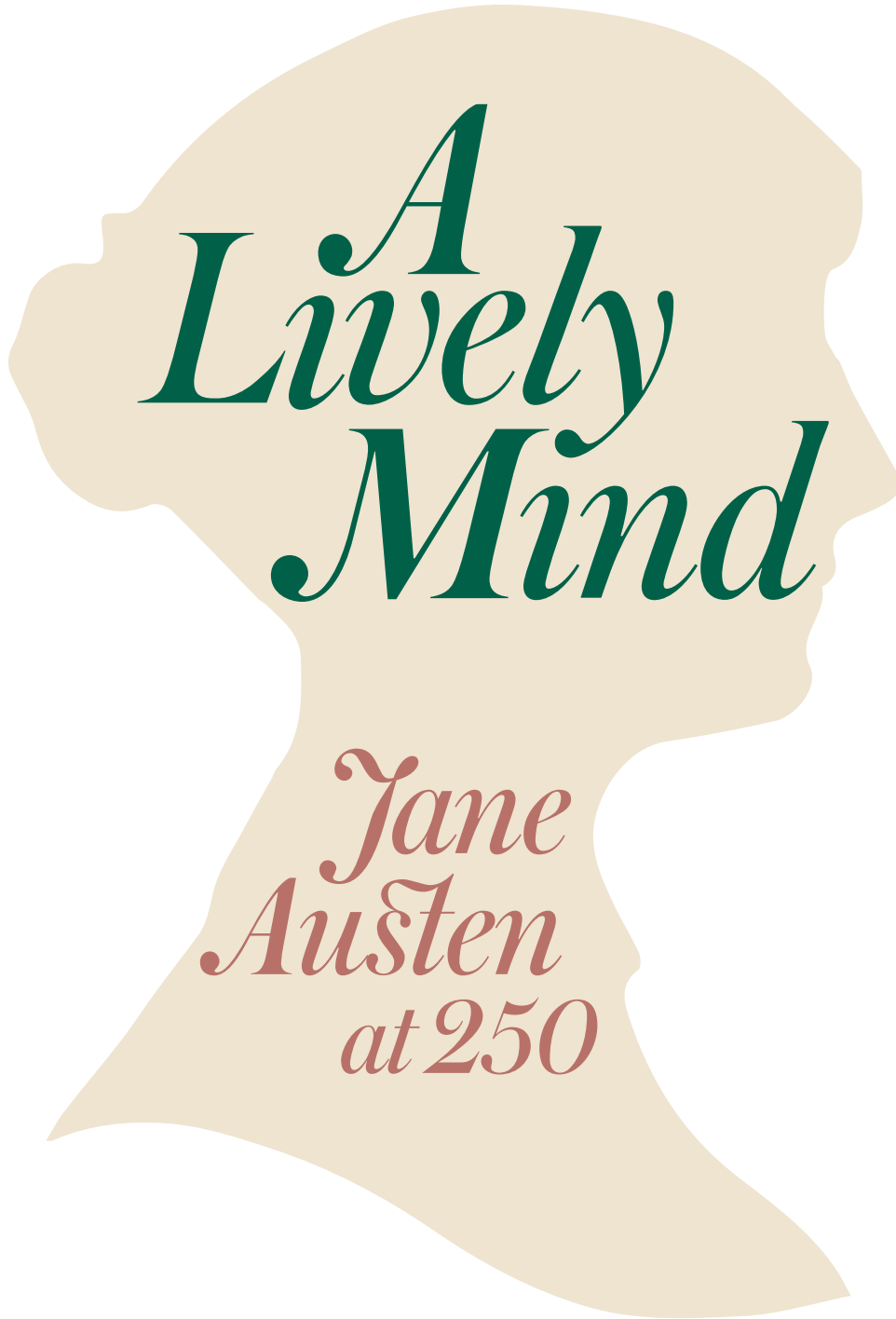


***A Lively Mind: Jane Austen at 250***  
**June 6 to September 14, 2025**



The  
**Morgan**  
Library &  
Museum

## A LIVELY MIND: JANE AUSTEN AT 250

Jane Austen's heroines value happiness, trust their own judgment, and love wholeheartedly. They act with conviction despite challenging circumstances and formidable opposition. In novels including *Pride and Prejudice*, *Emma*, and *Persuasion*, Austen (1775–1817) created engrossing narratives by exploring the everyday experiences and emotions of English gentlewomen. Her works, first published anonymously in the 1810s, have since resonated powerfully with readers across the centuries and throughout the world. Many have found inspiration, too, in Austen's life, which was less conventional than the courtship plots she transformed in her fiction. Imaginative and ambitious from an early age, she was supported by her family, especially her father and her sister, Cassandra, her lifelong confidante. In the last decade of her life, she rejoiced in her modest success as a published novelist.

Nineteenth-century American publishers and writers were vital to introducing Austen's novels to later generations and to offering fresh perspectives on her authorship. In the twentieth century, American collectors played essential roles in preserving Austen artifacts. This exhibition celebrates not only the 250th anniversary of Austen's birth but also the 50th anniversary of the landmark bequest of her manuscripts to the Morgan by Alberta H. Burke of Baltimore.

*A Lively Mind: Jane Austen at 250* is made possible by generous support from the Drue Heinz Exhibitions and Programs Fund, Cynthia H. Polsky, Martha J. Fleischman, the Caroline Morgan Macomber Fund, and the Lucy Ricciardi Family Exhibition Fund, with assistance from the Morgan's Literary and Historical Manuscripts Committee, Alyce Williams Toonk, the Gladys Kriebel Delmas Foundation, and Susan Jaffe Tane.



Cassandra Austen (1773–1845), *Jane Austen*, ca. 1810. Graphite and watercolor. National Portrait Gallery, London; NPG 3630. Photo: © National Portrait Gallery, London / Art Resource, New York.

## A BRILLIANT COLLABORATION

This magnificent patchwork coverlet, reproduced at two-thirds size, was sewn around 1810 by Jane Austen; her sister, Cassandra; and their mother while they were living in Chawton Cottage (now Jane Austen's House), in south central England. Symmetrically designed and incorporating more than sixty-four fabrics, this intricate piece testifies to the women's creativity and expertise in sewing. In Austen's novels, women are often engaged in "work," meaning embroidery, though the author rarely calls attention to what exactly they are producing. An exception is the languid Lady Bertram of *Mansfield Park*, who "spent her days in sitting, nicely dressed, on a sofa, doing some long piece of needlework, of little use and no beauty."

### Patchwork coverlet, ca. 1810

Jane Austen's House, Chawton; CHWJA:JAH153

Photo: Richard Warburton

## **A WRITING TABLE OF ONE’S OWN**

Visitors to Jane Austen’s House encounter the original of this twelve-sided table in the dining room, near a large window, and a chair like the one seen here. Such a small writing surface is a far cry from the “room of one’s own” that Virginia Woolf proclaimed in the 1920s to be essential for a woman author. Nevertheless, the dining room did afford Austen a quiet place for literary composition, unlike the busier drawing room across the hall. Both the table and its location demonstrate how resolutely Austen made space for her creative work. She also owned a portable writing desk, a gift from her father in 1794.

### **Jane Austen’s writing table Reproduction**

Jane Austen’s House, Chawton; CHWJA:JAH69

### **Chair, Baltimore, ca. 1800–1810**

#### **Soft maple, black walnut, butternut, cane, paint, and gilt**

Winterthur Museum, Garden & Library, Delaware, bequest of Henry Francis du Pont; 1957.1061.002



Jane Austen's portable writing desk, late eighteenth century. British Library, London; Add MS 86841. Photo: British Library Archive / Bridgeman Images.

## COLORFUL AND BOLD

Surviving fragments of wallpaper at Jane Austen's House in Chawton (formerly known as Chawton Cottage) enabled Hamilton Weston Wallpapers to re-create the designs to install there, as well as to sell elsewhere. With its vivid color and striking pattern, the green "Chawton Leaf" design adorns the house's dining room, where Austen's writing table stands. Known as arsenic green after its main ingredient, the color was very popular in the nineteenth century. The yellow "Chawton Vine" pattern, seen later in this exhibition, brightens the drawing room at Jane Austen's House. There, Austen played the pianoforte every morning and, later in the day, enjoyed reading, conversation, and letter-writing.

On wall:

**The dining room at Jane Austen's House.**

Photo: Luke Shears.

# KEY MEMBERS OF THE AUSTEN FAMILY

**Rev. George Austen** (1731–1805), a clergyman

**Cassandra Leigh Austen** (1739–1827), married Rev. Austen in 1764 and had eight children:

**James** (1765–1819), a clergyman who had three children:

**Anna** (1793–1872), visited Steventon Rectory as a young child and recalled hearing Jane's work read aloud

**James Edward Austen-Leigh** (1798–1874), a clergyman, author of the first book-length biography of Jane; he added "Leigh" to his surname in 1837 due to an inheritance

**Caroline** (1805–1880), visited Chawton Cottage as a child and recorded reminiscences of the life of the household

**George** (1766–1838), disabled from birth, lived with and was cared for by a family in the village of Monk Sherborne, Hampshire

**Edward** (1767–1852), heir to Thomas Knight's estates in Chawton, Hampshire, and Godmersham, Kent; he took the surname Knight in 1809 and had eleven children, including:

**Fanny** (1793–1882), Edward's eldest child and Jane's favorite niece, who had nine children, including:

**Lord Brabourne** (1829–1893), who compiled the first published edition of Jane's letters

**Henry** (1771–1850), a banker and later a clergyman, assisted Jane with publishing

**Cassandra** (1773–1845), amateur visual artist; her fiancé, Tom Fowle, died in 1797

**Francis**, known as Frank (1774–1865), rose to the rank of admiral of the fleet in the British Navy

**Jane** (1775–1817), novelist



## YOUTHFUL AMBITIONS

Jane Austen was born on December 16, 1775, in Steventon, a small village in Hampshire, in south central England. As a young girl, she began writing stories and sketches, many of which she dedicated to her appreciative family. Her father, a clergyman in the Church of England, encouraged her aspiration to become an author.

In her early twenties, she worked on drafts of *Sense and Sensibility*, *Pride and Prejudice*, and *Northanger Abbey*, which she shared with her sister, Cassandra. Jane's first efforts to publish her novels, however, ended in disappointment.

In 1801 Rev. Austen retired and moved with his wife and two daughters to the city of Bath. He died unexpectedly in 1805, leaving his sons to support their mother and sisters financially. Fortunately, Edward, the third eldest sibling, had been adopted by rich, childless relations, who made him their heir. In 1809 he offered the women a home of their own on his Hampshire estate in the village of Chawton.

**Charles** (1779–1852), rose to the rank of rear admiral in the British Navy and had seven children, including:

**Cassy** (1808–1897), recipient as a child of a letter written by Jane with backward spelling



Benjamin Lefroy (1791–1829), *Steventon Rectory*, 1820. Graphite.  
Jane Austen's House, Chawton; CHWJA:JAH191.1. Photo: Jonny Helm.

## A NOTE ON SPELLING

Because spelling was not yet fully standardized during Austen's lifetime, writers had considerable freedom. Quotations from manuscripts in this exhibition reproduce the spelling of the original.

## FROM THE COLLECTION OF ALBERTA H. BURKE

Items originally in Alberta Burke's collection are designated in exhibition labels with this icon:



# ENCOURAGING PARENTS

These silhouettes of Jane Austen's parents are thought to date from the early nineteenth century. Their features bear little resemblance to those in the silhouette that has long been associated, though not securely, with the novelist. Rev. Austen owned five hundred books, a large personal library for a man of his means. Unusually for the time, he allowed his daughters to read what they liked, whether from his collection, borrowed from friends, or obtained from a circulating (subscription) library. With less than two years of formal schooling each, the Austen sisters essentially educated themselves through reading, as well as through contact with their brothers and with the boy pupils to whom Rev. Austen gave lessons in Steventon Rectory.

## **Silhouettes of Rev. George Austen and Cassandra Leigh Austen, early nineteenth century Pen and ink**

Jane Austen's House, Chawton; CHWJA:JAH75.1-2



Silhouette, possibly of Jane Austen, by an unknown artist, ca. 1800–1815. National Portrait Gallery, London; NPG 3181. Photo: © National Portrait Gallery, London / Art Resource, New York.

## **“LITRATURE IN LADIES”**

A first cousin of Jane Austen’s mother, Cassandra Leigh Austen, Mary Leigh compiled this collection between 1750 and 1795, and subsequent generations continued to add to it. The circulation of literary manuscripts among one’s family and friends had long been a common practice within the gentry and aristocracy. By the late eighteenth century, more and more writers chose to publish, although many did so anonymously, like Austen, or pseudonymously. In her inscription, Leigh commented on changing fashions in women’s education: “Litrature in Ladies, when the earlier parts of these poems were written—was little encouraged, less admired, & therefore was seldom seen.” The crowded volume, however, clearly shows that Leigh considered the works worthy of preservation.

