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THE CAMBRIDGE EDITION
OF THE WORKS OF
JANE AUSTEN
LATER MANUSCRIPTS

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THE CAMBRIDGE EDITION
OF THE WORKS OF

JANE AUSTEN

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and *University of Aberdeen*

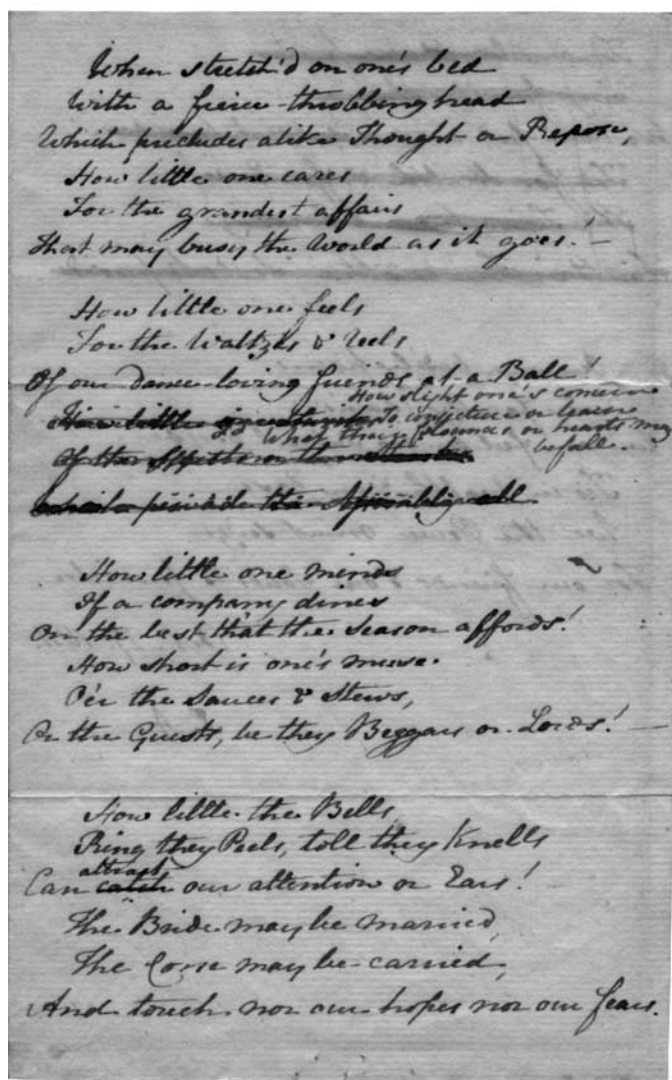
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Frontispiece: First manuscript page of Jane Austen's poem 'When stretch'd on one's bed'. See p. 253.

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JANE AUSTEN

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Edited by
Janet Todd and Linda Bree



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GENERAL EDITOR'S PREFACE

Jane Austen wrote to be read and reread. '[A]n artist cannot do anything slovenly,' she remarked to her sister Cassandra. Her subtle, crafted novels repay close and repeated attention to vocabulary, syntax and punctuation as much as to irony and allusion; yet the reader can take immediate and intense delight in their plots and characters. As a result Austen has a unique status among early English novelists – appreciated by the academy and the general public alike. What Henry Crawford remarks about Shakespeare in *Mansfield Park* has become equally true of its author: she 'is a part of an Englishman's constitution. [Her] thoughts and beauties are so spread abroad that one touches them every where, one is intimate with [her] by instinct.' This edition of the complete oeuvre of the published novels and manuscript works is testament to Austen's exceptional cultural and literary position. As well as attempting to establish an accurate and authoritative text, it provides a full contextual placing of the novels.

The editing of any canonical writer is a practice which has been guided by many conflicting ideologies. In the early twentieth century, editors, often working alone, largely agreed that they were producing definitive editions, although they used eclectic methods and often revised the text at will. Later in the century, fidelity to the author's creative intentions was paramount, and the emphasis switched to devising an edition that would as far as possible represent the final authorial wishes. By the 1980s, however, the pursuit of the single perfected text had given way to the recording of multiple intentions of equal interest. Authors were seen to have changed, revised or recanted, or indeed to have directed various

General Editor's preface

versions of their work towards different audiences. Consequently all states had validity and the text became a process rather than a fixed entity. With this approach came emphasis on the print culture in which the text appeared as well as on the social implications of authorship. Rather than being stages in the evolution of a single work, the various versions existed in their own right, all having something to tell.

