

## **Traces of the Life of Charlotte Brontë in *Jane Eyre***

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**Abstract:** “Details, situations which I do not understand and cannot personally inspect, I would not for the world meddle with. Besides not one feeling on any subject, public or private, will I ever affect that I do not really experience.” (Smith, 2000) This confession settles the question whether the books written by Charlotte Brontë are drawn from what came within her own world of experience. This paper wants to show the influence of the life and experiences of Charlotte Brontë on her famous novel *Jane Eyre*. The first part of the article provides a brief summary of the life of Charlotte Brontë. The second part provides information about the schools she attended to which are Cowan Bridge and Roe Head and their similarities to the novel. The third part of this paper provides Charlotte Brontë’s working experience as a governess in Stonegappe. The fourth part provides information about Henry Nussey, Mr. Heger and Hathersage, which have important influences on the novel. The paper concludes that a close acquaintance with Charlotte Brontë’s life shows that the story of *Jane Eyre* is largely her own experience.

**Key Words:** Literature, novel, biography.

### **Introduction**

In *An Hour with Charlotte Brontë*, C. Holloway argues about Charlotte Brontë’s works that “Her works are mainly delineations of actual experiences; she was not an inventor of fiction. Her fancy filled in the background of her pictures, but her own knowledge of people and things supplied the material.” (Holloway, 1883) This is what most of writers who study the life and works of Charlotte Brontë argue about her writing. Holloway further states that “Had she not known the experience, we should not have had such books as she wrote, ...” (Holloway, 1883) In *Understanding Jane Eyre : A Student’s Casebook to Issues, Sources & Historical Documents*, Teachman states; “As sources of material for her fiction, Brontë used the experiences she, her sisters, and her female friends had at school and work.” (Teachman, 2001) Barker illustrates in *The Brontës* that “Perhaps learning from her Brussels chapters in *The Professor*, Charlotte began to draw on personal experience to flesh out her characters and scenes.” (Barker, 1995) In *An Hour with Charlotte Brontë*, C. Holloway states about Charlotte Brontë that “With her mind she could see, independent of the organs of vision; and her wonderful intuitive powers invested her with a knowledge of human nature incompatible with the restricted life she led.” (Holloway, 1883)

Debra Teachman argues about *Jane Eyre* that “It claims a need for women to have equal experiences with men-not the same, but equal in quality and depth of meaning.” (Teachman, 2001) In *Jane Eyre*, Jane points out the famous lines about the equal states of men and women which have been read over and over again; “Women are supposed to be very calm generally: but women feel just as men feel; they need exercise for their faculties, and a field for their efforts as much as their brothers do; they suffer from too rigid a restraint, too absolute a stagnation, precisely as men would suffer; ...” (Brontë, 2006) That a young and plain girl like *Jane Eyre* claims to have “a field for her efforts” is what Charlotte Brontë dreams of. Brontë reflects her own ideas about the equality of men and women on her heroine. *Jane Eyre* thinks of herself as a spirit equal to any other spirit, on this subject Gordon points out; “It is here that Charlotte Bronte gave form and meaning to the private extravagance of her own life tugged between the claims of the self and the claims of society.” (Gordon, 1994)

In her biography Juliet Barker draws the conclusion that “an intense family relationship” was vital to the writing of the Brontës’ fiction. In *We are Three Sisters : Self and Family in the Writing of the Brontës*, Drew Lamonica states about the same topic that “Family was the medium through which they saw and interpreted the world.” (Lamonica, 2003) She further claims that literary critics viewed family as Brontës’ “motive for their writing” and argues; “Yet the family was not simply an essential context for the Brontës’ writing processes-the family is an essential element of content in the texts themselves.” (Lamonica, 2003)

In *Charlotte Brontë A Passionate Life*, Gordon points out that “But *Jane Eyre* stands out from many predecessors in the gothic or romance tradition for its unusual heroine: no swooning beauty, no fragile model of sensibility, Jane is a plain, intelligent governess who tells her story with compelling honesty.” (Gordon, 1994) We see the characteristics of Charlotte Brontë in her heroine and on this topic, in her famous biography *The Brontës*, Barker states that “Just as she was later to do with *Jane Eyre*, Charlotte endowed Elizabeth with many of her own characteristics.” (Barker, 1995) Charlotte was very small in figure as Mrs. Gaskell describes her. Barker indicates;