**Mary Leigh, compiler (1731–1797)**

***Family poems, 1750–1889***

The Morgan Library & Museum, purchased on the Macomber Fund, 2021; MA 23739

## **A GENTLEWOMAN'S EXPENSES**

Sumptuously bound in white leather, this large book proclaims its owner's privilege. Elizabeth Motley Austen began recording her expenditures upon her marriage in 1772 to Francis Motley Austen, a first cousin of Jane Austen's father, Rev. George Austen. Each page conveys the cost of maintaining a lady's wardrobe and outfitting her children, of whom Elizabeth Motley Austen eventually had eleven. In 1780, the year when her sixth child was born, she spent a total of £172.6.3 (172 pounds sterling, six shillings, and threepence) on items ranging from "Pomatum tooth powder & Curling Irons" to "Shoes for the children" to "Mending my Stays." By contrast, Jane's expenses for 1807 came to less than £45, as can be seen later in this exhibition.

### **Elizabeth Motley Austen**

#### **Personal expense ledger, 1772–80**

The Morgan Library & Museum, purchased on the Gordon N. Ray Fund, 2008;  
MA 7269



# A PRINCESS IMAGINES

These paper dolls, from a group of three heads and thirteen overlays, were created by Princess Charlotte Augusta, the eldest grandchild of King George III. The costumes, which range from historical to contemporary, allowed the princess to ponder what a difference is made by dress. Modern viewers might well be tempted to lay feminine ornaments on a masculine head, as the princess herself doubtless did not do. Charlotte Augusta married in 1816 and died in her first childbirth. Her father, the Prince Regent—later King George IV—admired Austen's novels and gave her his royal permission to dedicate *Emma* to him.

**Charlotte Augusta, Princess of Great Britain (1796–1817)**

**Paper dolls, ca. 1800–1810**

**Watercolor and graphite**

The Morgan Library & Museum, bequest of Julia P. Wightman, 1994; 2006.70

## A “PRODIGAL DAUGHTER”

Writing to her sister, Cassandra, while visiting their brother Edward in Kent, the twenty-year-old Jane Austen mused about her return journey to Steventon. Referring to herself irreverently as the “prodigal Daughter,” Jane joked about what she would do if her father didn’t pick her up in London. Perhaps she would study medicine or the law, or even join the army: She could “walk the Hospitals, Enter at the Temple, or mount Guard at St. James.” As the Austen sisters well knew, none of these professions was open to women at the time, and even published authorship was considered less than respectable. At the top right is one of the witty remarks in which Jane’s letters abound: “What dreadful Hot weather we have!—It keeps one in a continual state of Inelegance.”

### **Jane Austen (1775–1817)**

Autograph letter to Cassandra Austen, Rowling, September 18, 1796  
The Morgan Library & Museum, purchased by J. P. Morgan Jr., 1920;  
MA 977.2

# A PERSONAL COLLECTION OF MUSIC

Jane Austen took lifelong pleasure in playing the pianoforte, a forerunner of the piano. Because printed sheet music was expensive, she hand-copied favorite compositions borrowed from friends, as did several of her women relatives. The pieces in this manuscript volume were originally published from the early 1790s to 1810. The Austen family's music books, all of which have been digitized, shed light on the tastes and technical capacities of amateur musicians in this era. Famous names like Mozart and Beethoven are absent. Scenes of playing and singing occur frequently in Austen's novels, and her characters' attitudes toward music-making usually indicate their priorities.

**Jane Austen (1775–1817)**

***Juvinile songs @ lessons for young beginners who don't know enough to practise***

**Autograph manuscript, late eighteenth century**

Jane Austen's House, Chawton; CHWJA:JAH19.2



*Scan this QR code to further explore the Austen family's music books.*

## A DETERMINED YOUNG AUTHOR

Jane Austen began writing short, experimental fiction in her early teens, cheered on by her family, to whom she dedicated many pieces. She preserved fair copies of these works in a set of three manuscript volumes. This, the second, includes her notation in Latin, “Ex dono mei patris”: “The gift of my father.” In addition to buying his younger daughter a blank book—no small expense at the time—Rev. Austen supported her ambitions by offering one of her novels to the London publisher Thomas Cadell in 1797. The effort was unsuccessful. Cassandra, who contributed illustrations to “The History of England,” passed this volume down to their brother Francis (“Frank”), as evident from her notes on the flyleaf.

**Jane Austen (1775–1817)**

***Volume the Second***

**Autograph manuscript, 1790–93**

British Library, London; Add MS 59874



Cassandra Austen (1773–1845), Illustrations of Elizabeth I and Mary, Queen of Scots, in "The History of England," 1791. Ink and watercolor. British Library, London; Add MS 59874, p. 171. Photos: British Library Archive / Bridgeman Images.

## **“SHE ADMIRES CAMILLA”**

Austen was always keen to compare literary tastes with new acquaintances. In this letter, a Miss Fletcher earned Austen’s approbation for two reasons: “She admires Camilla, & drinks no cream in her Tea.” In *Northanger Abbey*, Austen proclaimed her admiration for *Camilla*’s author, Frances Burney (also mentioning her 1792 novel, *Cecilia*), and for another woman novelist, Maria Edgeworth, who published *Belinda* in 1801. A young woman, asked what she is reading, replies, “It is only Cecilia, Camilla, or Belinda.” The novel’s narrator then vigorously defends such works as superior in “genius, wit, and taste” to much-lauded writings by men.

**Jane Austen (1775–1817)**

**Autograph letter to Cassandra Austen, Rowling,  
September 15–16, 1796**

The Morgan Library & Museum, purchased by J. P. Morgan Jr., 1920; MA 977.1

“I am very much flattered by your commendation of my last Letter, for I write only for Fame, and without any view to pecuniary Emolument.”

Jane Austen to Cassandra Austen,  
January 14–15, 1796

## “MISS J. AUSTEN, STEVENTON”

As a mark of Austen’s great esteem for the author Frances Burney, she—or perhaps her fond father—paid a guinea (a pound sterling plus a shilling) to subscribe to Burney’s newest novel, *Camilla*.

A method of crowdfunding publication costs, subscription rewarded those who prepaid with acknowledgment by name in the published work. Austen’s name appeared in print only twice more during her lifetime: as a subscriber in 1808 to a book of sermons published by an acquaintance and in 1813 as a contributor, along with her mother and sister, to the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge. The title pages of Austen’s own novels did not identify her by name, as will be seen later in this exhibition.

**Frances Burney (1752–1840)**

***Camilla, or A Picture of Youth*, vol. 1**

**London: printed for T. Payne; T. Cadell Jun. and W. Davies, 1796**

The Morgan Library & Museum, bequest of Tessie Jones, 1976; PML 75395



## OVERHEARING A SECRET

Throughout her life, Jane Austen's first and most important reader was her sister, Cassandra. Their very young niece Anna, while staying at Steventon, heard "Pride and Prejudice (begun 1796) read aloud by the youthful writer to her sister. She . . . caught up the names of the characters, and talked about them so much downstairs, that her aunts feared she would provoke enquiry, for the story was still a secret from the elders." Oscar Fay Adams, an American researching the novelist's life, received this recollection from Anna's nephew Augustus and noted his intention to include it as an appendix to his biography. Adams's *The Story of Jane Austen's Life* is on view later in this exhibition.

**Augustus Austen Leigh (1840–1905)**

**Autograph letter to Oscar Fay Adams, December 3, [1889]**

The Morgan Library & Museum, gift of Mrs. April Axton, 1977; MA 3610

## AN UNSOLVED MYSTERY

Two documents listing Jane Austen's dates of composition have survived. One is signed on back with Cassandra's initials, C.E.A., and includes all six of Jane's published works, as well as the working titles of two earlier manuscripts—*First Impressions* and *Elinor and Marianne*—neither of which were published nor survive. The second document mentions only three titles and is unsigned.

When exactly these notes were written is unknown, although Cassandra's spelling of "North-hanger Abbey" suggests that she had not yet seen that novel in print. *Northanger Abbey* was released, together with *Persuasion*, in December 1817, five months after Jane died.

The authorship of the unsigned note is uncertain. Did Jane write it, or did Cassandra, as a draft for the longer list? Cassandra and Henry Austen were long thought to have selected the titles *Northanger Abby* and *Persuasion* for novels that Jane previously referred to as *Catherine* and *The Elliots*, respectively. Possibly the two sisters, during Jane's last weeks of life, chose the titles together. If so, the shorter list could be Jane's own.

Letters penned during 1816 and 1817 enable you to compare the sisters' handwriting and draw your own conclusions. To the left of Cassandra's note is her letter to Anne Sharp, the former governess for their brother Edward's children at his estate of Godmersham in Kent, enclosing several mementos of her late sister: "the lock of hair you wish for" plus "a pair of clasps" and "a small bodkin" (hairpin). To the right of the unsigned note is a letter from Jane to Cassandra, which includes thanks for Cassandra's housekeeping at Chawton Cottage: "I often wonder how you can find time for what you do, in addition to the care of the House. . . . Composition seems to me Impossible, with a head full of Joints of Mutton & doses of rhubarb."

**Cassandra Austen (1773–1845)**

**Autograph letter to Anne Sharp, Chawton, July 28, [1817]**



**Cassandra Austen (1773–1845)**

**Autograph note concerning the dates of composition of  
Jane Austen's novels, ca. July 1817**



**Cassandra or Jane Austen?**

**Autograph note giving the composition dates of three of  
Jane Austen's novels, ca. 1816–17**

**Cassandra Austen (1773–1845)**

**Autograph letter to Anne Sharp, Chawton, July 28, [1817]**



The Morgan Library & Museum, bequest of Alberta H. Burke, 1975, MA 2911.11 and MA 2911.12; purchased by J.P. Morgan Jr., 1925, MA 1034.4; and purchased by J.P. Morgan Jr., 1920; MA 977.41

North-hanger Abbey was written  
about the years 98 & 99  
C. E. A.

MA 2911

MA 2911.12

Verso of Cassandra Austen's note, ca. July 1817, showing her initials.

## A FAIR COPY

The only complete fiction manuscript of Austen's to survive, this epistolary novella features Lady Susan Vernon, a beautiful widow, unscrupulous flirt, and shamelessly neglectful mother. The watermark on the paper is dated 1805; scholars debate whether the work was composed near that date or was initially drafted in the 1790s. Under the title *Lady Susan*, the novella was first published in 1871 as part of the second edition of *A Memoir of Jane Austen*, by Austen's nephew James Edward Austen-Leigh. Belle da Costa Greene, the Morgan's first director, acquired the manuscript in 1947.

**Jane Austen (1775–1817)**

***Lady Susan***

**Autograph manuscript, ca. 1805–17**

**Pages 2 and 157 in facsimile**

The Morgan Library & Museum, purchased in 1947; MA 1226

## **“THE TRUE ART OF LETTER-WRITING”**

Jane Austen’s letters to Cassandra carried on the conversation that the sisters enjoyed when together, as she commented here: “I have now attained the true art of letter-writing, which we are always told, is to express on paper exactly what one would say to the same person by word of mouth; I have been talking to you almost as fast as I could the whole of this letter.” Jane assured Cassandra that she has become “more & more reconciled to the idea of our removal” from Steventon to Bath, though she was concerned by one question: “In what part of Bath do you mean to place your Bees?—We are afraid of the South Parade’s being too hot.”

**Jane Austen (1775–1817)**

**Autograph letter to Cassandra Austen, Steventon,  
January 3–5, 1801**

The Morgan Library & Museum, purchased by J. P. Morgan Jr., 1920;  
MA 977.9

## AN INSPIRING SETTING

When Rev. Austen retired in 1801, the family lost both his income and their home at Steventon Rectory. Selling most of their possessions, including Jane's cherished pianoforte, they moved to Bath, where Rev. and Mrs. Austen had married in 1764. A fashionable place to visit, the city offered comparatively affordable living, with theaters and shopping, while countryside walks beckoned beyond the handsome terraces of Georgian houses. The Austens' first residence in Bath was a house on gracious Sydney Place, which borders public gardens. Jane set portions of both *Northanger Abbey* and *Persuasion* in Bath, mentioning social venues and street names that would have been familiar to many of her contemporaries.

**Thomas Moule (1784–1851)**

***City of Bath***

**Hand-colored steel engraving**

**[London: George Virtue, 1837]**

The Morgan Library & Museum, bequest of Alberta H. Burke, 1975; MA 7285



## A WORK IN PROGRESS

These heavily revised pages come from the beginning of a novel, written on paper watermarked 1803. The sheets displayed here were originally folded into a booklet. Jane Austen is thought to have abandoned this composition, which unsparingly treats a genteel family's descent into poverty, because the subject matter was too close to home after her father died in January 1805. Her nephew published the unfinished work in 1871 as *The Watsons*.