The Cambridge edition describes fully Austen's early publishing history and provides details of composition, publication and publishers as well as printers and compositors where known. It accepts that many of the decisions concerning spelling, punctuation, capitalizing, italicizing and paragraphing may well have been the compositors' rather than Austen's but that others may represent the author's own chosen style. For the novels published in Jane Austen's lifetime the edition takes as its copytext the latest edition to which she might plausibly have made some contribution: that is, the first editions of *Pride and Prejudice* and *Emma* and the second editions of *Sense and Sensibility* and *Mansfield Park*. Where a second edition is used, all substantive and accidental changes between editions are shown on the page so that the reader can reconstruct the first edition, and the dominance of either first or second editions is avoided. For the two novels published posthumously together, *Northanger Abbey* and *Persuasion*, the copytext is the first published edition.

The two volumes devoted to manuscript writings divide the works between the three juvenile notebooks on the one hand and the remaining manuscript writings on the other. The juvenile notebooks and 'Lady Susan' have some resemblance to the published works, being fair copies and following some of the conventions of publishing. The other manuscript writings consist in part of fictional works in early drafts, burlesques and autograph and allo-graph copies of occasional verses and prayers. The possible dating of the manuscript works, as well as the method of editing, is considered in the introductions to the relevant volumes. Their features

General Editor's preface

as manuscripts have been respected and changes and erasures either reproduced or noted.

In all the volumes superscript numbers in the texts indicate end-notes. Throughout the edition we have provided full annotations to give clear and informative historical and cultural information to the modern reader while largely avoiding critical speculation; we have also indicated words which no longer have currency or have altered in meaning in some way. The introductions give information concerning the genesis and immediate public reception of the texts; they also indicate the most significant stylistic and generic features. A chronology of Austen's life appears in each volume. More information about the life, Austen's reading, her relationship to publication, the print history of the novels and their critical reception through the centuries, as well as the historical, political, intellectual and religious context in which she wrote, is available in *Jane Austen in Context*, which forms part of the edition.

Janet Todd

PREFACE

This volume contains all the known manuscript works of Jane Austen's adulthood, with the exception of the cancelled chapters of *Persuasion*, which are reproduced as an Appendix in the volume of *Persuasion* in the Cambridge edition. The manuscripts exist in many forms, and each is described in detail at the appropriate point in the volume. With the exception of 'Lady Susan' and some of the poems, none exists in a fair copy in Austen's hand. Some survive only in draft form, some in versions written down by others; some have come down to us in multiple forms. Because of the 'occasional' nature of the poems in particular, where they exist in more than one version we have chosen to reproduce the earliest complete text, while noting variants between this and any other versions in Austen's handwriting.

With the exception of the reading texts of 'The Watsons' and 'Sanditon' (see below) we have not changed Jane Austen's spelling, capitalization, paragraphing or punctuation; her idiosyncrasies and inconsistencies, which form part of the texture of her work, have been carefully preserved. We have however made no attempt to represent graphic features of the manuscripts, such as lines drawn above or below titles and chapter numbers. Jane Austen occasionally uses the long 's'; throughout we have regularized this to the modern 's'. Her use of quotation marks differs from modern usage; we have followed her various systems but, when opening or closing quotation marks have been accidentally omitted, they have been inserted.

Jane Austen's handwriting is generally clear and legible, but some ambiguities in the manuscripts cause difficulties in transcription.

Preface

Since her indentations are often extremely slight, it is not always clear where a new paragraph begins. Many initial letters of words fall somewhere between upper and lower case, while commas cannot always be distinguished from periods. In such cases we have used our best editorial judgement, taking into account Jane Austen's practice in other manuscripts. The inseting of 'Lady Susan' into larger pages has sometimes resulted in the extreme right hand margin of Austen's original manuscript being no longer visible; here, and on other occasions of obvious accidental omission, we have inserted missing letters within square brackets.

'The Watsons' and 'Sanditon', her two incomplete novels, both exist in what seems to be a first-draft state. As working documents, they are very revealing of Austen's creative process. We have therefore decided that, rather than drawing an 'authoritative' text from the manuscript, with textual notes describing the revisions, additions and deletions, we would offer a line-by-line transcription of the two manuscripts: these appear as Appendices A and B. With this method, while we cannot indicate whether revisions were made at the time of first writing or later (on which one can speculate only when examining the manuscript in its material state), we can show where Austen was having difficulty working and reworking a phrase or sentence, and where she was writing smoothly in response to her first thoughts.