“It is also the first novel to have a plain and ordinary woman as its heroine. Charlotte is usually credited with this innovation in *Jane Eyre*, which she told her friends, was written to prove to her sisters that a heroine ‘as plain and as small as myself’ could be as interesting as their conventionally beautiful ones.” (Barker, 1995)

### **Charlotte Brontë’s Early Life**

Charlotte Brontë was born on 21st April, 1816 in Thornton, Yorkshire, England, the third child to Patrick Brontë, a clergyman of Irish descent and his wife, Maria Branwell. The family only lived in Thornton for five years and Patrick Brontë was offered to work for the Church in Haworth. The house in Haworth had a garden in front and was near the Church. In *In the Footsteps of the Brontës*, Chadwick states; “The house is full of memories, and the old-fashioned window seats remind readers of *Jane Eyre*, and of her partiality for hiding herself in the recesses of the windows.” (Chadwick, 1914) In *Selections from the literary remains of Ellis and Acton Bell*, Charlotte Brontë gives a very faithful picture of the district, which applies to Haworth; “Mills and scattered cottages chase romance from these valleys; it is only higher up, deep in among the ridges of the moors, that imagination can find rest for the sole of her foot; and even if she finds it there, she must be a solitude-loving raven, no gentle dove.” (Chadwick, 1914) Kathryn White, the writer of the book *The Brontës* examines; “The Brontës’ environment affected their work deeply ...” (White, 1998) In *Charlotte Brontë A Passionate Life*, Gordon describes the moors as “a contrast between restriction and freedom that was to be central to their work.” Gordon indicates; “*Jane Eyre* has a notion that, in the last extremity, she will cast herself on the breast of nature as on the body of a mother.” (Gordon, 1994)

Brontë children read and studied books from their father’s library and they used to be very creative drawing and writing plays, poems and stories. *Bewick’s British Birds* was included in Patrick Brontë’s collection of books. In *The Brontës*, Juliet Barker illustrates that “The simple lines but the great detail of the vignettes were endlessly copied by the young Brontës with varying degrees of success.” (Barker, 1995) Kathryn White, in *The Brontës*, indicates that “they all copied vignettes from Thomas Bewick’s *A History of British Birds*, mentioned in the first chapter of *Jane Eyre*.” (White, 1998) It is significant that in the first chapter *Jane Eyre* studies the vignettes of this book.

### **Charlotte Brontë’s School Life**

#### **Cowan Bridge**

In her widely-read biography *The Life of Charlotte Brontë*, Elizabeth Gaskell states what Charlotte told her; “Miss Brontë more than once said to me, that she should not have written what she did of Lowood in “*Jane Eyre*”, if she had thought the place would have been so immediately identified with Cowan Bridge, although there was not a word in her account of the institution but what was true at the time when she knew it; ...” (Gaskell, 2009) The Clergy Daughters’ School was the first school which the Brontë sisters were sent. Her experiences here are reflected in Lowood in *Jane Eyre*. In an essay which was written in Charlotte’s time Elizabeth Rigby states; “... Cowan Bridge near Kirkby Lonsdale-these being distinctly, as we hear, the original and the reformed Lowoods of the book-is pretty generally known.” (Rigby, 1990) In *The Brontës*, Juliet Barker depicts; “The story of the young Brontës at the Clergy Daughters’ School has become inextricably entwined with that of the young *Jane Eyre* at Lowood School.” (Barker, 1995) Kathryn White in *The Brontës* indicates that “The school is notorious for being the basis of Lowood charity school in Charlotte’s *Jane Eyre*.” (White, 1998) In *Understanding Jane Eyre : A Student’s Casebook to Issues, Sources & Historical Documents*, Teachman states that “Brontë’s experiences at Cowan Bridge School provided the foundation for much of Jane’s experience as a student at Lowood, and Brontë’s experiences at Roe Head School provided her with an understanding of the experiences Jane would have undergone as a teacher at Lowood.” (Teachman, 2001)

In her book, Chadwick talks about a commemorative medallion on which it is written “At this school Maria Elizabeth Charlotte Emily Daughters of the Rev. P. Brontë were educated in 1824-1825.” (Chadwick, 1914) Chadwick talks about a report for the Brontë children at the school and she states Charlotte Brontë’s report; “Entered school August 10, 1824. ... Altogether clever of her age, but knows nothing systematically. Left school June 1, 1825. Governess.” (Chadwick, 1914)