In 1905 the manuscript was divided into two by a descendant who had inherited it. J. P. Morgan Jr. purchased the opening pages in 1925 for just over £317 (about \$16,000 today), and Oxford University's Bodleian Library bought the larger portion at auction in 2011 for £850,000 (about \$1.4 million today).

**Jane Austen (1775–1817)**

***The Watsons***

**Autograph manuscript, ca. 1805**

The Morgan Library & Museum, purchased by J. P. Morgan Jr., 1925;  
MA 1034.2



# A DAUGHTER'S INHERITANCE

Published in 1801, the year the Austens moved to Bath, this travel guide contains three detailed itineraries for multiday expeditions. In *Northanger Abbey*, characters discuss journeying to sites accessible from Bath, including “Blaize Castle” and Clifton, a suburb of Bristol. Poignantly, Jane Austen added her signature to this book previously owned by her father. His death in 1805 left his wife and daughters with very little to live on. After a year moving among inexpensive lodgings, the Austen women left Bath.

**Richard Warner (1763–1857)**

***Excursions from Bath***

**Bath: printed by R. Cruttwell, 1801**

Jane Austen's House, Chawton; CHJWA:JAHB46



“Expect a most agreeable Letter; for not being overburdened with subject—(having nothing at all to say)—I shall have no check to my Genius from beginning to end.”

Jane Austen to Cassandra Austen,  
January 21–22, 1801

# UNSETTLED YEARS

From 1806 until July 1809, the Austen sisters and their mother lived with their brother Francis and his new wife in Southampton, a port city along the southern coast. James, Edward, and Henry each contributed what money they could. Very different financial circumstances had been within Jane Austen's grasp just a few years earlier. In 1802 she received a marriage proposal from a wealthy man, Harris Bigg-Wither, the brother of dear friends. She first accepted it and then, the next morning, changed her mind. Had Austen married Bigg-Wither, she would likely have become the mother of many children, with little time for writing novels.

**Anonymous, British school, previously attributed**

**to J. M. W. Turner**

***Southampton, nineteenth century***

**Pen and brown ink and wash**

The Morgan Library & Museum, bequest of  
Alberta H. Burke; 1975.62



# UNIMPRESSED BY WALTER SCOTT

Jane Austen wrote from Godmersham, her brother Edward's estate in Kent, which afforded her an extensive library in which to browse. She commented acerbically to Cassandra on what she was currently reading, the newest poem by Walter Scott: "Ought I to be very much pleased with Marmion?—as yet I am not." Cassandra, accustomed to her sister's handwriting, would have had no difficulty reading the crosshatched lines. Because postage was charged by the sheet and paid by the recipient in this era, Jane was being considerate of her sister by keeping her letter to one sheet of paper. The postmark can be seen, as well as the wax seal that secured the folded page. Mass-produced envelopes were introduced later in the nineteenth century.

**Jane Austen (1775–1817)**

**Autograph letter to Cassandra Austen, Godmersham,  
June 20–22, 1808**

The Morgan Library & Museum, purchased by J. P. Morgan Jr., 1920;  
MA 977.16

## FIRST ACCEPTANCE FOR PUBLICATION

In 1803, while living in Bath, Jane Austen succeeded in selling a novel with the help of her brother Henry. This scrap bearing her handwriting is the sole surviving portion of the manuscript. Crosby & Co. paid the low sum of £10 for *Susan* and advertised the novel widely. To Jane's dismay, however, *Susan* was never released. Under a pseudonym, she wrote to the firm in 1809, announcing that if *Susan* was not forthcoming, she would seek another publisher. In reply, Richard Crosby threatened legal action unless he was paid back for the manuscript before she published it elsewhere. Apparently, she could not then afford to do so. Henry sent Crosby £10 in 1813, after which Jane revised *Susan* into *Northanger Abbey*.

**Jane Austen (1775–1817)**

***Susan***

**Autograph fragment, ca. 1803**

The Morgan Library & Museum, purchased on the Fellows Fund, 1958;  
MA 1958

# LIVING ON A BUDGET

This small page cut from an 1807 calendar provides the only known record of Austen's personal expenses, which came to forty-four pounds, ten shillings, and sixpence. (A pound sterling comprised twenty shillings, abbreviated "s." Twelve pence, or pennies, abbreviated "d," made one shilling.) Austen's expenditures are enlightening. £13.19s.3d, a third of the total, went to "Cloathes & Pocket," the latter meaning pocket, or spending, money. "Washing"—professional laundering—added £8.14s.5d. Music's importance to Austen is evident in her payment of £2.13s.3d to "Hire Piano Forté."

**Jane Austen (1775–1817)**

**Autograph memorandum of personal accounts, ca. 1807**

The Morgan Library & Museum, bequest of Alberta H. Burke, 1975;  
MA 2911.2





## PROUD PROFESSIONAL

In July 1809 the Austen women and their friend Martha Lloyd took up residence in Chawton Cottage (now known as Jane Austen's House). There, both sisters found contentment in their creative pursuits. Cassandra created the only known portrait of Jane from life, a pencil and watercolor sketch. In a period of extraordinary productivity, Jane revised three of her fiction manuscripts and composed another three novels from scratch.

Austen's long wait to see her work in print was rewarded with the release of *Sense and Sensibility* in late October 1811. *Pride and Prejudice* followed in January 1813, *Mansfield Park* in May 1814, and *Emma* in December 1815. Praised by reviewers, her novels sold moderately well, and she took great satisfaction in her earnings.

In May 1817, after more than a year of intermittent illness, Austen moved to the city of Winchester to receive medical treatment. She died there on July 18 and was buried in Winchester Cathedral. *Northanger Abbey* and *Persuasion* were published together that December. An accompanying biographical essay written by her brother Henry publicly revealed her identity for the first time.





Jane Austen's House in Chawton, Hampshire. Photo: Luke Shear.



Cassandra Austen (1773–1845), *Jane Austen*, ca. 1810. Graphite and watercolor. National Portrait Gallery, London; NPG 3630. Photo: © National Portrait Gallery, London / Art Resource, New York.

## AT THE DRAWING TABLE

Fanny, the eldest daughter of Jane Austen's brother Edward, is depicted here in her early teens. Drawn by her aunt Cassandra, the portrait presents Fanny absorbed in her artistic pursuit. Drawing and painting in watercolors were considered acceptable activities for gentlewomen, unlike painting in oils, a medium reserved for professionals, the great majority of whom were men. Portraits, however amateur, were prized in an era before photography. In *Emma*, the title character Emma Woodhouse applies her talents to creating a likeness of her friend and protégée Harriet Smith. Previously, Emma attempted portraits of a wide range of family members, from babies to adults.

**Cassandra Austen (1773–1845)**

***Frances (Fanny) Catherine Knight*, early nineteenth century**

**Reproduction of a watercolor drawing**

Jane Austen's House, Chawton; CHWJA:JAH170

“No indeed, I am never too busy to think of S&S. I can no more forget it, than a mother can forget her sucking child; & I am much obliged to you for your enquiries.”

Jane Austen to Cassandra Austen,  
April 25, 1811

## **“GREAT NOVEL-READERS”**

Updating Cassandra, away at Godmersham, about activities at home in Steventon, Jane Austen mentioned that their father was reading “Cowper to us in the evening.” In exciting news, a new subscription library would shortly open, a boon to “our family, who are great Novel-readers & not ashamed of being so.” Novels, which lacked literary prestige, were often disparaged as frivolous reading, a judgment that *Northanger Abbey* strongly opposes.

Jane also noted her plan to replace the “black military feather” in her cap with “the Coquelicot one, as being smarter,” since coquelicot—a poppy red—“is to be all the fashion this winter.” A November 1798 fashion plate showing coquelicot accessories and military feathers appears later in this exhibition.

**Jane Austen (1775–1817)**

**Autograph letter to Cassandra Austen, Steventon,  
December 18–19, 1798**

The Morgan Library & Museum, purchased by J. P. Morgan Jr., 1920;  
MA 977.3



## **“PEICES FOR THE PATCHWORK”**

Fiber and textile arts (traditionally women’s pursuits), among other matters, were on Jane Austen’s mind when writing to Cassandra at Godmersham. Hearing that their brother Edward’s adoptive mother, Catherine Knight, was giving away her spinning wheel, Jane reflected, “I could never use it with comfort.” She also asked whether Cassandra has remembered “to collect peices for the Patchwork,” a likely reference to the coverlet reproduced outside the entry to this exhibition.

Confident of Cassandra’s sympathy, Jane also admitted an arboreal mishap—“I will not say that your Mulberry trees are dead, but I am afraid they are not alive”—and responded candidly to a recent naval battle: “How horrible it is to have so many people killed! And what a blessing it is that one cares for none of them!”

**Jane Austen (1775–1817)**

**Autograph letter to Cassandra Austen, Chawton, May 31, 1811**

The Morgan Library & Museum, purchased by J. P. Morgan Jr., 1920;  
MA 977.29

# LITERARY OPINIONS

This letter to Cassandra from Godmersham contains valuable comments on Jane Austen's reading, writing, and publishing. She panned Mary Brunton's best-selling 1811 novel *Self-Control* as "an excellently-meant, elegantly-written Work, without anything of Nature or Probability in it." She declared her intention of complimenting the "Sagacity & Taste" of an acquaintance, Charlotte Williams, by "naming a Heroine after her," which she did in her final, unfinished novel, later published as *Sanditon*. Referring to *Sense and Sensibility*, Jane expressed hopes for "a good sale of my 2d Edition," which was just out. At the end is a note from niece Fanny: "I have just asked At: Jane to let me write a little in her letter but she does not like it so I won't."

**Jane Austen (1775–1817)**

**Autograph letter to Cassandra Austen, Godmersham,  
October 11–12, 1813**

The Morgan Library & Museum, purchased by J. P. Morgan Jr., 1920;  
MA 977.33

## A GIFT FOR A NIECE

Jane Austen presented this lovely set of works by William Cowper, her favorite poet, to her niece Fanny, with the inscription “Fanny Cath: Austen / June 29, 1808 / the Gift of her Aunt Jane.” The volumes show few signs of use, suggesting that Fanny Austen may well have been less interested in Cowper than was Fanny Price, the heroine of *Mansfield Park*, who twice quotes his poetry.

Stereotyping was a printing method that was cost-effective for works that a publisher anticipated reissuing due to steady demand. Austen’s novels, by contrast, were printed using movable type, which required each letter to be individually set by hand and reset for any subsequent editions.

**William Cowper (1731–1800)**

***Poems*, 2 vols.**

**London: stereotyped and printed by Andrew Wilson for  
J. Johnson, 1808**

The Morgan Library & Museum, gift of Virginia Surtees, 2005;  
PML 129621–22



## PIANO PLAYING BEFORE BREAKFAST

Fifty years after Jane Austen's death, her niece Caroline recorded her reminiscences of daily life at Chawton Cottage, which she had experienced as a little girl. "Aunt Jane began her day with music," Caroline recalled. "Much that she played from was manuscript, copied out by herself—and so neatly and correctly, that it was as easy to read as print. At 9 o'clock she made breakfast—that was her part of the household work. . . . Aunt Cassandra did all the rest." Caroline extolled her aunt Jane's neatness in all forms of handiwork, from embroidery to playing cup-and-ball games, to folding and sealing her letters. Caroline's brother James Edward Austen-Leigh incorporated these and other family recollections into his 1870 biography, *A Memoir of Jane Austen*.

**Caroline Mary Craven Austen (1805–1880)**

***Recollections of Jane Austen***

**Autograph manuscript, 1867**

Jane Austen's House, Chawton; CHWJA:JAH401

## IN THE KITCHEN

Battered and stained from use, this manuscript book of recipes and remedies was compiled from around 1796 to 1830 by Martha, who lived at Chawton Cottage with the Austen women. Martha Lloyd attributed many entries to their source, as can be seen here. At the lower left is a recipe for Scotch orange marmalade jointly contributed by Henry Austen's second wife, Eleanor, and Miss Debary, a friend, while the right-hand page includes two more recipes from Jane Austen's mother: "Brised Crust" (pâte brisée, or piecrust pastry) and "Short Crust." In 1828 Martha married Jane's brother Francis, who had recently been widowed.

**Martha Lloyd (1765–1843)**

**Household book**

**Autograph manuscript, ca. 1796–1830**

Jane Austen's House, Chawton; CHWJA:JAHB34

# FASHIONABLE LONDON

Jane Austen visited her brother Henry in London in order to correct proof sheets of her novels. While there, she attended art exhibitions and theater performances. The detailed, evocative engravings in Rudolph Ackermann's *Microcosm of London* offer windows into scenes of both privilege and poverty. Since printing in multiple colors was prohibitively expensive, aquatint engravings like this one were colored by hand.