Because of the presence of these line-by-line transcriptions we have chosen to present, in the main body of the volume, 'reading' versions of both texts, which have been discreetly edited to reflect basic publishing conventions of the early nineteenth century, as evidenced by Austen's own published works. Accordingly, we have made the following changes:

- inserted quotation marks around speeches, except where the older convention of using brackets to indicate the speaker is used;
- inserted a line-break before and after speech, except where the speeches seem designed to run on;
- added some paragraphing when a single paragraph seems much longer than is common in the published works, and the narrative

Preface

moves to a new subject; for 'Sanditon' we have usually followed the paragraph divisions suggested by Cassandra Austen in her fair copy of the manuscript made after Jane Austen's death;

-reduced Austen's heavy use of initial capital letters for nouns of all kinds;

-converted underlining into the usual printed equivalent of italics;

-normalized superscripts, so that 'M^{rs}' becomes 'Mrs.', etc.;

-expanded grammatical contractions, so that 'tho' becomes 'though', etc.;

-expanded contractions for dates, titles and names, so that 'Oct.' becomes 'October', 'Col.' becomes 'Colonel' (as it does in most, though not all, references in the published works), 'H.' becomes 'Heywood', etc.;

-corrected idiosyncratic or old-fashioned spellings which would have been caught in any publishing process, such as 'veiw', 'freind', 'neice', 'independant', 'chearful', 'agreable', 'bason'; where the spelling was acceptable in the nineteenth century, though obsolete now, for example with 'staid' for 'stayed', 'shew' for 'show', 'stile' for 'style', 'anle' (which appears in *Pride and Prejudice*) and Surry (in *Emma*), we have not adjusted it;

-adjusted punctuation where the text seems to require it for the sake of sense or common usage;

-harmonized Austen's inconsistent use of the apostrophe.

With one exception, we have not made consistent Austen's spelling of names, so that, just as in *Pride and Prejudice* the Bennets' aunt is either Phillips or Philips, here the keeper of the library in Sanditon remains variously Mrs. or Miss Whilby or Whitby. The exception is the spelling of Edwards/Edwardes in 'The Watsons', which we have represented throughout as Edwards, partly because of the need to expand the frequently used contraction 'E.'

Despite clear evidence that early nineteenth-century printing practice would have insisted on extensive adjustment, we have chosen to make very few changes in Austen's use of the dash. It is clear to us that the dash is so characteristic of her style, and so closely

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Preface

bound up with the rhythm of her prose, that removal, or substantial reduction, would risk changing the nature of the text in a way that could not be justified in a scholarly edition.

As far as all the changes are concerned, we have made them with caution. We strongly recommend that readers compare the resulting reading text with the line-by-line transcriptions, to reach a rounder sense both of Austen's creative process as shown in these two unfinished works, and of the relationship, more generally, between her manuscripts and her published novels.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Given the very varied nature of the contents of this volume, we have been grateful for the assistance of a large number of people.

Like all editors of scholarly editions, we are indebted to those who came before us – in this instance in working on, and presenting editions of, Jane Austen's manuscripts and related works. They include Christine Alexander, R. W. Chapman, Margaret Anne Doody, Margaret Drabble, Claudia L. Johnson, Vivien Jones, David Selwyn, Brian Southam and Kathryn Sutherland.

Thanks are due to the owners of the manuscripts we have consulted and reproduced, and the libraries within which they are held: Belinda Austen, the Bath and N. E. Somerset Council, the Henry W. and Albert A. Berg Collection in the New York Public Library, the British Library, Damaris Jane Brix, Chawton House Library and Study Centre, the City Museum, Winchester, the Dean and Chapter of Winchester Cathedral, the Fondation Martin Bodmer, David Gilson, Park Honan, King's College Cambridge (in particular Patricia McGuire the Archivist), the Morgan Library in New York (in particular Christine Nelson, the Drue Heinz Curator of Literary and Historical Manuscripts), Sandy Lerner, the William H. Olin Library, Oakland, California, Queen Mary, University of London (particularly Lorraine Screene the Archivist), and Freydis Jane Welland.

We are very grateful for information, ideas and advice we have received from Kathy Atherton, Antje Blank, Marilyn Butler, Emma Clery, Edward Copeland, Jan Davies, Geoffrey Day, Alistair Duckworth, Roz Field, Heather Glen, David Hewitt, Derek Hughes, Peter Knox-Shaw, David McKitterick, James McLaverty, Claude

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The editorial and production team at Cambridge University Press – Maartje Scheltens, Audrey Cotterell, Alison Powell and Caroline Murray – have supported the volume with expertise and enthusiasm well beyond what their professional work required.

