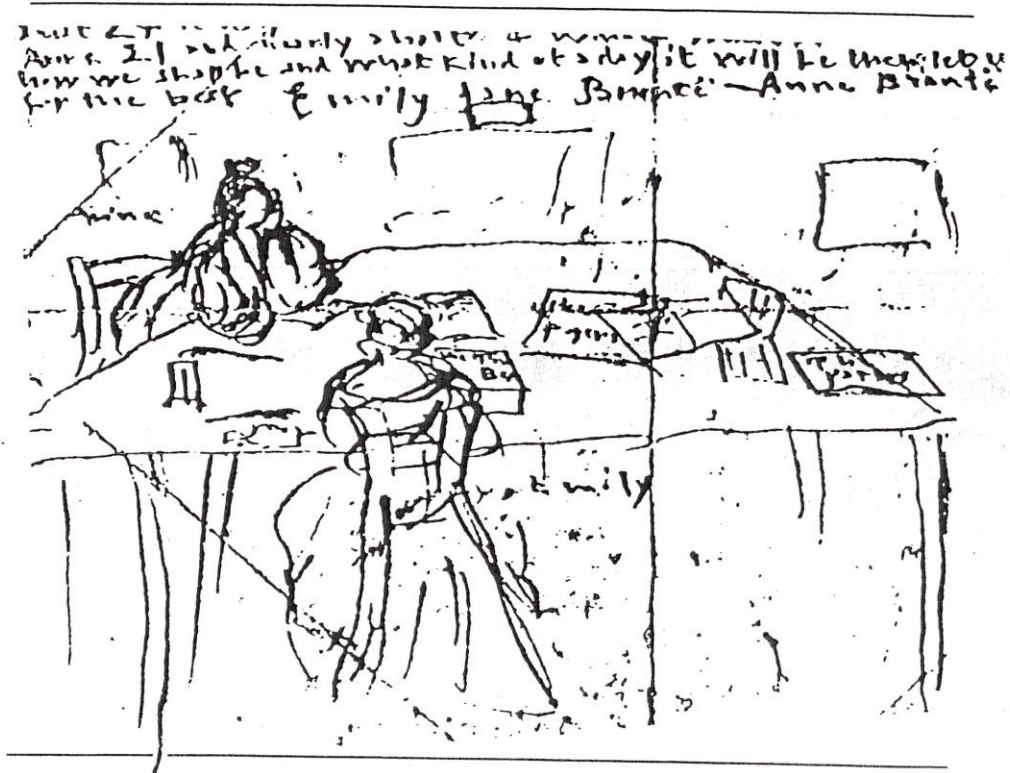




The Brontë Society

Brontë Parsonage Museum



RESEARCH LIBRARY

INTRODUCTION TO STUDY & RESEARCH FACILITIES

The Brontë Parsonage Museum aims to help with your study and appreciation of the Brontës' lives and works, and to make the Collection as accessible as possible while preserving it for the future.

The Museum itself offers a programme of permanent and temporary interpretative exhibitions and educational events for schools and colleges, as well as the unique experience of visiting the former home of the Brontë family.

People with more specific needs may wish to consider using our Research Library. It is not necessary to be a member of the Brontë Society to make use of these facilities, but it *is* essential to have an appointment. If you cannot find the books or articles you need through your local, school or university library, or via the inter-library loan service operated by public libraries, then you may need to contact us. This leaflet sets out what services the Library Staff can offer, and how to make the best use of them.

The Research Library

The Research Library is housed within the Brontë Parsonage Museum building, in the wing built by the Revd. Wade in the 1870s. The research Library is the focal point for the largest collection of Brontë material in the world and provides a key resource for the academic scholar. The glass-fronted bookcases were the gift of Sir James Roberts, who purchased the Parsonage and presented it to the Brontë Society in 1928. At present, the Research Library also serves as a busy Curatorial Office and so both space and availability are limited.

Charges

Visitors have free access to the library and its resources. If you are unable to get to the library or require staff to carry out research on your behalf, we offer a research service. For each enquiry, after the first hour, time is charged at £25 per hour. We will make every effort to find information for you, but you will still be charged for the time even if no information has been found.

Please note that an advance appointment is essential for the Research Library. Contact the Library Staff to discuss your research requirements and to arrange a convenient appointment. Please telephone to let us know if you have to cancel an appointment, as there may be a waiting list.