***Microcosm of London, vol. 2***

**London: printed by T. Bensley for R. Ackermann, [1808–11]**

The Morgan Library & Museum, gift of Henry S. Morgan, 1974; PML 75949

Sadler's Wells Theatre from *Microcosm of London*, 1809.  
Hand-colored aquatint. The Morgan Library & Museum,  
gift of Henry S. Morgan, 1974; PML 75950.

## PRIME PEOPLE-WATCHING

When staying in London, Jane Austen took advantage of the city's culture. She confessed to Cassandra, however, that at museums and galleries, "my preference for Men & Women, always inclines me to attend more to the company than the sight." Jane anticipated "excellent singing" at one upcoming gathering and "great pleasure" from a professional harpist at another. A cold prevented her from attending a play with Henry. The sentence cut out from this page likely contained an uncharitable remark about a relative. After Jane's death, Cassandra selectively censored some letters that she judged to be otherwise worthy of preservation. She is thought to have destroyed many others to safeguard her late sister's privacy.

**Jane Austen (1775–1817)**

**Autograph letter to Cassandra Austen, London, April 18–20, 1811**

The Morgan Library & Museum, purchased by J. P. Morgan Jr., 1920;  
MA 977.27

“I am perfectly serious in my refusal.—You could not make *me* happy, and I am convinced that I am the last woman in the world who would make *you* so.”

Elizabeth Bennet to Mr. Collins,  
*Pride and Prejudice*, chapter 19

# CONTEMPLATING BOOKS AND ADORNMENTS

Consumption of all kinds, from novels to shopping, once again occupied Austen's thoughts in this letter from London. Awaiting the publication of *Sense and Sensibility*, she expressed anxiety at reading Mary Brunton's *Self-Control*, being "always half afraid of finding a clever novel too clever—& of finding my own story & my own people all forestalled." (Austen's unsparing criticism of *Self-Control* is on view earlier in this exhibition.) She resolved "to spend no more money" updating the trim on her pelisse (a coat-like garment) and declared herself "very well satisfied" with hearing her appearance commended as "pleasing looking."

**Jane Austen (1775–1817)**

**Autograph letter to Cassandra Austen, London, [April 30, 1811]**

The Morgan Library & Museum, purchased by J. P. Morgan Jr., 1920;  
MA 977.28

## **“BY A LADY”**

*Sense and Sensibility* focuses on the close relationship between sisters Elinor and Marianne Dashwood. Elinor unites great depth of feeling (“sensibility”) with strong self-discipline (“sense”), while the younger Marianne indulges her emotions to excess, often to the detriment of her well-being. In the climactic scene displayed at right, Marianne, recovering from life-threatening illness, movingly tells Elinor that she intends from then on to emulate her sister’s behavior.

Austen’s first title page conceals her name but conveys her gender and social status. “Printed for the author by” indicates that she published on commission, sharing profits with the publisher while retaining the copyright. She earned £140 from this edition, which sold out in two years. Egerton issued a second edition in October 1813.

**Jane Austen (1775–1817)**

***Sense and Sensibility*, 3 vols.**

**London: printed for the author by C. Roworth and published by  
T. Egerton, 1811**

The Morgan Library & Museum, bequest of Gordon N. Ray, 1987;  
PML 130097–99



## **“THE LIVELINESS OF YOUR MIND”**

Published in 1813, *Pride and Prejudice* was Austen's best-selling title, entering two further editions by the end of 1817. But because she sold the copyright, for £110, she did not share in the revenue. The title page omits Austen's name while acknowledging her prior authorship, a formula used for all her subsequent novels.

Witty and confident, Elizabeth Bennet is Austen's most appealing heroine. Although financial insecurity looms, Elizabeth declines two marriage proposals that she is certain would not make her happy. Wealthy Mr. Darcy ultimately earns her regard by listening to her criticism of him and undertaking self-improvement. His appreciation of Elizabeth's intelligence is one of his most winning qualities, along with the excellent taste evident in his estate, Pemberley.

**Jane Austen (1775–1817)**

***Pride and Prejudice*, 3 vols.**

**London: printed for T. Egerton, 1813**

The Morgan Library & Museum, bequest of Gordon N. Ray, 1987;  
PML 130100–02

## SEEKING PORTRAITS OF HER CHARACTERS

Jane Austen's characters lived on in her imagination, as she made clear in this letter to Cassandra. At an exhibition in London by the Society of Painters in Oil and Water Colours, the author sought faces that reminded her of Jane and Elizabeth Bennet from *Pride and Prejudice*. She was thrilled to see “a small portrait of Mrs Bingley [Jane], excessively like her . . . exactly herself, size, shaped face, features & sweetness; there never was a greater likeness. She is dressed in a white gown, with green ornaments, which convinces me of what I had always supposed, that green was a favourite colour with her.” Austen held out hope of seeing a portrait of Elizabeth in a subsequent exhibition: “I dare say Mrs D. will be in Yellow.”

**Jane Austen (1775–1817)**

**Autograph letter to Cassandra Austen, London, May 24, 1813**

The Morgan Library & Museum, purchased by J. P. Morgan Jr., 1920;  
MA 977.31

## IS THIS MRS. BINGLEY?

A catalogue of the exhibition Jane Austen described in the letter to Cassandra at left offers the tantalizing possibility of identifying the portrait she recognized as “Mrs Bingley.” One contender is *Portrait of a Lady* by the French artist Jean-François Hüet-Villiers. However, it is not certain which of Hüet-Villiers’s many portraits of ladies was shown on that occasion. It may have been the original—now apparently lost—upon which this later engraving was based. Versions of this 1820 print by the noted artist (and visionary poet) William Blake circulated widely, as its sitter, Georgina Quentin, was widely believed to be a longtime mistress of the Prince Regent, who ascended to the throne as King George IV in 1820.

**William Blake (1757–1827),**

**after Jean-François Hüet-Villiers (1772–1813)**

***Portrait of Mrs. Q [Georgina Quentin], 1820***

**Stipple engraving, printed in color and finished by hand**

The Morgan Library & Museum, gift of Charles Ryskamp in memory of Michael S. Currier; 1998.36:4

## A PATTERN OF LACE

City visits brought opportunities to observe fashion trends and to shop, often by proxy for family members. From Bath, Jane Austen exulted in the purchase of a new cloak, a significant investment at almost £2. She drew “the pattern of its’ lace” to guide Cassandral, who was at home in Steventon, in her selection of trim for her own cloak: “If you do not think it wide enough, I can give 3d [threepence] a yard more for yours.” Jane expressed satisfaction that the “Gauzes” (thin, translucent fabric) she saw for sale were “not so good or so pretty as mine.” Of vogues in millinery, she observed that “Flowers are very much worn, & Fruit is still more the thing.” Several lines have been cut away, presumably by Cassandra to remove too-private comments.

**Jane Austen (1775–1817)**

**Autograph letter to Cassandra Austen, Bath, June 2, 1799**

The Morgan Library & Museum, purchased by J. P. Morgan Jr., 1920;  
MA 977.4

# A FASHION FOR COQUELICOT

Nicolaus Heideloff's *Gallery of Fashion* differentiated itself from similar monthly publications by depicting complete outfits that ladies in London had recently been seen wearing: in essence, the same “spotted on the street” approach still in use today. Complementing each hand-colored illustration was a detailed description of every fabric, leather, fur, and feather. On display here are the coquelicot (poppy-colored) accessories and military-inspired feathers that were in vogue in winter 1798, as Jane Austen noted to Cassandra in a letter included earlier in this exhibition.

## ***Gallery of Fashion***

**London: N. Heideloff, 1798**

The Morgan Library & Museum; PML 5680

# PROMOTING BRITISH FABRICS

Published monthly from 1809 to 1828, Rudolph Ackermann's *Repository* purveyed culture in all its forms, from fashion illustrations, to engravings of aristocrats' houses, to articles about current events. This book of plates taken from the *Repository* presents ensembles for every activity that a gentlewoman might pursue throughout the day and evening. Each issue contained samples of British-made fabrics, along with advice about where to buy and how to use each material. Surviving sets of swatches, like these, offer a glimpse of the rich colors, bold patterns, and luxuriant textures available to customers in the Regency era (the period from 1811–20 when the Prince Regent, George III's eldest son, reigned in place of his father, who was incapacitated by illness).

## **Fashion plates from *The Repository of Arts, Literature, Commerce, Manufactures, Fashions and Politics*, 1814–16**

The Morgan Library & Museum; PML 5682

## ***The Repository of Arts, Literature, Commerce, Manufactures, Fashions and Politics***

**London: R. Ackermann, 1812**

Goucher College Special Collections & Archives, Rare Book Collection



“Emma Woodhouse, handsome, clever, and rich, with a comfortable home and a happy disposition, seemed to unite some of the best blessings of existence; and had lived nearly twenty-one years in the world with very little to distress or vex her.”

*Emma*, chapter 1

# AN UNWELCOME INVITATION

Two days before drafting this letter, Austen met Rev. Clarke, the chaplain and private librarian to the Prince Regent (later King George IV), at Carlton House, the Regent's London residence. A connoisseur and collector of art, the Regent was frequently caricatured for his marital infidelities and voracious appetites. While Austen despised him, he admired her novels, according to Clarke, who granted her permission to dedicate her next work to the Regent. Austen had no desire to do so, as can be ascertained from her effort here to seek clarification from Clarke. His reply must have convinced Austen, or perhaps her publisher John Murray, of the disadvantages of declining a royal offer. *Emma* bears an obsequious dedication to the Regent, the wording of which was presumably Murray's, not Austen's.

**Jane Austen (1775–1817)**

**Autograph copy of a letter to James Stanier Clarke,  
November 15, 1815**

The Morgan Library & Museum, purchased by J. P. Morgan Jr., 1925;  
MA 1034.7



TO  
HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS  
**THE PRINCE REGENT,**  
THIS WORK IS,  
BY HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS'S PERMISSION,  
MOST RESPECTFULLY  
DEDICATED,  
BY HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS'S  
DUTIFUL  
AND OBEDIENT  
HUMBLE SERVANT,  
THE AUTHOR.

Dedication page from *Emma*, 1816. Goucher College Special Collections & Archives, Rare Book Collection.

## **“A MIND LIVELY AND AT EASE”**

“Handsome, clever, and rich” Emma Woodhouse indulges in matchmaking and other fanciful pursuits while devotedly caring for her hypochondriac father. In the first passage here, the narrator shows us the village sights that delight Emma, and in the second Austen invents the term “imaginist” to describe Emma’s extraordinary imagination.

*Emma* occasioned Austen’s most laudatory review. In an unsigned essay, Walter Scott acclaimed her ability to construct compelling narratives out of everyday events and feelings. Austen took a financial gamble by having the prominent publisher John Murray release *Emma* plus a second edition of *Mansfield Park* on commission. Lackluster sales left Austen with a profit of less than £39 for both. These volumes are in the publisher’s original bindings, known as “boards.”

**Jane Austen (1775–1817)**

***Emma*, 3 vols.**

**London: printed for John Murray, 1816**

The Morgan Library & Museum, purchased by J. P. Morgan Jr., 1928;  
PML 25476–78

## MODEST EARNINGS

On this small scrap of paper, Austen kept careful track of payments from her publishers between March 1816 and March 1817. She received payouts from the first edition of *Mansfield Park*, the second edition of *Sense and Sensibility* (recorded in two separate entries), and initial profits from *Emma*. As the heading indicates, she had already invested £600: “Navy Fives” refers to government stock that generated annual interest of 5 percent. While £600 may seem like a large sum of money, interest of £30 per year would not have gone very far. Clearly, Austen was not earning enough to support herself, much less the household at Chawton Cottage.

**Jane Austen (1775–1817)**

***Profits of my novels, over & above the £600 in the Navy Fives***

**Autograph manuscript, ca. March 1817**

The Morgan Library & Museum, purchased by J. P. Morgan Jr., 1925;  
MA 1034.5

## BEARING UP

Writing to her friend Anne Sharp, Jane Austen recounted her recent weeks of debilitating illness from what she called her “sad complaint.” Based on her symptoms, it has been speculated that her ultimately fatal malady may have been Addison’s disease (an adrenal condition), cancer, or lupus. Jane expressed her profound gratitude for her sister Cassandra’s care: “Words must fail me in any attempt to describe what a Nurse she has been to me.” Otherwise, Jane was determinedly upbeat, even joking that “if I live to be an old Woman I must expect to wish I had died now, blessed in the tenderness of such a Family.”

**Jane Austen (1775–1817)**

**Autograph letter to Anne Sharp, Chawton, May 22, [1817]**

The Morgan Library & Museum, bequest of Alberta H. Burke, 1975;  
MA 2911.9



## READERS' REVIEWS

Jane Austen's concern with what her readers thought of her novels is evident from the responses she collected for both *Mansfield Park* and *Emma*. Visible on this page are comments on *Emma* from Captain Austen (Francis) and his wife; Anne Sharp, the friend who was formerly governess to Edward Knight's children; Cassandra; Fanny Knight; Jane's mother; and Martha Lloyd. Most compared *Emma* to Jane's two previous novels, though they disagreed on which of the three they preferred.