In *An Hour with Charlotte Brontë*, Holloway states about Cowan Bridge that “The pupils all knew the pangs of unappeased hunger, and a feeling of nausea overcame her for years when she recalled the food she was compelled to eat there.” (Holloway, 1883) In *Charlotte Brontë A Passionate Life*, Lyndall Gordon points out to the condition of the food in the school “Hungry as they were, the girls often could not bring themselves to swallow such food, and were soon semi-starved.” (Gordon, 1994) Similar to these accounts, *Jane Eyre* complains about the food in the school stating that “Then the scanty supply of food was distressing: with the keen appetites of growing children, we had scarcely sufficient to keep alive a delicate invalid.” (Brontë, 2006) Gordon further argues that “In Charlotte’s later view, low morale, semi-starvation, and physical neglect predisposed most of the pupils to

infection.” (Gordon, 1994) In *The Brontës*, Kathryn White argues about Cowan Bridge; “Cowan Bridge suffered from poor diet and hygiene in food preparation, encouraging the spread of disease.” (White, 1998)

On the subject of Helen Burns Mrs. Gaskell points out; “I need hardly say that Helen Burns is as exact a transcript of Maria Brontë as Charlotte’s wonderful power of reproducing character could give.” (Gaskell, 2009) White states about the death of Charlotte’s sister Maria; “Charlotte blamed the school for her death and over twenty years later she recreated Maria in the character of the saintly Helen Burns in *Jane Eyre*.” (White, 1998) In *Charlotte Brontë A Passionate Life*, Lyndall Gordon argues; “From the time of her arrival at the school, Charlotte was forced to watch Maria’s repeated humiliation at the hands of a schoolmistress called Miss Andrews, the Miss Scatcherd of *Jane Eyre*. Miss Scatcherd, who is described as small, dark, smartly dressed, with a rather morose look, persecutes the uncomplaining Helen Burns, an exact portrait of Maria Brontë.” (Gordon, 1994) Maria was “her teacher’s prime victim” and Gordon argues; “Charlotte quivered in ‘impotent anger’, but Maria preached a creed of endurance.” (Gordon, 1994) This reminds us of Helen Burns who does not resist but accepts her teacher’s bad treatment of her. Juliet Barker points out that “In the saintly Helen Burns, too, she drew from life, taking as a model her eldest sister, Maria. Ironically, this was the one character the reviewers were to find fault with, considering her too good to be true ...” (Barker, 1995) Barker further indicates that “Charlotte herself suggested that her own sister, Maria, was the original of Helen Burns in *Jane Eyre*. She later told her editor, William Smith Williams: ‘she was real enough: I have exaggerated nothing there.’” (Barker, 1995)

The Rev. W. Corus-Wilson was the founder and the manager of the Clergy Daughters’ School, and known in *Jane Eyre* as the clergyman, Mr. Brocklehurst. Kathryn White indicates; “Cowan Bridge was run by the Revd William Carus Wilson, author of magazines such as *The Children’s Friend* and *The Friendly Visitor*, which featured the terrible consequences for little children if they thwarted God’s wishes. Mr. Brocklehurst of Lowood was based on Carus Wilson.” (White, 1998) Mrs. Chadwick in *In the Footsteps of The Brontës* states somewhat a similar situation about Carus Wilson; “That Mr. Carus-Wilson made several mistakes in the early days is not to be wondered at, and that he was very strict and narrow concerning religious matters ...” (Chadwick, 1914) Throughout the novel, religion is an important theme. Mr. Brocklehurst is a religious figure and represents a model of religion which has the hypocrisies of the nineteenth-century Evangelical movement. In *Charlotte Brontë A Passionate Life*, Lyndall Gordon argues about Carus Wilson that “Carus Wilson was a manipulative, rather sinister man who saw girls as weak and sinful and whose school would attempt to save them by trying to stamp out their nature: by cutting off their hair, by chilling their bodies, by depressing their appetites with inedible food, and birching them into submission.” (Gordon, 1994) In *Jane Eyre*, when Mr. Brocklehurst visits Lowood, he makes a student’s “natural curls” cut. When Mrs. Temple tells him that the girl’s hair curls naturally, he says; “Naturally! Yes, but we are not to conform to nature. ... I desire the hair to be arranged closely, modestly, plainly.” (Brontë, 2006)