A large number of people have been particularly generous with their time, knowledge and skill. We would like to express special thanks to Tom Carpenter, David Gilson and Peter Sabor. But our greatest debt of gratitude is to Deirdre Le Faye, whose knowledge of Austen's life and family circumstances is unparalleled, and from whose intellectual generosity we have benefited hugely. This volume could not have been published in anything like its present form without her help and encouragement to us – and her stringent questioning of our conclusions – as we pursued and presented our research.

CHRONOLOGY

DEIRDRE LE FAYE

1764	
26 April	Marriage of Rev. George Austen, rector of Steventon, and Cassandra Leigh; they go to live at Deane, Hampshire, and their first three children – James (1765), George (1766) and Edward (1767) – are born here.
1768	
Summer	The Austen family move to Steventon, Hampshire. Five more children – Henry (1771), Cassandra (1773), Francis (1774), Jane (1775), Charles (1779) – are born here.
1773	
23 March	Mr Austen becomes Rector of Deane as well as Steventon, and takes pupils at Steventon from now until 1796.
1775	
16 December	Jane Austen born at Steventon.
1781	
Winter	JA's cousin, Eliza Hancock, marries Jean-François Capot de Feuillide, in France.
1782	
	First mention of JA in family tradition, and the first of the family's amateur theatrical productions takes place.
1783	
	JA's third brother, Edward, is adopted by Mr and Mrs Thomas Knight II, and starts to spend time with them at Godmersham in Kent. JA, with her sister Cassandra and cousin Jane Cooper, stays for some months in Oxford

Chronology

	and then Southampton, with kinswoman Mrs Cawley.
1785	
Spring	JA and Cassandra go to the Abbey House School in Reading.
1786	
	Edward sets off for his Grand Tour of Europe, and does not return until autumn 1790.
April	JA's fifth brother, Francis, enters the Royal Naval Academy in Portsmouth.
December	JA and Cassandra have left school and are at home again in Steventon. Between now and 1793 JA writes her three volumes of 'Juvenilia'.
1788	
Summer	Mr and Mrs Austen take JA and Cassandra on a trip to Kent and London.
December	Francis leaves the RN Academy and sails to East Indies; does not return until winter 1793.
1791	
July	JA's sixth and youngest brother, Charles, enters the Royal Naval Academy in Portsmouth.
27 December	Edward Austen marries Elizabeth Bridges, and they live at Rowling in Kent.
1792	
27 March	JA's eldest brother, James, marries Anne Mathew; they live at Deane.
?Winter	Cassandra becomes engaged to Rev. Tom Fowle.
1793	
23 January	Edward Austen's first child, Fanny, is born at Rowling.
1 February	Republican France declares war on Great Britain and Holland.
8 April	JA's fourth brother, Henry, becomes a lieutenant in the Oxfordshire Militia.
15 April	James Austen's first child, Anna, born at Deane.
3 June	JA writes the last item of her 'Juvenilia'.

Chronology

1794	
22 February	M de Feuillide guillotined in Paris.
September	Charles leaves the RN Academy and goes to sea.
?Autumn	JA possibly writes the novella ‘Lady Susan’ this year.
1795	
	JA probably writes ‘Elinor and Marianne’ this year.
3 May	James’s wife Anne dies, and infant Anna is sent to live at Steventon.
Autumn	Rev. Tom Fowle joins Lord Craven as his private chaplain for the West Indian campaign.
December	Tom Lefroy visits Ashe Rectory – he and JA have a flirtation over the Christmas holiday period.
1796	
October	JA starts writing ‘First Impressions’.
1797	
17 January	James Austen marries Mary Lloyd, and infant Anna returns to live at Deane.
February	Rev. Tom Fowle dies of fever at San Domingo and is buried at sea.
August	JA finishes ‘First Impressions’ and Mr Austen offers it for publication to Thomas Cadell – rejected sight unseen.
November	JA starts converting ‘Elinor and Marianne’ into <i>Sense and Sensibility</i> . Mrs Austen takes her daughters for a visit to Bath. Edward Austen and his young family move from Rowling to Godmersham.
31 December	Henry Austen marries his cousin, the widowed Eliza de Feuillide, in London.
1798	
	JA probably starts writing ‘Susan’ (later to become <i>Northanger Abbey</i>).
17 November	James Austen’s son James Edward born at Deane.
1799	
Summer	JA probably finishes ‘Susan’ (<i>NA</i>) about now.
1800	
	Mr Austen decides to retire and move to Bath.