Their views still provide food for thought: Do you concur with Fanny, who could not “bear Emma herself”? Are you, like Anne Sharp, “delighted with Mr. K[nightley]”? Perhaps, like Francis Austen, you appreciate *Emma*'s “air of Nature”: that is, its realism.

**Jane Austen (1775–1817)**

***Opinions of Emma***

**Autograph manuscript, ca. 1816**

British Library, London; Add MSS 41253A, fol. 9

## OPINIONS OF EMMA

**Captn. Austen.** — liked it extremely, observing that though there might be more Wit in P & P —. & an higher Morality in MP — yet altogether, on account of its' peculiar air of Nature throughout, he preferred it to either.

**Mrs. F. A.** — liked & admired it very much indeed, but must still prefer P. & P.

**Mrs. J. Bridges** — preferred it to all the others.

**Miss Sharp** — better than MP. — but not so well as P. & P. — pleased with the Heroine for her Originality, delighted with Mr. K — & called Mrs. Elton beyond praise. — dissatisfied with Jane Fairfax.

**Cassandra** — better than P. & P. — but not so well as M. P. —

**Fanny K.** — not so well as either P. & P. or M P. — could not bear Emma herself. — Mr. Knightley delightful. — Should like J. F. — if she knew more of her. —

**Mr. & Mrs. J. A.** — did not like it so well as either of the 3 others. Language different from the others; not so easily read. —

**Edward.** — **preferred it to M P.** — only. — Mr. K. liked by everybody.

**Miss Bigg** — not equal to either P & P. — or MP. — objected to the sameness of the subject (Match-making) — all through. — Too much of Mr. Elton & H. Smith. Language superior to the others. —

**My Mother** — thought it more entertaining than MP. — but not so interesting as P. & P. — No characters in it equal to Ly Catherine & Mr. Collins. —

**Miss Lloyd** — thought it as clever as either of the others, but did not receive so much pleasure from it as from P. & P — & MP. —

**Mrs & Miss Craven** — liked it very much, but not so much as the others.  
—

**Fanny Cage** — liked it very much indeed & classed it between P & P. — & MP. —

**Mr. Sherer** — did not think it equal to either MP — (which he liked the best of all) or P & P. — Displeased with my . . .

# IMPROVING ONE'S ESTATE

Humphry Repton achieved great success as a landscape designer by applying the principles of the picturesque to the estates of the wealthy. He presented each potential client with a hand-drawn prospectus in one of his “Red Books,” so called because of their eye-catching leather binding. Along with a map, he supplied before-and-after images of views using paper engineering: Lifting the flap showed what the renovation promised to achieve. An inventive and tireless self-promoter, Repton further advertised his business by producing printed versions of his Red Books. In *Mansfield Park*, characters mention Repton by name while discussing how to “improve” estates, but the nature-loving heroine, Fanny Price, is horrified to think of ancient trees being cut down to open up prospects.

**Humphry Repton (1752–1818)**

***The Red Book of Ferney Hall, 1789***

***The Red Book of Hatchlands in Surrey, 1800***

**Pen and brown ink and watercolor**

The Morgan Library & Museum, gifts of Junius S. Morgan and Henry S. Morgan;  
1954.17 and 1954.16



## A TOO LIVELY MIND

Shy and penniless Fanny Price is brought up on her uncle Sir Thomas Bertram's estate, Mansfield Park, as an act of charity. Sir Thomas also owns land—and benefits from the labor of enslaved people—in the Caribbean colony of Antigua. Fanny is miserable until her kind cousin Edmund Bertram takes her under his wing. Having secretly fallen in love with him, Fanny suffers severely when his head is turned by the captivating Mary Crawford. In the passage shown here, Edmund muses on Mary's moral character.

With *Mansfield Park*, Austen returned to publishing on commission. This edition, the novel's first, included approximately 1,250 copies and sold out within six months, earning her £320.

**Jane Austen (1775–1817)**

***Mansfield Park*, 3 vols.**

**London: printed for T. Egerton, 1814**

The Morgan Library & Museum, bequest of Gordon N. Ray, 1987;

PML 130103–5

# **AMUSING A YOUNG NIECE**

Jane Austen retained her playful spirit even as her health declined, as can be seen in this remarkable letter devised for the enjoyment of her eight-year-old niece, Cassy, the eldest daughter of her younger brother, Charles. To aid Cassy in reading each backward word, Jane wrote in print, not script, and formed larger letters than she was accustomed to when writing to adults. It is easy to imagine how excited Cassy would have been to receive such a puzzle from her beloved aunt.

**Jane Austen (1775–1817)**

**Autograph letter to her niece Cassandra Austen,  
Notwahc [Chawton], January 8, [1817]**

The Morgan Library & Museum, purchased by J. P. Morgan Jr., 1925;  
MA 1034.6

## “ONLY A NOVEL”

Published together in a four-volume set, *Northanger Abbey* and *Persuasion* are an odd pair. Responding to the popularity of Gothic thrillers in the 1790s, when Austen first drafted it, *Northanger Abbey* brims with youthful energy and broad humor. In this well-known passage, the narrator proclaims the greatness of the novel as a literary genre, praising titles by Frances Burney and Maria Edgeworth.

In *Persuasion*, composed in Austen’s last years of life, Anne Elliot courageously turns away from her titled, self-absorbed family and toward the warmhearted, brave men and women of the British Navy. Among them are Captain Frederick Wentworth, Anne’s former fiancé, with whom she has remained in love, and his friend Captain Harville. To the latter, Anne gently but firmly asserts here that women’s accounts of their own experiences ought to be respected more than men’s declarations about women.

A prefatory, unsigned “Biographical Notice of the Author,” written by Henry Austen, identified Jane Austen by name for the first time, portraying her as a faultless Christian woman, devoid of literary ambition.

Publishing on commission, John Murray issued an estimated 1,750 copies. Cassandra, Jane’s literary executor, is believed to have earned £500 from this edition. These volumes are in the publisher’s original bindings (“boards”).

**Jane Austen (1775–1817)**

***Northanger Abbey* and *Persuasion*, vols. 1, 3, and 4**

**London: John Murray, 1818**

The Morgan Library & Museum, purchased by J. P. Morgan Jr., 1928;

PML 25488 and PML 25490–91

# PERSONAL ELEGANCE

This sumptuous silk pelisse, which features a pattern of gold oak leaves on a brown ground, conveys Austen's stylishness and physical stature. Elements of the garment's design date it to circa 1812–14. In those years, thanks to the earnings from her novels, Austen could afford to purchase the expensive fabric and employ a professional to stitch it.

In 1993 family descendants donated the original pelisse to what is now the Hampshire Cultural Trust. The textile and fashion historian Hilary Davidson devised the pattern for this replica and sewed it by hand. Based on the pelisse's measurements, Davidson estimates that Austen was between 5'6" and 5'8" tall. The accompanying video shows the construction of the garment and how it moves when worn.

## **Jane Austen's silk pelisse**

### **Reconstruction created by Hilary Davidson, 2018**

Jane Austen's House, Chawton

## **3-D reconstruction of Jane Austen's pelisse, 2025**

Produced by Hilary Davidson and Larissa Shirley King, Fashion Institute of Technology, New York

## AN ICONIC RING

This lovely, unostentatious gold and turquoise ring was made between 1760 and 1780. By tradition, turquoise is the birthstone for December, Jane Austen's birth month, though whether she bought the ring or received it as a gift is not known. In 1820 Cassandra gave it to Henry's second wife, Eleanor, as an engagement present. Family descendants put the ring up for auction in 2012, and Kelly Clarkson of *American Idol* fame made the winning bid of £152,450. After concern arose about an artifact of such significance leaving Britain, a temporary export ban was placed, and Clarkson graciously relinquished her purchase. A fundraising campaign enabled Jane Austen's House to secure the ring, which the museum has displayed ever since.

**Jane Austen's ring, ca. 1760–80**

**Gold and turquoise**

Jane Austen's House, Chawton; CHWJA:JAH356

# SPOOFING LITERARY CLICHÉS

Readers often confidently tell novelists what they should write about next. Austen made brilliant artistic use of such suggestions by weaving them into the summary of an over-the-top story in which a virtuous but dull heroine and her father, a garrulous clergyman, endure “a striking variety of adventures” as they careen through Europe, ending up in Kamchatka, Russia. The irreverent tone, rollicking plot, and nonsensical juxtapositions all recall Austen’s teenage writings. Strongly implied, however, is the serious artistic purpose she brought to her published novels, which rely on none of the commonplaces and absurdities present here.

**Jane Austen (1775–1817)**

***Plan of a novel, according to hints from various quarters***

**Autograph manuscript, ca. 1815**

The Morgan Library & Museum, purchased by J. P. Morgan Jr., 1925;  
MA 1034.1

## **“SHE WAS THE SUN OF MY LIFE”**

Jane Austen died in Cassandra’s arms on July 18, 1817. She was forty-one years old. To their niece Fanny, Cassandra recounted her sister’s last days and hours and gave eloquent voice to her grief: “I have lost a treasure, such a Sister, such a friend as never can have been surpassed,—She was the sun of my life, the gilder of every pleasure, the soother of every sorrow, I had not a thought concealed from her, & it is as if I lost a part of myself.” Cassandra found consolation in her certainty that her sister would be accepted into heaven, and she appreciated, too, that Jane was to be buried in Winchester Cathedral, “a Building she admird so much.”

**Cassandra Austen (1773–1845)**

**Autograph letter to Fanny Knight, Winchester, [July 20, 1817]**

The Morgan Library & Museum, bequest of Alberta H. Burke, 1975;  
MA 2911.10





# **“THE EXTRAORDINARY ENDOWMENTS OF HER MIND”**

Jane Austen was buried in historic Winchester Cathedral, near the house where she died on July 18, 1817, at age forty-one. Although the distinguished location honors her authorship, her gravestone makes no mention of her publications, only of “the extraordinary endowments of her mind.” The epitaph’s emphasis on Jane’s family attachments and Christian virtues matches Henry’s portrayal of her in his “Biographical Notice,” prefaced to *Northanger Abbey* and *Persuasion*. Her grave became the site of literary pilgrimage in the mid-nineteenth century and remains one today. A brass wall plaque added in 1872 identifies her as “known to many by her writings.”

## **Jane Austen’s gravestone at Winchester Cathedral**

Photo: David Gee 4 / Alamy Stock Photo

## EARLY READERS IN NORTH AMERICA

Unbeknownst to Jane Austen, *Emma* reached an appreciative audience in North America during her lifetime. Reunited here are four of the six known surviving copies of the 1816 Philadelphia edition, each of which bears marks from its owners and readers. A new generation of Americans encountered all of Austen's novels thanks to the edition published in 1832–33 in Philadelphia. Among its readers was the Quincy family of Massachusetts, who made Francis Austen, Jane's oldest surviving brother, aware of their enthusiasm. In the late nineteenth century, Austen's readership was broadened through the efforts of two American men of letters. Oscar Fay Adams, in his 1891 biography, rejected the myth of Austen as a loveless spinster uninterested in fame, presenting her instead as a joyful, determined artist whose family bonds sustained her. William Dean Howells, the eminent novelist and editor, asserted Austen's literary greatness in essays written for an unlikely venue: the women's magazine *Harper's Bazar*. Howells's love for Austen's writings was shared with his entire family, especially his daughter Mildred, a poet and visual artist.

## A CURIOUS AND CAREFUL READER

Jeremiah Smith (1759–1842), a Harvard graduate, served as chief justice of New Hampshire and, briefly, as its governor. In his copy of *Emma*, Smith noted the date of its purchase and facts that he later gleaned about Austen. He subsequently bought imported copies of *Sense and Sensibility*, *Pride and Prejudice*, and *Mansfield Park*. The publisher Mathew Carey aimed to reprint the exact text of John Murray's edition of *Emma*. But Carey's printers—Justice & Cox, of Trenton, New Jersey—were less than careful in their typesetting, resulting in several glaring errors. Smith confidently corrected in ink every misspelling that he noticed. Evidently, the word “imaginist,” which Austen coined to commend Emma Woodhouse's powers of imagination, seemed wrong to Smith, who changed it to “imaginast.”

**Jane Austen (1775–1817)**

***Emma*, 2 vols.**

**Philadelphia: M. Carey, 1816**

Dartmouth Libraries, Hanover, New Hampshire; Smith J PZ3 .A93



Left: Francis Alexander (1800–1880), *Jeremiah Smith*, 1835. Oil on canvas. Hood Museum of Art, Dartmouth College, Hanover, New Hampshire; P.836.4.