THE COLLECTIONS

** The Research Library contains a comprehensive collection of secondary source material, including facsimiles of primary source material, and is suitable for specialised study at postgraduate level and beyond. Access to original manuscripts is restricted.*

Secondary Source Material

Books & Articles

A wide range of biographical, critical, topographical and related works on the Brontës.

Brontë Society Transactions/Brontë Studies

The Brontë Society's journal, from 1898 to the present. Published Index to 1967 available for consultation.

Drama Archive

Stills, programmes, scripts and material from dramatisations of the Brontës' lives and works.

Copy Documents

Facsimiles of Brontë material from other public collections are available for private study only. Copies of this material may not be made for readers and permission for reproduction must be sought from the appropriate institution or copyright holder.

Photographs & Facsimiles

Brontë manuscripts and letters are available for study in facsimile form in order to preserve the original documents. Photographs of Brontë drawings and three-dimensional items in the collection are available for study.

Primary Source Material available in the Research Library

(Limited Access: postgraduate level & beyond. Academic Reference essential)

The Brontës' Own Books

Books which belonged to the Brontës and are annotated by them. A printed list of titles is available by post.

Manuscripts, Drawings & other Rare Material

Printed and hand held catalogues of the manuscript collections are available in the Library.

RESEARCH LIBRARY REGULATIONS

Readers are granted access to the Research Library on the condition that they observe the following regulations, which are imposed in the interests of the preservation of the Museum and Library collections for the future. These regulations are prepared in line with common procedures in research libraries and archives worldwide.

Please read the following Regulations carefully before signing the Research Application Form to show that you have read and agree to abide by the rules of the Research Library. If anything is unclear, then please ask a member of the Library Staff to clarify it for you.

1: Making an Appointment

Anyone wishing to carry out research in the Research Library *must apply in advance* to the Curator, specifying their area of study and their purpose for seeking admission. The main qualification for obtaining access to the Research Library is that the applicant is carrying out work which cannot reasonably be carried out in other libraries available to them. Applicants should give their permanent address. Applications should be made well in advance of the intended visit. A Research Application Form should be signed and completed by each applicant.

2: Opening Hours

The Research Library is usually open from Wednesday to Friday, 10.00am to 4.30pm. The Research Library is closed on bank holidays, 24th December to 1st January inclusive and during the Museum's Annual Closed period, which runs for four weeks in January/February. *Readers should note that a prior appointment is essential as the opening hours may vary.* The Library, which also functions as a Curatorial Office, is often in use for seminars, photography and conservation work, during which time the room is not available to readers.

3: Access to Rare & Manuscript Material

Anyone with reason to study original manuscripts and drawings, the Brontës' own books, or first and rare editions *must* accompany their application with an academic reference. Access to rare and manuscript material will not be granted without such a reference.

4: Academic Reference

The reference should be a letter of recommendation from a person of recognised academic standing, based on personal knowledge of the applicant and certifying that he or she is suitable person to use the Society's collections that he or she is familiar with guidelines for handling such material, and that access to primary source material is essential to their research. This reference must be forwarded to the Curator in advance of the intended visit. Please note that Academic References are subject to re-application every five years.

5: Studying Facsimiles

Readers should note that facsimiles in the form of photocopies, photographs or microfilm are available for study. Where no accurate transcript of a manuscript exists, transcripts can generally be made from photocopies and the original manuscript may be consulted in order to check any difficult readings.

Access to original material will not be granted without an academic reference as noted in Section 4 above.

6: Conservation of the Library & Museum Collections

Readers will appreciate that the Library Regulations are imposed in the interests of conservation and preservation of the collections for the future. We have a large number of readers each year and access to primary source materials has to be limited to some extent.

Please note that if you are unfamiliar with working in a library environment, or it is a long time since you studied archive material, you should read the following regulations carefully to help avoid accidents or carelessness. If you are in any doubts as to the best way to handle an item, then please ask a member of the Library Staff to advise you.

7: Handling Research Library Materials

The following rules must be observed when handling *all* Research Library material.

Specific guidelines for rare material are listed below

Readers are requested to take the utmost care of all manuscripts, books, periodicals and other material in the Library & Museum Collections: any defects or damage to material issued to readers should be reported to the Library Staff.

Readers working on manuscripts and rare materials may only use *pencil* for making notes: *the use of ballpoint pens, fountain pens, felt tips or other ink is strictly prohibited*. Readers must take care not to turn the pages or handle books with a pencil in their hand.