Chronology

1801	
24 January	Henry Austen resigns his commission in the Oxfordshire Militia and sets up as a banker and army agent in London.
May	The Austen family leave Steventon for Bath, and then go for a seaside holiday in the West Country. JA's traditional West Country romance presumably occurs between now and the autumn of 1804.
1802	
25 March	Peace of Amiens appears to bring the war with France to a close.
Summer	Charles Austen joins his family for a seaside holiday in Wales and the West Country.
December	JA and Cassandra visit James and Mary at Steventon; while there, Harris Bigg-Wither proposes to JA and she accepts him, only to withdraw her consent the following day.
Winter	JA revises 'Susan' (<i>NA</i>).
1803	
Spring	JA sells 'Susan' (<i>NA</i>) to Benjamin Crosby; he promises to publish it by 1804, but does not do so.
18 May	Napoleon breaks the Peace of Amiens, and war with France recommences.
Summer	The Austens visit Ramsgate in Kent, and possibly also go to the West Country again.
November	The Austens visit Lyme Regis.
1804	
	JA probably starts writing 'The Watsons' this year, but leaves it unfinished.
Summer	The Austens visit Lyme Regis again.
1805	
21 January	Mr Austen dies and is buried in Bath.
Summer	Martha Lloyd joins forces with Mrs Austen and her daughters.
18 June	James Austen's younger daughter, Caroline, born at Steventon.
21 October	Battle of Trafalgar.

Chronology

1806	
2 July	Mrs Austen and her daughters finally leave Bath; they visit Clifton, Adlestrop, Stoneleigh and Hamstall Ridware, before settling in Southampton in the autumn.
24 July	Francis Austen marries Mary Gibson.
1807	
19 May	Charles Austen marries Fanny Palmer, in Bermuda.
1808	
10 October	Edward Austen's wife Elizabeth dies at Godmersham.
1809	
5 April	JA makes an unsuccessful attempt to secure the publication of 'Susan' (<i>NA</i>).
7 July	Mrs Austen and her daughters, and Martha Lloyd, move to Chawton, Hants.
1810	
Winter	<i>S&S</i> is accepted for publication by Thomas Egerton.
1811	
February	JA starts planning <i>Mansfield Park</i> .
30 October	<i>S&S</i> published.
?Winter	JA starts revising 'First Impressions' into <i>Pride and Prejudice</i> .
1812	
17 June	America declares war on Great Britain.
14 October	Mrs Thomas Knight II dies, and Edward Austen now officially takes surname of Knight.
Autumn	JA sells copyright of <i>P&P</i> to Egerton.
1813	
28 January	<i>P&P</i> published; JA half-way through <i>MP</i> .
?July	JA finishes <i>MP</i> .
?November	<i>MP</i> accepted for publication by Egerton about now.
1814	
21 January	JA commences <i>Emma</i> .
5 April	Napoleon abdicates and is exiled to Elba.
9 May	<i>MP</i> published.