Right: John Neagle (1796–1865), *Mathew Carey*, 1825. Oil on canvas. Library Company of Philadelphia; OBJ 845.

## MARKETING *EMMA* IN THE USA

After emigrating from Dublin in 1784, Mathew Carey (1760–1839) became a leading publisher in the young United States. In addition to printing works by American authors, he produced unauthorized reprints of books published in London and elsewhere. This was an entirely legal endeavor, however, as international copyright law did not yet exist. Carey's edition of *Emma* sold for \$2 in boards (publisher's binding), half the price of copies imported from London. This advertisement for *Emma*, prominently placed on the first page of the catalogue Carey sent to booksellers in other cities, includes positive reviews from Britain. The uncredited *Quarterly Review* blurb was written by Walter Scott.

***The Monthly Literary Advertiser*, no. 17**

**Philadelphia: January 1817**

American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, Massachusetts

## UNIMPRESSED BY *EMMA*

The condition of this copy shows the effects of heavy use by patrons of a circulating library. Visible beneath the half-torn-off title page is a portion of the dedication page—"By His Royal Highness's Dutiful"—and the novel's first few pages. Penciled annotations appear in both volumes, by at least two readers. "I expect Emma is going to marry Mr. Knightly," wrote one sage observer after the two characters dance together. "How disagreeable Mrs Elton is," another comment reads. "I wonder who likes this book," someone scrawled. The final page of the novel offers the richest responses, some barely legible, with characters' names listed opposite pithy descriptors.

**Jane Austen (1775–1817)**

***Emma*, 2 vols.**

**Philadelphia: M. Carey, 1816**

New York Society Library; Ham A933 E5

# A READER'S ANNOTATIONS ON THE LAST PAGE OF *EMMA*

Mr. Knightley \_\_\_\_\_ tolerable  
Emma \_\_\_\_\_ intolerable  
Harriet \_\_\_\_\_ very pleasant  
Frank \_\_\_\_\_ delightful  
Jane \_\_\_\_\_ enchanting  
Woodhouse \_\_\_\_\_ grouty [meaning ill-tempered]  
Miss Bates \_\_\_\_\_ Full of Gab  
El[ton] \_\_\_\_\_ d—d [damned] sneak  
[Mrs. Elton?] \_\_\_\_\_ vulgar woman

## AN ACCOMPLISHED WOMAN

E. I. du Pont's eldest two daughters were painted by the American portraitist Rembrandt Peale in 1813, the year that *Pride and Prejudice* was published. Evelina Gabrielle du Pont (1796–1863) faces the viewer with a confident gaze, perhaps on the verge of a smile. The book in her hand identifies her as a reader, a fact amply borne out by her correspondence. Letters between Evelina and her elder sister Victorine are full of comments about their current reading, though unfortunately no explicit mention of *Emma* has been found.

**Rembrandt Peale (1778–1860)**

***Evelina Gabrielle du Pont, 1813***

**Oil on canvas**

Hagley Museum and Library, Wilmington, Delaware; 2020.7





Rembrandt Peale (1778–1860), *Victorine du Pont Bauduy*, 1813. Oil on canvas. Winterthur Museum, Garden & Library, Delaware; 1916.0709.

## FROM A BUSINESSMAN'S FAMILY LIBRARY

The elegant signature in this copy of *Emma* is that of Eleuthère Irénée du Pont (1771–1834), the founder of E. I. du Pont de Nemours and Company, the forerunner of the international conglomerate known as DuPont. Together with his father and elder brother, who emigrated with him from France to Delaware's Brandywine Valley, du Pont formed a family library of more than two thousand titles, including dozens of novels in both French and English. The latter were most likely read by his eight children rather than by him, since he was less than fully fluent in English. Acquainted with Mathew Carey as a fellow businessman in the Wilmington–Philadelphia area, du Pont acquired many titles published by Carey's firm.

**Jane Austen (1775–1817)**

***Emma*, 2 vols.**

**Philadelphia: M. Carey, 1816**

Winterthur Museum, Garden & Library, Delaware; PR4030 E54 S

# INTERRUPTING THE READERS

Sophie Madeleine du Pont, E. I.'s youngest daughter, created a captivating series of “carics”—caricatures—showing activities familiar from Austen’s life and novels: sketching, writing, embroidery, piano playing, dancing, amateur theatricals, and, of course, reading. On the facing page, Sophie identified her sister Victorine (“Vic”) as seated on the left, with Sophie herself (“Soph”) on the right; in the middle is their sister Eleuthera (“Tata”). Margaretta (“Meta”), another cousin, enters, saying, “Well upon my word! this is very entertaining. I wish I had brought my book too!”

**Sophie Madeleine du Pont (1810–1888)**

***The Pleasures of Society*, 1827**

**Ink and watercolor**

Hagley Museum and Library, Wilmington, Delaware;  
Sophie Madeleine du Pont Papers

“Lady Dalhousie, formerly Miss Brown of Coalstoun, is an amiable, intelligent, and lively woman . . .”

Walter Scott, journal entry, March 30, 1829

## A STORIED COPY

The first owner of this copy signed her name, C. B. Dalhousie, vertically on the title page and placed her book label on the inside front cover.

A later owner, curious about her identity, jotted notes in pencil:

“Countess of D. wife of the 9th Earl (1770–1838), who was Governor of Canada, Nova Scotia, etc. 1814–1828.”

The volumes’ third and fourth owners, the American collectors Frank J. Hogan and Alberta H. Burke, added their bookplates.

Born Christian Broun, Lady Dalhousie (1786–1839) accompanied her husband, George Ramsay, to his government postings in North America and India. An avid reader and the mother of three sons, she is best remembered as an expert collector of botanical specimens.

**Jane Austen (1775–1817)**

***Emma*, 2 vols.**

**Philadelphia: M. Carey, 1816**

Goucher College Special Collections & Archives, Rare Book Collection



*Explore a digital facsimile of Lady Dalhousie’s Emma at [emmainamerica.org](http://emmainamerica.org) or by scanning this QR code.*

## A NOTABLE OWNER

This letter reveals that the man who penciled notes in Lady Dalhousie's copy of *Emma* was Siegfried Sassoon, the celebrated First World War poet. His correspondent was Percy Muir, a prominent book dealer. The rediscovery of an American edition of Austen printed during the author's lifetime was major news for book historians and collectors. As Sassoon remarked in parentheses, Geoffrey Keynes—whose own Austen collection formed the basis of his 1929 reference work *Jane Austen: A Bibliography*—was “livid” to be denied the opportunity to publish the first description of Carey's edition of *Emma*.

**Siegfried Sassoon (1886–1967)**

**Autograph letter to Percy H. Muir, December 3, 1941**

Goucher College Special Collections & Archives,  
Alberta H. and Henry G. Burke Collection





Glyn Philpot (1884–1937), *Siegfried Sassoon*, 1917. Oil on canvas.  
The Fitzwilliam Museum, University of Cambridge; 1121.  
Photo: © The Fitzwilliam Museum, University of Cambridge.

## IN THE BALLROOM

Though unsigned, these charming watercolors, painted in Halifax, Nova Scotia, around 1819, unmistakably depict Lady Dalhousie and her husband receiving their guests at a ball, likely held at Government House, their official residence. The artworks showcase Lady Dalhousie's acute powers of observation and sense of humor, qualities that she shared with Austen. Lord Dalhousie recorded thoughts about a similar occasion in his 1816 diary: "Last night Lady D. gave a Ball to the better class of the society. About 200 people came to it, not powerful in either beauty or good dancing, but on the whole it showed a very good set of people, very much inclined to be pleased, at same time extremely civil & attentive."

**Attributed to Christian Ramsay, Countess of Dalhousie  
(1786–1839)**

**Self-portrait at a ball, ca. 1819**

**Lord Dalhousie at a ball, ca. 1819**

**Graphite and watercolor**

Nova Scotia Museum, Cultural History Collection; 85.119.32D and 85.119.32A





William Douglas (1780–1832), *Christian Broun of Colstoun with Her 3rd Son, the Hon. James Ramsay*, 1816 (detail); *George, 9th Earl of Dalhousie with His Dogs Basto and Yarrow*, ca. 1816 (detail). Graphite and watercolor. Colstoun Arts and Ludovic Broun-Lindsay. Photos: The Art of Print.

“I satisfied one of my many heart’s-desires last week, when, after years of yearning I got a 1st Am. ed of P&P. called Elizabeth Bennet . . .”

Alberta H. Burke to Averil G. Hassall, March 16, 1962

# AUSTEN FOR A NEW GENERATION

In the 1830s Henry Carey (Mathew's son) and his business partners reissued all six of Austen's novels. It is not known why they retitled *Pride and Prejudice* as *Elizabeth Bennet*, nor why that title page, unlike the others, omits Austen's name. Here, an 1833 *Northanger Abbey*, still in the original publisher's binding, is open to a page advertising the firm's publications. Pragmatically, an early owner of this 1833 *Emma* had the two volumes bound into one.

Carey, Lea and Blanchard subsequently printed Austen's collected works as a two-volume set, with tiny type formatted into two columns, and as an even less readable one-volume compendium. Paperback editions of *Elizabeth Bennet* and *Mansfield Park*, priced at just twenty-five cents, followed as well.

**Jane Austen (1775–1817)**

***Elizabeth Bennet, or Pride and Prejudice, 2 vols.***

**Philadelphia: Carey & Lea, 1832**



***Emma***

**Philadelphia: Carey, Lea and Blanchard, 1833**

***Northanger Abbey, vol. 1***

**Philadelphia: Carey & Lea, 1833**



## AMERICAN FANS CONTACT AN AUSTEN BROTHER

In April 1833 the family of Josiah Quincy, then president of Harvard, read *Persuasion* out loud and, on finishing it, felt they “could not bear to part with Anne Elliot & Capt. Wentworth,” as the youngest daughter, Anna, recorded in her diary. In 1852 Anna’s elder sister Eliza Susan sent Francis Austen a fan letter and requested Jane’s autograph. Francis, grateful to hear of her appreciation for his late sister’s works and “to learn that their celebrity had reached across the Atlantic,” generously sent an entire letter Jane wrote to Martha Lloyd in 1800: the first Austen manuscript in North America. Eliza Susan responded ecstatically: “A great sensation was excited in our family circle by the acquisition of a letter actually written and folded by Jane Austen!” In 1856 Anna visited Francis and his family at their home outside Portsmouth: the only meeting to take place between a sibling of Austen’s and an American reader. The second edition of James Edward Austen-Leigh’s *A Memoir of Jane Austen*, displayed below, included the text of Eliza Susan’s earliest letter to Francis under the heading “Opinion of American readers.”

On wall:

**Francis Austen (1774–1865)**

**Autograph letter to Eliza Susan Quincy, Portsmouth,  
January 31, 1852**

Massachusetts Historical Society, Quincy Family Papers

**Jane Austen (1775–1817)**

**Autograph letter to Martha Lloyd, Steventon,  
November 12–13, 1800**

Massachusetts Historical Society, Quincy Family Papers

In case:

**James Edward Austen-Leigh (1798–1874)**

*A Memoir of Jane Austen*

**London: Richard Bentley and Son, 1871**

The Morgan Library & Museum, bequest of Gordon N. Ray, 1987; PML 130123

**EXCERPT FROM  
FRANCIS AUSTEN'S LETTER  
TO ELIZA SUSAN QUINCY,  
JANUARY 31, 1852**

“Of the liveliness of her imagination and playfulness of her fancy, as also of the truthfulness of her description of character and deep knowledge of the human mind, there are sufficient evidence in her works; and it has been a matter of surprise to those who knew her best, how she could at a very early age and with apparently limited means of observation, have been capable of nicely discriminating and portraying such varieties of the human character as are introduced in her works.—In her temper she was chearful and not easily irritated, and tho’ rather reserved to strangers so as to have been by some accused of haughtiness of manner, yet in company of those she loved the native benevolence of her heart and kindness of her disposition were forcibly displayed. On such occasions she was a most agreeable companion and by the lively sallies of her Wit and good-humoured drollery seldom failed of exciting the mirth and hilarity of the party. She was fond of children and a favorite with them. Her Nephews and Nieces of whom there were many could not have a greater treat than crouding round and listening to Aunt Jane’s stories.”

## TREASURING AN AUSTEN SIGNATURE

Below this Austen autograph, evidently cut from the end of a letter, the English novelist Catherine Hutton (1756–1846) recorded its provenance and transcribed a portion of “a short Memoir of Jane Austen, written, I have no doubt, by her brother, Sir F. Austen.” This brief biographical account, which cannot confidently be attributed to Francis Austen, repeats familiar Jane Austen myths, including that she “wrote for her own amusement, without an eye to either fame or profit.” Hutton concluded her transcription with a poignant reflection of her own: “I am inferior to Jane Austen in person, manners, and talents; but when she makes one of her characters speak her own mind, as she frequently does, I am delighted to think that I bear some resemblance to her.”