Tunstall Church is described in *Jane Eyre* as Brocklebridge, Charlotte Brontë depicts it in *Jane Eyre*; “Sundays were dreary days in that wintry season. We had to walk two miles to Brocklebridge Church, where our patron officiated. We set out cold, we arrived at church colder: during the morning service we became almost paralysed. It was too far to return to dinner, and an allowance of cold meat and bread, in the same penurious proportion observed in our ordinary meals, was served round between the services.” (Brontë, 2006) Of Tunstall Church, In *An Hour with Charlotte Brontë*, Holloway argues; “Charlotte tells us of the long, cold walks the pupils were compelled to take in the snow and rain, hungry and insufficiently clad; of the barren, uncomfortable church in which they sat shivering through a long sermon, only to resume their weary march at the end of it, and then to go supperless to bed, or eat food that was distasteful and wholly inadequate to supply their needs.” (Holloway, 1883)

### **Roe Head School**

Kathryn White in *The Brontës* states; “During Charlotte’s first days at Roe Head school in January 1831, Ellen Nussey, a fellow pupil, discovered a little, weeping, shrinking figure in the shadows of the library, a picture which is echoed in the opening chapter of *Jane Eyre* when the young Jane takes refuge among the books.” (White, 1998) Ellen Nussey and Navy Taylor were Charlotte’s close friends at Roe Head and they left a faithful record of Charlotte Brontë. Mary Taylor indicates; “She used to draw much better and more quickly, than anything we had seen before and knew much about celebrated pictures and painters.” (Chadwick, 1914) Ellen Nussey described her as “rising from the bottom of the classes to the top.” (Chadwick, 1914) Similarly, *Jane Eyre* states; “Already I had made visible progress: that very morning I had reached the head of my class.” (Brontë, 2006)

As her friends state Charlotte had that habit of pacing to and fro in the room, this also reminds us of *Jane Eyre* who has the same habit. At this point, Sandra Gilbert illustrates that “... restlessness and passion-the pacing ‘backwards and forwards’-which it were italicize Jane’s little meditation on freedom.” (Gilbert, 1990)

Charlotte had little pleasures like visiting the homes of Mary Taylor and Ellen Nussey. Gordon argues that Charlotte was inspired by a story which built the foundation for *Jane Eyre* when she was teaching at Roe Head. “Charlotte may have recalled this story in July 1845 when she visited the Eyre family seat of North Lees during a three-week stay with Ellen in Hathersage, Derbyshire.” (Gordon, 1994) Charlotte was frequently invited to Ellen Nussey’s home at the Rydings, Birstall. The Rydings figures in *Jane Eyre* as Thornfield.

After Charlotte studied at Roe Head, she obtained a teaching position there. Barker states; “Charlotte had taken up her post as a teacher at Roe Head with deep reluctance.” (Barker, 1995) She quitted her job in 1838 and returned to Haworth to teach her sisters. However, she was anxious about the future; she was determined to qualify herself to earn her own living.

### **Stonegappe**

In *The Brontës*, Kathryn White points out; “Career options for women were severely restricted. ... and the only resort for an educated woman was teaching, being a governess or writing.” (White, 1998) She further states that “One of the main themes of the Brontës’ writing is their own experience of education and the need to learn a living.” (White, 1998) Charlotte Brontë tried to work as a governess herself as her heroine Jane Eyre. Her brief experiences as a governess cast some light on the experiences of Jane Eyre as a governess. In *An Hour with Charlotte Brontë*, Holloway states that “When the question of earning her bread came to be considered by her, and it came early, Charlotte realized that teaching young children was her only available accomplishment, and she sought and obtained a position as governess.” (Holloway, 1883) In 1839, Charlotte Brontë obtained a situation as a governess to the children of Mrs. John Sidwick at Stonegappe, a large house in Skipton, Yorkshire. Gateshead Hall, described in the early part of the novel is based on Stonegappe. Gordon points out; “Below, in the valley, runs the river Ayre, perhaps one source for the name of Jane Eyre. It is well-known that Stonegappe was the source for Gateshead in *Jane Eyre*, and it is likely that Jane’s position as an interloper in an uppish family owed something to the position in which Charlotte found herself when she joined the Sidgwicks in May 1839.” (Gordon, 1994) Lyndall Gordon states the indifference of Mrs Sidgwick and argues; “However Charlotte tried to please – however Anne tried at Blake Hall – neither won the slightest recognition. Their gifts of mind were invisible; their employers could not see what did not reflect themselves.” (Gordon, 1994) Charlotte wrote to Emily about Mrs. Sidgwick that “I now begin to find that she does not intend to know me.” (Gordon, 1994) Charlotte reflects this feeling of being invisible as a governess in *Jane Eyre*. In *Jane Eyre*, two sisters, Diana and Mary Rivers, leave their home, Moor-House, to serve as governesses in families “by whose wealthy and haughty members they were regarded only as humble dependants, and who neither knew or sought one of their innate excellences, ...” (Gordon, 1994) Ellen Nussey well remembered Charlotte giving an account of Norton Conyers, an old mansion that she visited when she was employed at Stonegappe. The interior of Thornfield Hall, referred to in *Jane Eyre*, must have been taken from Norton Conyers. One of small rooms in the attic was shown as “the mad woman’s room” and there is a story that it was once occupied by an insane woman. This most probably gave rise to the story of Bertha Mason. However, at this point Gordon argues about the Thornfield Hall that “Based on Ellen’s old home, the Rydings, near Birstall, and on the Eyre family seat of North Lees which CB visited during her stay in Derbyshire in 1845.” (Gordon, 1994)