- (a) Readers may not eat sweets or any other kind of food, or drink anything or chew gum in the Research Library. Smoking is a fire hazard and is forbidden in all parts of the Museum and Brontë Society Office buildings.
- (b) Readers may not bring into the Research Library any materials or objects which could damage a book: this includes food, drink, paste, glue, ink in bottle, adhesive tapes, scissors or knives.
- (c) Readers must not write on or mark the books in any way, or moisten their fingers to turn pages.
- (d) Readers must not lay the paper on which they are writing on any book or other library material, open or closed; they must not lean on books, bend them back, lay them face downwards when open, cut any uncut pages, fold any page nor straighten creased pages – this may cause further damage.
- (e) Readers must use the book rests, where provided, for all books and manuscripts.
- (f) During any temporary absence from the Research Library, readers must not leave books or manuscripts open as this strains spines and bindings and exposes the material to damaging UV light.

(g) Tracing is not allowed without permission.

(h) No book, manuscript, drawing or other property of the Brontë Society may be removed from the Study Room or Research Library under any circumstances.

(i) On leaving the Study Room or Research Library readers may be requested to make their bags, cases and other objects (including ladies' handbags) available for inspection.

(j) Books and other material from the Research Library may only be removed from the shelves by Library Staff.

8: Special Regulations for handling Primary Source Materials

(k) Readers working on manuscripts, drawings or rare books may only use pencil for making notes: *the use of ballpoint pens, fountain pens, felt tips or other inks is strictly prohibited*. Readers must take care not to turn the pages or handle books & manuscripts with a pencil in their hand as this may result in accidental marking.

(l) Bundles of loose papers must be kept in the order in which they are received: if they are found disarranged by a reader this fact should be drawn to the attention of the Library Staff.

(m) Cotton researcher gloves will be provided for all readers working on rare books and mounted drawings. This prevents the transference of perspiration to book covers and mounts.

(n) Perspex clips will be provided for holding pages of books or other documents open. Readers must not hold pages open with their fingertips.

(o) Readers must take care not to sneeze or breathe heavily over manuscript material, as the excess moisture is damaging to documents.

(p) In cases where material is especially fragile or rare, the material may not be handled at all. This applied particularly to Emily Brontë material and to some books owned by the Brontës.

9: Supervision

(a) No reader may enter the Research Library without a member of Staff in attendance.

(b) All readers will be supervised by a member of Staff at all times.

10: Prior Notice of materials required

It is helpful if readers can specify requirements in advance, as some materials are stored elsewhere in the building and access to these storage areas is limited to times when the Museum is closed to the general public.

11: Exclusion from the Research Library

Failure to comply with any of these regulations may result in exclusion from the Library.

STUDY & RESEARCH SERVICES

Enquiry Service

- * the library accepts written enquiries and there is a charge of £10 per hour for staff time. The enquiry service is free to Brontë Society members. Please state that you are a member when you write.
- * we will try to advise on research as much as possible, but we cannot undertake to carry out research for students or offer a reading service for manuscripts and dissertations.

Photocopying Service

- * strictly according to copyright regulations. Please ask for further information on copyright.
- * copies are made by Staff for readers.
- * a charge of 20 pence per sheet and a £2.50 handling fee (this includes postage and packing) plus v.a.t. is made for all photocopies. For large or complicated photocopy orders an additional facility fee may be charged.

Reading Lists

- * all books, articles and issues of *Brontë Society Transactions/Brontë Studies* are catalogued on a computer database according to subject. We can generate specialised reading lists, tailored to your subject area. Sample categories include: different members of the family, their novels, poetry, psychology, feminism, etc. The database records *every* book in the collection so we cannot provide a complete listing of books for readers, as this would number over 4,000 titles.
- * the computers are for staff use only and may not be accessed by readers.

Published & other Catalogues

- * Hand-held catalogues on the main manuscript collections and a printed catalogue of the Bonnell Collection of manuscripts are available for consultation in the Library. A complete illustrated catalogue of the Brontës' paintings and drawings has been published and is available for consultation.

Picture Library

- * Photographs of a selection of items from the Museum Collections can be purchased for private study. Permission to reproduce photographs must be obtained from the Curator of the Brontë Parsonage Museum. Please ask for details and a current list of print and reproduction charges.

For more information on these services, please contact:

Ann Dinsdale, Principal Curator

Sarah Laycock, Curator

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