**Jane Austen’s signature cut from a letter dated February 17,  
with annotations by Catherine Hutton, 1841**

Edith Lank Family Collection

# MAKEOVERS FOR AUSTEN

The watercolor of Jane Austen by her sister, Cassandra, which is reproduced outside this gallery, is the only known portrait of her face drawn from life. Because family members disliked it, they commissioned a new portrait in 1869 from the artist James Andrews for inclusion in James Edward Austen-Leigh's biography *A Memoir of Jane Austen* (1870). Neither Andrews nor the steel engraver, William Home Lizars, was credited in the *Memoir* or on separate prints. Lizars's engraving has since been adapted by others. An anonymous artist, working in watercolor on ivory, materials commonly used for miniature portraits during Austen's lifetime, referenced Lizars's image but reversed the sitter's position and added color.

Another steel engraving by an uncredited artist was included in volume one of Evert A. Duyckinck's *Portrait Gallery of Eminent Men and Women of Europe and America* (1873), where Austen wears, surprisingly, a wedding ring. For an 1893 article, the American wood engraver M. Lamont Brown further reinvented Austen, complete with clearly visible nipples. In 2017 the Bank of England put the Lizars portrait on the £10 note.





James Andrews (1807–1875),  
*Jane Austen*, 1869. Watercolor  
and gouache over graphite.  
Photo: Sotheby's.



A £10 note featuring a likeness of Jane Austen, 2017. Collection of  
Juliette Wells. © All rights reserved by Bank of England.

**Anonymous, British school**

**Miniature portrait of Jane Austen, ca. 1870–90**

**Watercolor on ivory**

The Morgan Library & Museum; AZ078

**William Home Lizars (1788–1859),  
after James Andrews (1807–1875)**

***Jane Austen***

**Steel engraving**

**London: Richard Bentley, 1870**

The Morgan Library & Museum, purchased by J. P. Morgan Jr., 1925;  
MA 1034.12

***J. Austen: after an original family portrait***

**Steel engraving**

**[New York: 1873]**

The Morgan Library & Museum, purchased by J. P. Morgan Jr., 1920;  
MA 977.43

**M. Lamont Brown**

**Portrait of Jane Austen**

**Wood engraving from Oscar Fay Adams,**

**“In the Footsteps of Jane Austen,”**

***The New England Magazine* 8, no. 5, July 1893**

Collection of Juliette Wells

# OMITTING AUSTEN'S BROTHER GEORGE

Lord Brabourne, the elder son of Austen's niece Fanny, published in 1884 the earliest collection of the author's letters, prefaced by his own biographical portrait of her. This copy was owned and annotated by two great-nieces of Austen's, sisters Fanny Caroline Lefroy and Louisa Lefroy Bellas. It is open to a telling insertion: Fanny Caroline's list of Rev. Austen's children, which omits his son with disabilities, George. Other notes concern Austen's love life. Of Harris Bigg-Wither's marriage proposal in 1802, Fanny Caroline observed that Austen, "swayed by the wishes of some of her own family & by her warm regard for some of his, was nearly persuaded to accept the offer of a gentleman who had everything to recommend him but her own feelings."

**Edward Knatchbull-Hugessen, Lord Brabourne (1829–1893)**

***Letters of Jane Austen*, vol. 1**

**London: Richard Bentley & Son, 1884**

Edith Lank Family Collection

## A LANDMARK BIOGRAPHY

The first biographer of Austen to conduct eyewitness research, synthesize prior accounts of her life, and offer fresh critical insights into her works was an American, Oscar Fay Adams. Adams visited England in the summer of 1889 to view for himself the places familiar to Austen. As a mark of trust, family descendants granted him unprecedented access to artifacts and buildings. His descriptions of what he saw constitute a valuable record of Chawton Cottage and other places of importance to literary pilgrims. The second, 1897 edition of *The Story of Jane Austen's Life* included the earliest published photographs of sites associated with Austen's life and works, as well as the first reproduction of a portrait said by the family to depict the teenage Jane Austen.

**Oscar Fay Adams (185a–1919)**

***The Story of Jane Austen's Life***

**Boston: Lee and Shepard, 1897**

Goucher College Special Collections  
& Archives, Rare Book Collection

Collection of Juliette Wells



Portrait of Oscar Fay Adams from *The Cosmopolitan*, 1890.  
Collection of Juliette Wells.



## ALL IN THE FAMILY

William Dean Howells (1837–1920) proclaimed Austen's greatness far and wide in his editor's columns for *The Atlantic Monthly*. Having first read Austen in midlife, he shared his enthusiasm with his entire family, much as the Quincys did in the mid-nineteenth century. Mildred Howells (1873–1966), a poet and visual artist, traveled with her father to England in 1904. Their Austen-inspired tourism to Bath and Winchester subsequently featured in Howells's columns and books.

**Augustus Saint-Gaudens (1848–1907)**

***Mildred and William Dean Howells, 1898***

**Bronze relief**

National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC,  
transfer from the National Gallery of Art, gift of Mildred Howells, 1949;  
NPG 65.65

# TRACES OF A WOMAN READER

Intended for a book of poems that was never published, this pen-and-ink illustration depicts a woman engrossed in her reading, and the figure unmistakably resembles the artist. Though Mildred Howells did not illustrate Austen's novels, several drawings that she produced for a 1902 "Whist Calendar" evoke scenes from Austen's fiction. This image shows a man whose attention is diverted by a beautiful harpist, much as Mary Crawford enthralls Edmund Bertram in *Mansfield Park*.

**Mildred Howells (1872–1966)**

***Lines Upon Reading a Garden Annual*, undated**

**Pen and ink**

Houghton Library, Harvard University; Howells Family Papers,  
MS Am 1784.10 (17)



Mildred Howells (1872–1966), Illustration for *Whist Calendar*, 1902.  
[Boston]: Noyes, Platt & Company, 1901. Photo: Potter & Potter Auctions.

# AUSTEN THROUGH AMERICAN EYES

Writing for the women's magazine *Harper's Bazar*, William Dean Howells focused on Austen in three (out of forty) essays titled "Heroines of Nineteenth-Century Fiction." Published as a book, *Heroines of Fiction*, in 1901, Howells's overview of English fiction was acclaimed by reviewers, though it was later all but forgotten.

The *Bazar* commissioned the leading commercial artists of the day to illustrate Howells's essays. Rosina Sherwood's depictions of Anne Elliot of *Persuasion* and Catherine Morland of *Northanger Abbey* are especially affecting. Less so, perhaps, is Howard Chandler Christy's rendering of Emma Woodhouse as a haughty woman with clothing that uneasily bridges the Regency and the Gilded Age. Arthur I. Keller contributed yet another variation on Lizars's portrait of Austen, placing her at a harpsichord rather than in the chair in which Cassandra originally portrayed her.

## William Dean Howells (1837–1920)

**"Heroines of Nineteenth-Century Fiction" in *Harper's Bazar*,  
June 23 and 30, 1900**

***Heroines of Fiction*, vol. 1**

**New York: Harper and Brothers, 1901**

Collection of Juliette Wells



Rosina Emmet Sherwood (1854–1958), Illustration of Catherine Morland in *Northanger Abbey*, 1900. Collection of Juliette Wells.

## A SYMPATHETIC EYE

In the 1890s advances in printing enabled publishers to reissue Austen's novels with dozens of illustrations. Among the most enduringly popular are those of Chris Hammond, an English artist who used a gender-neutral form of her first name professionally. These pen-and-ink drawings demonstrate how Hammond treated with care not only major scenes and characters but also those only briefly mentioned, including servants.

**Christiana M. Demain Hammond (1860–1900)**

**Illustrations for *Sense and Sensibility*, ca. 1899, left to right:**

**“She was scarcely able to stand”**

**“She had actually made her own woman inquire of  
Mr Willoughby’s groom”**

**“She was almost ready to cry out, ‘Lord! what should hinder it’”**

**“In the disappointed hopes of her dairymaid—. She found fresh sources  
of merriment”**

**Pen and ink on bristol board**

The Morgan Library & Museum, bequest of Alberta H. Burke;  
1975.61:1–2 and 1975.61:5–6



## **ALBERTA H. BURKE, COLLECTOR AND BENEFACTOR**

Alberta Hirshheimer, whose love of Austen found its outlet in knowledgeable collecting, was born in 1906 in La Crosse, Wisconsin, to a book-loving family of German Jewish heritage. Her passion project of building what she termed an “Austen archive” was actively supported by her husband, Henry Gershon Burke, né Berkowitz, an estate lawyer and fellow bibliophile.

With a limited budget for collecting, Alberta relied on her considerable expertise when selecting items to purchase. Her timing was fortunate: First editions of Austen’s novels were still quite affordable in the mid-twentieth century, as were Austen letters in manuscript. Yet Alberta’s interests went well beyond such conventionally prized material, encompassing translations of Austen’s novels and ephemera documenting her presence in popular culture.

Upon her death in 1975, Alberta bequeathed her Austen manuscripts and period artworks on paper to the Morgan and the rest of her distinguished collection to her alma mater, Goucher College in Baltimore. In 1979 Henry Burke cofounded the Jane Austen Society of North America.

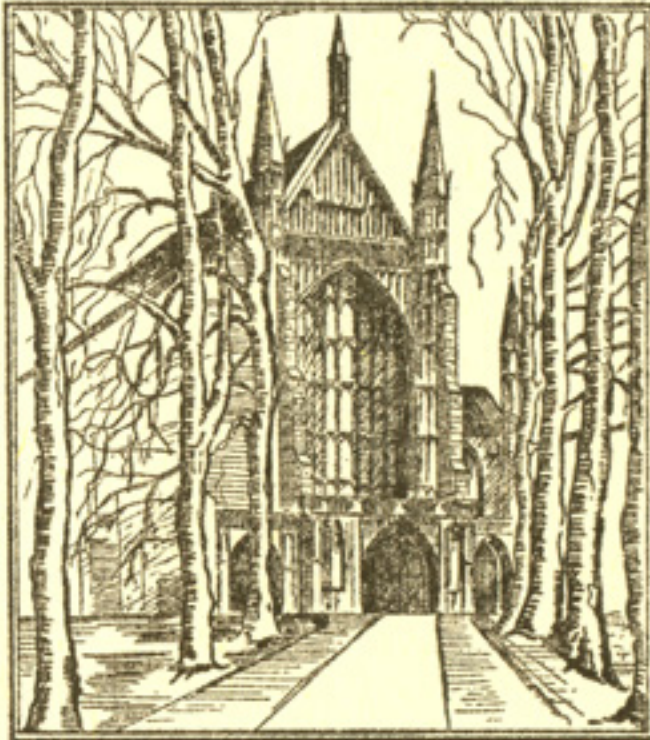




Alberta Burke at the house where Jane Austen died, College Street, Winchester, 1952. Goucher College Special Collections & Archives, Alberta H. and Henry G. Burke Collection.



ALBERTA·H·BURKE



1  
7  
7  
5

"JANE LIES AT WINCHESTER  
BLESSED BE HER SHADE"  
—RUDYARD KIPLING

1  
8  
1  
7

Alberta Burke's custom bookplate for her Jane Austen collection.  
Goucher College Special Collections & Archives, Alberta H. and  
Henry G. Burke Collection.

“The J.A. collection is the perpetual pleasure of my life. I have bought each thing because I felt I could not live without it, and because Jane Austen is ‘St. Jane’ in my private hagiology.”

Alberta H. Burke to Percy H. Muir,  
May 21, 1948

# IN AUSTEN'S FOOTSTEPS

Alberta and Henry Burke traveled to England for the first time in 1935. Snapshots from Winchester show the cathedral where Austen is buried, as well as the house where she died. In London the couple were drawn to antiquarian bookshops, as Henry later recalled: "On our first walk, we discovered Marks & Co. at 84 Charing Cross Road. We walked in and began asking about some of the Jane Austen bibliographical items we carried in our heads. We were also attracted to the beautiful color plate books and topographical items published in the Jane Austen period." In 1937 the Burkes returned to England and visited Bath. Alberta posed at 4 Sydney Place, the house rented by the Austens when they arrived in the city in 1801.

## **Photographs of the Burkes' travels to Winchester and Bath, 1935 and 1937**

Goucher College Special Collections & Archives,  
Alberta H. and Henry G. Burke Collection



## A COLLECTOR'S "BIBLE"

Alberta Burke taught herself about Austen's publishing history using Geoffrey Keynes's *Jane Austen: A Bibliography* (1929), the first reference work of its kind. Keynes, a renowned surgeon and the brother of the economist John Maynard Keynes, is also remembered for his bibliography of William Blake, which was likewise based on his own collection. As can be seen here, Alberta corrected and updated Keynes's entries as her expertise, and her collection, grew. Beginning in the 1960s she corresponded enthusiastically with David J. Gilson, an English librarian who was working toward a new, much more comprehensive Austen bibliography. Alberta did not live to see its publication in 1982.