### **Marriage Proposal**

Charlotte’s letters probably led Mrs. Gaskell to think that she had no eagerness for marriage but *Jane Eyre* proves the opposite. Marriage in her view should mean a real union between two souls such as existed between Rochester and Jane. Charlotte had a great desire for a true marriage.

She received a marriage proposal from the Reverend Henry Nussey, the brother of her friend Ellen Nussey. About this proposal, in *The Brontës*, White states that “In March 1839, Charlotte received an unexpected, business-like proposal of marriage from Ellen’s brother, the Revd Henry Nussey. He had contemplated missionary work and the experience may have influenced Charlotte’s depiction of the chilly missionary, the Revd St John Rivers, in *Jane Eyre*.” (White, 1998) Although the proposal was unromantic, there were certain advantages to this marriage as Charlotte would not worry about her future any longer and could forget about being a governess. However, Charlotte refused the proposal and as its reason, White indicates; “For Charlotte, love was a prerequisite of marriage, though many women would have considered her foolish not to grasp the opportunity of financial security.” (White, 1998) As to her refusal, Barker examines; “The problem was that Charlotte like Elizabeth Hastings and Jane Eyre, had the romantic notion that she should love her husband. ‘I asked myself two questions-’, Charlotte told Ellen ‘Do I love Henry Nussey as much as a woman ought to love the man her husband? ... Yet I had not, and never could have that intense attachment which would make me willing to die for him-and if ever I marry it must be in that light of adoration that I will regard my husband.’ ” (Barker, 1995) In her letter containing her negative answer to Henry Nussey, she writes; “In forming this decision- I trust I have listened to the dictates of conscience more than to those of inclination.” (Barker, 1995) Similar to Revd. Henry Nussey’s offer of marriage and missionary work with him, St. John Rivers makes Jane an offer of marriage and missionary work with him in India. He proposes; “A missionary’s wife you must-shall be. You shall be mine: I claim you-not for my pleasure, but my Sovereign’s service.” (Brontë, 2006) Like Charlotte, her heroine refuses this proposal as she knows that she will never be able to love him as she does Mr. Rochester, as Jane is already aware of passion she cannot tolerate a marriage without it. Jane tells Henry Nussey that; “I scorn the counterfeit sentiment you offer: yes, St. John and I scorn you when you

offer it.” (Brontë, 2006) Jane indicates that; “It is-that he asks me to be his wife, and has no more of a husband’s heart for me than that frowning giant of a rock ...” (Brontë, 2006)

### **Hathersage**

In *The Brontës*, Barker illustrates; “Though Charlotte was to stay only a brief three weeks at Hathersage, the visit was to be a major influence in shaping *Jane Eyre*.” (Barker, 1995) Barker mentions Charlotte’s poem *The Missionary* which was probably written at that time. This poem tells of a man who has to give up his love to be a missionary in another county. “This scenario was to be developed more fully in *Jane Eyre*, where St. John Rivers loves Rosamond Oliver but refuses to ask her to share his own destiny as a missionary in India because he knows she will not be able to adapt to his hardships.” (Barker, 1995) Barker depicts; “Whether or not Charlotte was consciously seeking material for the story that, a year later, was to become *Jane Eyre*, the village of Hathersage and its setting were to feature prominently in her novel. Even the name of his heroine seems to have been adopted from the four splendid medieval brasses of the Eyre family in the church. The fifteenth-century Eyre home, North Lees Hall, which lay two miles from Hathersage, may also have provided Charlotte with material for her description of Rochester’s Thornfield Hall.” (Barker, 1995)

