

# Emily Brontë

30 Jul 1818 – 19 Dec 1848

Works include: *Poems*,  
*Wuthering Heights*



## Significant Dates

- 1818 (30 July) Birth of Emily Jane
- 1824 Emily, Maria, Elizabeth, Charlotte go to the Clergy Daughters' School at Cowan Bridge
- 1825 Following the death of Maria and then Elizabeth, the girls are removed from the school to be taught at home by their father and Aunt, Elizabeth Branwell. There is also a record of art lessons in Keighley given by John Bradley in his studio in New Bridge Street, c1829.
- 1834 Branwell and Charlotte create Angria and Emily and Anne create the imaginary world of Gondal.
- 1835 Emily goes as a pupil to Roe Head in Mirfield, where Charlotte is teaching, but is unhappy and returns two months later to be replaced by Anne.
- 1838/9 Emily becomes a school teacher at Law Hill School, Southowram, near Halifax. She wrote a poem about this, *A Little While*. In a letter to Ellen Nussey, Charlotte reveals Emily's 'slavery' in the job. Both poem and letter are on page 59 of, *The Brontës: A Life in Letters* by Juliet Barker (1997, Viking). In March 1839, Emily resigns from Law Hill.
- 1842 Emily and Charlotte become pupils in Brussels at the Pensionnat Heger to improve their foreign language skills, in the hope of opening their own school in the future. Both return home later that year, however, following the death of Aunt Branwell in October.
- 1843 Emily remains in Haworth as housekeeper to the family. Charlotte returns to Brussels.
- 1844 The sisters attempt to establish their own school at Haworth Parsonage but are unsuccessful.
- 1845 A manuscript of Emily's poems is discovered by Charlotte who persuades both her sisters to publish a book of their poems. They all begin to write their first novels for publication at about this time.
- 1846 (May) *Poems* by Currer, Ellis and Acton Bell are published. Emily is Ellis.
- 1847 *Wuthering Heights* is accepted for publication by T. C. Newby and is published in December, alongside Anne's *Agnes Grey*; Charlotte's *Jane Eyre* having been published in October to great success.
- 1848 On 19th December, Emily dies of tuberculosis, three months after Branwell who died earlier that same year on 24th September.

## Resources for Emily Brontë in Keighley Library

Keighley Local Studies Library holds a nationally important collection of books and articles on the Brontës, Brontë Society and Museum. Please ask staff for the catalogue and the new information booklet or see: [www.bradford.gov.uk/libraries/local-and-family-history](http://www.bradford.gov.uk/libraries/local-and-family-history)

### **Works of Emily Brontë**

In 2018, Keighley Library is acquiring new publications of Emily's life and works, including *The Complete Poems* and *Wuthering Heights*, see also [www.poetryarchive.org](http://www.poetryarchive.org). There are plenty of critical studies on *Wuthering Heights* available in Bradford libraries for reference and loan. For portraits of Emily, see the following web site: [www.npg.org.uk](http://www.npg.org.uk). For local events including walks, talks, music, films and workshops that celebrate the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Emily's birth, pick up a leaflet in the library or visit: [www.bronte.org.uk/whats-on](http://www.bronte.org.uk/whats-on).

### **Biographies**

One of the most recent authors on the Brontë sisters is Juliet Barker who has written in some detail about each of the sisters, including recent theories and research, *The Brontës* (Abacus, 2010). Please check the catalogue for other works. Other biographies include: *The Birth of 'Wuthering Heights': Emily Brontë at Work* by Edward Chitham (Macmillan, 1998), *Emily Brontë: Heretic* by Stevie Davies (1998), *Emily Brontë* by Winifred Gérin (1971), the *Life and Eager Death of Emily Brontë* by Virginia Moore (1936), *Emily Brontë* by Charles Simpson (1929). Quite a few books have been published about the Brontë sisters' time in Brussels of which the latest is *The Brontës in Brussels* by Helen MacEwan (Peter Owen Publishers, 2014). There is a very interesting, most recent discussion on Emily's passion for moorland walking and about her pets and animals (including as depicted in *Wuthering Heights*) in *The Brontë Cabinet, Three Lives in Nine Objects* by Deborah Lutz (Norton & Company, 2016).

### **Articles**

Many articles have appeared in the *Brontë Society Transactions* from 1895, as well as discussions on Emily's art, letters and works and life generally. For a full list of articles, please ask to see the index. Keighley Library has a near complete run to date of the *Transactions*, for reference and presently a new index of photographs/illustrations is also being created by a volunteer.

**Brontë Scrapbooks of news cuttings** are updated regularly in Keighley Local Studies Library. They are indexed and include articles and news reports from local newspapers and magazines covering all the latest research, Parsonage Museum acquisitions, films, plus music, theatre, radio and television productions.

### **Art works**

Emily is generally recognised as the most talented of her sisters at drawing and painting. The following is **available for reference only** in Keighley Library and shows Emily's art works most clearly and comprehensively: *The Art of the Brontës* by Christine Alexander and Jane Sellar (Cambridge University Press, 1995).

### **National and Local Archive Collections**

Search <http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk> for *Emily Brontë* for a comprehensive listing.

**Haworth Parsonage's Museum and Library holds, amongst other items, the Bonnell Collection.** Henry Houston Bonnell was a life member of the Brontë Society and collected Brontë material from the 1890s. It includes manuscripts, letters and drawings of the Brontës including Emily, with annotated books owned by the family, see: [www.bronte.org.uk](http://www.bronte.org.uk).