**Geoffrey Keynes (1887–1982)**

***Jane Austen: A Bibliography***

**London: printed for the Nonesuch Press, 1929**

Goucher College Special Collections & Archives,  
Alberta H. and Henry G. Burke Collection



# CATALOGUING HER COLLECTION

These three cards describe items from Alberta Burke's collection that are included in this exhibition: Lady Dalhousie's copy of *Emma*, the first American printing of *Northanger Abbey*, and a 1956 Spanish translation of *Pride and Prejudice*. Though Alberta had no formal training in library science, she nevertheless kept meticulous records—a practice that she began in 1937 while she was bedridden for months with an arm infection:

I typed the cards one-fingered, one handed with the typewriter on my breakfast tray, & though the quantity has since expanded to 3 file boxes, I've never re-done those uPsiDe Down RaGGEd-looking ones which gave me so much pleasure 24 years ago! Besides, neatness, except in my clothes, has never been a strong point with me.

**Alberta H. Burke (1906–1975)**

**Catalogue cards, various dates**

Goucher College Special Collections & Archives,  
Alberta H. and Henry G. Burke Collection



# VISUALIZING AUSTEN'S WORLD

Insights into Alberta Burke's philosophy and practice of collecting emerge from letters she wrote to her friend Averil Hassall, an Englishwoman whom the Burkes first met on their inaugural journey to England in 1935. Here, Alberta explained how the color-plate books in her collection aided her imagination: "I'm afraid that I have too much respect for a book 'as is' to extra-illustrate it, but what do you suppose my shelves of Ackermann's Repository, Microcosm, Hope's Furniture Design, Heideloff, etc are for but to do it mentally? I love pictures of anything which, by the most tenuous and remote associations I can drag into the Jane Austen orbit."

**Alberta H. Burke (1906–1975)**

**Autograph letter to Averil Hassall, February 14, 1961**

Goucher College Special Collections & Archives,  
Averil Hassall Collection

# THE EFFORT OF ELEGANCE

A lover of dress, Alberta Burke studied the history of fashion by attending exhibitions and collecting period prints, including this set by the celebrated caricaturist James Gillray. It presents a self-possessed woman, assisted by her lady's maid, progressing from the lacing of stays to the donning of a wig, to the completion of the ensemble with gloves and an opulent shawl. Unlike eighteenth-century satirists who treated a woman's dressing or undressing with prurience or disgust, Gillray matter-of-factly depicted the labor required to produce a beautiful effect. Each print rewards close scrutiny, as the accessories and ornaments surrounding the central figure evolve along with her.

**James Gillray (1756–1815)**

***Progress of the Toilet***

**Plate 1: *The Stays***

**Plate 2: *The Wig***

**Plate 3: *Dress Completed***

**Hand-colored etchings**

**London: H. Humphrey, February 26, 1810**

The Morgan Library & Museum, bequest of Alberta H. Burke, 1975;

MA 7282–4



# A PRIME ACQUISITION

The files Alberta Burke bequeathed to Goucher include documentation of her purchases of manuscripts and rare books, the most valuable of which she acquired in the 1940s. These three records pertain to the letter that Cassandra Austen wrote to Fanny Knight on July 20, 1817, describing Austen's death (displayed earlier). Although Henry Burke sent telegrams to British dealers and handled payments, Alberta decided which auction items to bid on and how much to offer for each. The bid that secured Cassandra's letter, £100, equates to approximately \$6,200 today. In recent years, sales prices for Jane Austen letters in manuscript have exceeded \$200,000.

**Henry G. Burke (1902–1989)**

**Copy of cable sent to Percy H. Muir, June 19, 1947**

**Percy H. Muir (1894–1979)**

**Letter to Henry G. Burke, June 23, 1947**

**Invoice from Elkin Mathews Ltd., June 23, 1947**

Goucher College Special Collections & Archives,  
Alberta H. and Henry G. Burke Collection





## A DRAMATIC GIFT

Only once did Alberta Burke speak publicly about her collection: at the July 1949 meeting of the Jane Austen Society in Chawton, when Jane Austen's House was first opened to visitors. T. Edward Carpenter, who had spearheaded the acquisition of Chawton Cottage and its transformation into a museum, complained at the meeting that key relics, including memorial locks of hair belonging to Austen and her father, had recently left England after being bought by Americans. Burke, who had purchased those very objects, was offended by the implication that Americans were unworthy of owning Austen treasures. She stood up, identified herself, and declared that she would donate the two locks of hair to the new museum. She preserved press coverage of the occasion in her scrapbook.

**Lock of Jane Austen's hair, 1817**

**Jane Austen's House, Chawton; CHWJA:JAH28**



**Alberta H. Burke (1906–1975)**

**Jane Austen scrapbook, 1948–52**

Goucher College Special Collections & Archives,  
Alberta H. and Henry G. Burke Collection



# MIDCENTURY MODERN AUSTEN

Averil Hassall, an English artist and art teacher who shared Alberta Burke's interest in all things Austen, made countless contributions to her friend's collection from the 1930s until Henry Burke's death in 1989. As gifts, Hassall handbound several articles on Austen into books, creating title pages in her beautiful calligraphy. Here, she rendered Alberta's initials and her own as overlapping monograms—AHB and AGH, respectively—and added a quick, vigorous sketch of a woman in a Regency dress, seated at a sloping writing desk. Who could this be but Jane Austen?

**Averil Hassall (1910–1997)**

**Sketch of Jane Austen, 1950**

**Pen and ink**

Goucher College Special Collections & Archives,  
Alberta H. and Henry G. Burke Collection



# ALBERTA BURKE AND THE MORGAN

Alberta Burke chose to bequeath her Austen manuscripts to the Morgan because the institution welcomed her even though she lacked an academic title. As she recounted in 1974, “30 or more years ago, a kindly curator let me examine all their J. A. mss., although I walked in from the street bearing no proper credentials (but I was wearing a mink coat!) I’ve never forgotten the gracious kindness.” Later, in 1950, the Burkes attended a lecture at the Morgan by R. W. Chapman, who prepared the first scholarly edition of Austen’s writings.

Just a few days after Alberta’s death on May 22, 1975, Henry Burke notified Charles Ryskamp, the Morgan’s director, of her bequest, inviting him to the couple’s apartment in Baltimore to receive the manuscripts. In his letter of thanks, Ryskamp described Alberta’s “extraordinary collection” as “built with love and annotated beyond most scholars’ dreams.” As Ryskamp promised, the Morgan’s 1975 exhibition celebrating the two hundredth anniversary of Austen’s birth paid tribute to Alberta Burke.

**Francena Harris Balch (1912–1998)**

**Letter to Alberta H. Burke, September 20, 1950**

**Charles Ryskamp (1928–2010)**

**Letter to Henry G. Burke, May 28, 1975**

Goucher College Special Collections & Archives, Alberta H. and Henry G. Burke Collection



## A VERY FREE TRANSLATION

In the 1810s the fame of the Swiss novelist Isabelle de Montolieu, the first translator of Austen into French, greatly exceeded Austen's. The title page of *Raison et sensibilité* proclaims that it has been freely translated—"traduit librement." Indeed, Montolieu rewrote the novel's ending, having Marianne Dashwood, renamed "Maria," marry her first love, the rakish Willoughby, rather than the dependable, much older Colonel Brandon. This copy, Montolieu's own, includes her corrections in ink to the printed text. Austen was unaware of this French translation, just as she did not know that *Emma* was reprinted in Philadelphia in 1816. Montolieu translated *Persuasion* as *La famille Elliot* in 1821.

**Jane Austen (1775–1817)**

***Raison et sensibilité*, 4 vols.**

**Translated by Isabelle de Montolieu (1751–1832)**

**Paris: Chez Arthus-Bertrand, 1815**

The Morgan Library & Museum, purchased on the Gordon N. Ray Fund, 2024;  
PML 199164.1–4

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# CAPTURING AUSTEN'S SPIRIT

The distinguished English wood engraver Joan Hassall, a relation by marriage of Alberta Burke's friend Averil Hassall, was commissioned by the Folio Society to illustrate Austen's novels for an edition published between 1957 and 1963. Alberta wrote to Averil that she appreciated Joan Hassall's images for their "style & elegance and non-mawkish period identification." In 1976, a year after Alberta's death, Averil sent Henry Burke this set of six wood engravings for inclusion in the collection Alberta had bequeathed to Goucher College.

## Joan Hassall (1906–1988)

**Illustrations of Jane Austen novels, ca. 1957–63, clockwise from upper left:**

**"Miss Crawford's Harp" (*Mansfield Park*)**

**"The saunter round Woodston" (*Northanger Abbey*)**

**"Ann [*sic*] Elliot and Captain Wentworth" (*Persuasion*)**

**"Captain Benwick runs for help" (*Persuasion*)**

**"Willoughby carries in Marianne" (*Sense and Sensibility*)**

**"Elinor meets Miss Steele in Kensington Gardens"  
(*Sense and Sensibility*)**

## Wood engravings

Goucher College Special Collections & Archives, Alberta H. and  
Henry G. Burke Collection



## BELONGING IN AUSTEN'S WORLD

Amy Sherald, who composes striking, dignified images of people of color, is best known as the official portraitist of Michelle Obama and for her posthumous portrait of Breonna Taylor. She is also among the many contemporary creators, from novelists to television showrunners, who are envisioning inclusive, inspiring takes on Austen. This young man, a model rather than a named portrait subject, confidently meets the viewer's gaze, his posture relaxed. Sherald's thought-provoking title is an excerpt from the famous opening sentence of *Pride and Prejudice*: "It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife."

**Amy Sherald (b. 1973)**

***A Single Man in Possession of a Good Fortune, 2019***

**Oil on canvas**

Collection of Lizbeth and George Krupp

# **PRIDE AND PREJUDICE AROUND THE GLOBE**

Alberta Burke sought out translations of Austen's novels long before others considered them worth preserving. Thanks to her bequest, Goucher College holds what is believed to be the world's largest collection of Austen translations. Most editions she acquired were paperbound, and their cover illustrations are quite often anachronistic. "Of course I cannot read all the languages in which I have J. A. translations!" Burke once remarked. "I can stab at a few, but the Finnish, Modern Greek, Hebrew and Japanese and Chinese, most of which were gifts from kind friends, are possessions, not useful tools."

**見偏与櫻傲 (*Ngou maan jyu pin gin*). Hong Kong, 1961**

***Gordost i predrasuda*. Belgrade: Rad, 1953**

***Stolthed og fordom*. Copenhagen: Hirschsprungs, 1952**

***Stolthed og fordom*. Vojens, Denmark: Spectators Girafbøger, 1962**

***De gezusters Bennet*. Amsterdam: L. J. Veen, ca. 1950s**

***Ylpeys ja ennakkoluulo*. Porvoo, Finland: Werner Söderström  
Osakeyhtiö, 1953**

***Orgueil et préjugés*. Brussels: Éditions LaBoétie, 1945**

***Orgueil et préjugés*. Paris: Fernand Hazan, 1948**

***Elisabeth und Darcy*. Berlin: Frundsberg, 1939**

***Stolz und vorurteil*. Wilhelmshaven, Germany: Hera Verlag, 1951**

**Περηφάνεια και Προκατάληψη (*Perephaneia kai prokatalepse*).  
[Greece: Ikaros, 1953]**

**גא'אבא ו-מישפאט קאדום (*Ga'avah u-mishpat kadum*). Tel Aviv: Mo'adon  
Ko'e Ma'ariv, 1984**

***Orgoglio e pregiudizio*. Milan: Editrice Boschi, 1957**

***Orgoglio e pregiudizio*. Milan: Fratelli Fabbri, 1959**

***Orgoglio e pregiudizio*. Milan: Editrice Piccoli, 1969**

***Orgulho e preconceito*. Rio de Janeiro: José Olympio, 1958**

***Orgulho e preconceito*. Rio de Janeiro: Editorial Bruguera, ca. 1961**

***Гордость и предубеждение (Gordost' i predubezhdenie)*. Moscow: Nauka, 1967**

***Gordost i predrasuda*. Belgrade: Knjiga za Svakoga, 1964**

***Más fuerte que el orgullo*. Barcelona: M. Arimany, Editor, 1944**

***Orgullo y prejuicio*. Barcelona: Editorial Juventud, 1956**

***Orgullo y prejuicio*. Buenos Aires: Editorial de Ediciones Selectas S.R.L., 1961**

***Orgullo y prejuicio*. Madrid: Iter Ediciones, 1970**

***Stolthet och fördom*. Uddevalla, Sweden: Forum, 1968**

Goucher College Special Collections & Archives, Rare Book Collection