In *We Are Three Sisters: Self and Family in the Writing of the Brontës*, Charlotte depicts her sisters, Anne and Emily, in Rivers sisters; “Not only are the Rivers sisters alike, but Jane immediately recognizes her affinity to them: ‘I liked to read what they liked to read: what they enjoyed, delighted me; what they approved, I revered. ... we coincided, in short, perfectly.’ ” (Lamonica, 2003) Gordon argues the same about Rivers sisters being Emily and Anne “Grave and slender, both possessed faces full of distinction and intelligence. So she described them in the form of two studious sisters, Diana and Mary Rivers, who shelter Jane when she runs away from bigamous Mr. Rochester.” (Gordon, 1994) Lamonica further examines that “This idealized picture of sisterly solidarity can be seen in the context of the Bronte family relations in the 1840s, as Charlotte compensated for her increasing estrangement from Branwell, her former confidante and creative spur, by turning to her sisters for both emotional and creative support. Despite Hannah’s presentation of the Riverses’ sibling unity, St John is significantly peripheral to the female community in Moor-House. He is unable to share in their domestic harmony, as Branwell was, by 1846, distanced from his sisters.” (Lamonica, 2003)

### **Monsieur Heger**

Monsieur Heger’s personality was a great source of inspiration for Charlotte Brontë. Charlotte was very happy during her first year at Brussels. At the end of six months, Emily and Charlotte were offered the position of teaching. Holloway indicates; “At the expiration of the six months two sisters were offered positions in the school ...” (Holloway 20) In her second stay in Brussels, Charlotte was feeling lonely as she was feeling herself more attached to Heger. Barker focuses on that “She could not declare her love to Monsieur Heger in such shameless terms, but her heroine could and would. Like Monsieur Heger, Mr Rochester was married, and Jane, like Charlotte, would take the moral line and flee from temptation; but Jane, unlike Charlotte, would eventually win her man.” (Barker, 1995) Gordon depicts; “M. Heger’s letters to Charlotte have vanished, but forty years later, writing to another English pupil, his engaging ways remained undimmed.” (Gordon, 1994) She presents a paragraph from Heger’s letter and states; “This voice is like Rochester’s as he contemplates Jane in his library and becomes aware of a resolute woman who does not deny feeling but who will not allow it to shake her reason” (Gordon, 1994). “Though this relationship was beyond all doubt entirely proper, the letter breathes an intimacy and sensuality which a susceptible woman would find erotic. ‘I only have to think of you to see you’, he told the lady in question.” (Barker, 1995) She further examines; “This could be Mr. Rochester talking to Jane Eyre.” (Barker, 1995) Charlotte Brontë fell in love with a powerful man like Mr. Rochester who was the opposite of everything she valued. Gordon illustrates that “Rochester’s words to Jane are close to Heger’s style.” (Gordon, 1994) White indicates “It is interesting that she addresses him as her ‘master’ on several occasions, a term which Jane Eyre uses to describe the moody Rochester.” (White, 1998) When she returned to Haworth, she was not ill in body, but she never seemed to be well after leaving Brussels. There were constant complaints of depression and ill-health. Charlotte said “I shall not forget what the parting with M.Heger cost me, it grieved me so much.” (Gaskell, 2009) This state of mind resembles that of Jane Eyre when she flees Thornfield and Mr. Rochester. “Depression drives Jane into the wilderness near Whitcross. Whitcross was derived from the stone pillar known as the Moscar Cross, close to the Hallam moors in Derbyshire which Charlotte would have seen when she vacationed with Ellen in the village of Hathersage in the summer of 1845.” (Gordon, 1994) Barker depicts that “Charlotte’s own journey across the flat moorlands between Sheffield and Hathersage, where the desolation is broken only by scattered outcrops of rock, was to provide an appropriate setting for Jane’s flight from Rochester, and Hathersage itself became the fictional village of Morton.” (Barker, 1995)

### **Conclusion**

On this study, the influences of Charlotte Brontë's experiences on her successful novel, *Jane Eyre* have been analysed by stating many opinions of various critics and biographers as well as connotations from the novel, *Jane Eyre* itself. The first part examines Charlotte Brontë's early life illustrating its reflections on her novel. It further focuses on her time in Haworth. The second part indicates Charlotte Brontë's school life, Cowan Bridge, Roe Head and her teaching experience, depicting their relevancies to her novel. The third part focuses on Charlotte's experiences as a governess and its reflections on *Jane Eyre*. The last part depicts Henry Nussey, Monsieur Heger and Hathersage and their impacts on the novel. Therefore, through this study, traces and effects of Charlotte Brontë's life on her work are analysed and a close observation of her life depicts the reflections of her experiences on her novel, *Jane Eyre*.

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