

instances where text had been modified, until the wove stock's principal and regular use in volume 3. We know that Brontë's publishers had asked her to revise chapter one in February, as is documented in her correspondence.¹³⁰ But, to date, scholars have assumed that Brontë refused to edit the opening of her novel, based on her responses to W. S. Williams and James Taylor of Smith, Elder.¹³¹

The leaves in chapter one do not reflect any apparent change to their inked numbering (see table 4) as we have seen in volume 2 in conjunction with changes in paper stocks. But there is a marked gap where f. 22 should appear that separates the wove leaves of chapter one, which concludes on f. 21, from the laid paper used for chapter two, which begins on f. 23.¹³² This omission carries with it no apparent loss of text, as we learn when collating the manuscript with the first edition—a fact that strongly suggests that Brontë removed f. 22 herself as part of an editorial process.¹³³ Furthermore, f. 21 (the last leaf of chapter one) is written on a recycled leaf whose verso bears the title *Shirley*—another clue that the chapter was revised and recopied only at a later stage, as Brontë did not entirely decide on the title *Shirley* until August 24, 1849—long after she had first sent the manuscript volume 1 to her publisher in February; before that, the novel had been tentatively referred to as *Hollow's Mill*, a title that was ultimately

130. Brontë's correspondence, identified as likely being written on February 20, 1849, reads as follows: "I sincerely thank you both for the candid expression of your objections—what you say with reference to the first chapter shall be duly weighed—At present I feel reluctant to withdraw it—because as I formerly said of the Lowood-part of 'Jane Eyre'—it is true—The curates and their ongoing are merely photographed from the life." *Letters*, 2:181.

131. For example, Jacob Korg writes: "Although Smith and Elder asked her to cut the first chapter, a satiric description of the curates at dinner, Charlotte Brontë refused, arguing that the scene was authentic." See "The Problem of Unity in *Shirley*," *Nineteenth-Century Fiction* 12, no. 2 (1957): 125–36 (126). doi:10.2307/3044150, accessed August 19, 2020. The general view is reflected by Rosengarten and Smith, who do not document or consider any of the bibliographical or codicological evidence presented here, and who write as follows: "Charlotte would not withdraw the offending chapter, telling James Taylor that she could not 'sacrifice truth to the fear of blame'; but she accepted his strictures on 'the bad taste of the opening apostrophe—that I had already condemned in my own mind.'" *Shirley*, xix. Further on, Rosengarten and Smith write: "most of the alterations are slight" in volume 1. Their footnotes and apparatus make no mention of the manuscript evidence that I discuss. In her article, Marin maintains this position: "she did not comply with her publishers' suggestion to drop the first chapter because it might have offended religious readers and it might have destroyed the aesthetic unity of the composition." See Marin, "Charlotte Brontë's Heron Scissors," 24.

132. As I mentioned earlier, the BL conservators inserted a replacement leaf as part of the 1976 rebind—but the leaf is not clearly marked as such.

133. My opinion here is different from that of Smith and Rosengarten, who note: "there is no f. 22, but this seems to be an error: no matter is omitted at this point." See *Shirley*, Clarendon edition, xxiv. While Smith and Rosengarten see this as a numbering error, it is worth observing that Brontë was not prone to making mistakes of this kind. Indeed, there are no other detectable numbering errors of this sort in the entire manuscript. Also, when drawing this conclusion, Smith and Rosengarten did not take into consideration the difference in paper stocks, the differences in leaf numbering made in pencil, or the recycled title page leaf—evidence that clearly suggests a revision was made.