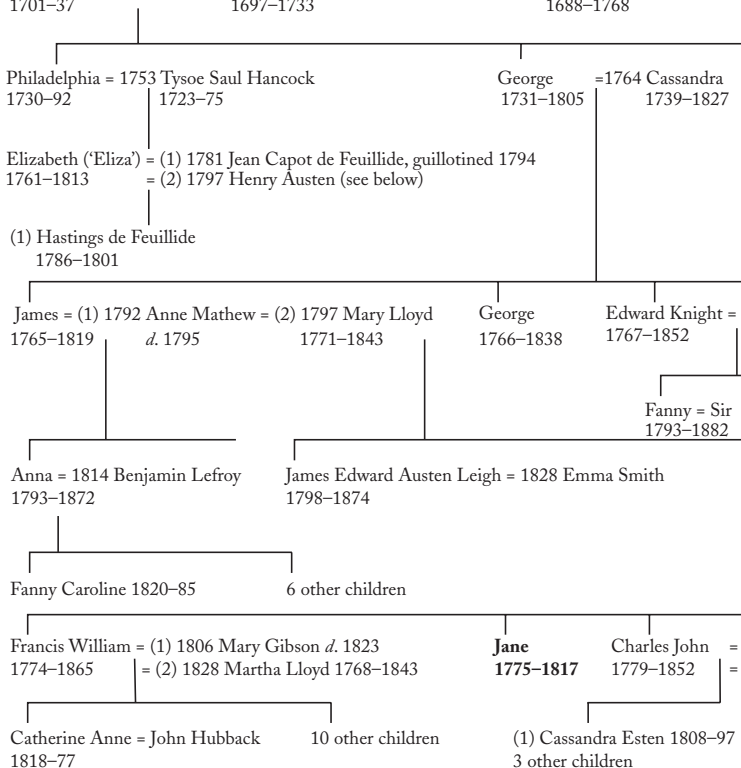
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- 24 December Treaty of Ghent officially ends war with America.
- 1815**
- March Napoleon escapes and resumes power in France; hostilities recommence.
- 29 March *E* finished.
- 18 June Battle of Waterloo finally ends war with France.
- 8 August JA starts *Persuasion*.
- 4 October Henry Austen takes JA to London; he falls ill, and she stays longer than anticipated.
- 13 November JA visits Carlton House, and receives an invitation to dedicate a future work to the Prince Regent.
- December *E* published by John Murray, dedicated to the Prince Regent (title page 1816).
- 1816**
- 19 February 2nd edition of *MP* published.
- Spring JA's health starts to fail. Henry Austen buys back manuscript of 'Susan' (*NA*), which JA revises and intends to offer again for publication.
- 18 July First draft of *P* finished.
- 6 August *P* finally completed.
- 1817**
- 27 January JA starts 'Sanditon'.
- 18 March JA now too ill to work, and has to leave 'S' unfinished.
- 24 May Cassandra takes JA to Winchester for medical attention.
- 18 July JA dies in the early morning.
- 24 July JA buried in Winchester Cathedral.
- December *NA* and *P* published together, by Murray, with a 'Biographical Notice' added by Henry Austen (title page 1818).
- 1869**
- 16 December JA's nephew, the Rev. James Edward Austen Leigh (JEAL), publishes his *Memoir of Jane Austen*, from which all subsequent biographies have stemmed (title page 1870).

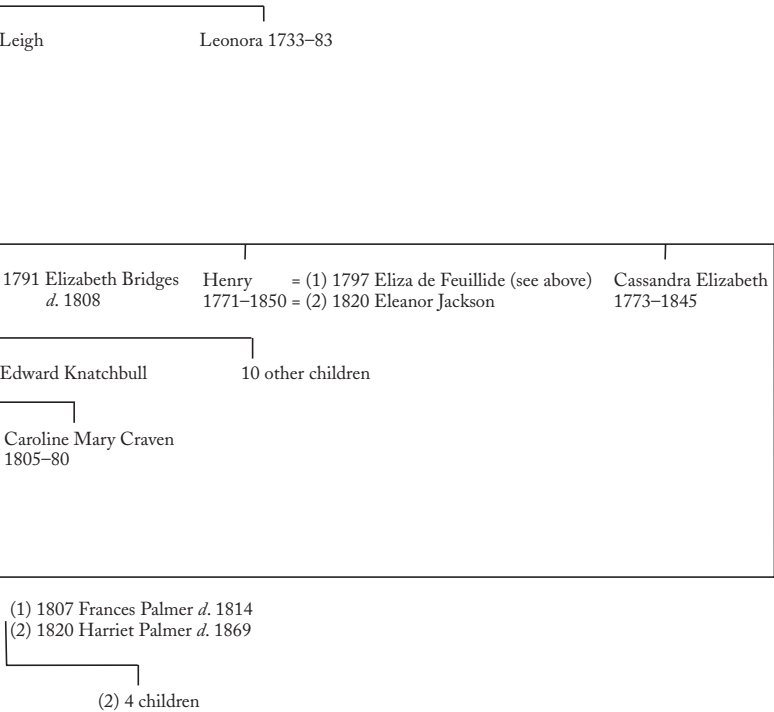
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- 1871
 JEAL publishes a second and enlarged edition of his *Memoir*, including in this the novella 'LS', the cancelled chapters of *P*, the unfinished 'W', a précis of 'S', and 'The Mystery' from the Juvenilia.
- 1884
 JA's great-nephew, Lord Brabourne, publishes *Letters of Jane Austen*, the first attempt to collect her surviving correspondence.
- 1922
 'Volume the Second' of the Juvenilia published.
- 1925
 The manuscript of the unfinished 'S' edited by R. W. Chapman and published as *Fragment of a Novel by Jane Austen*.
- 1932
 R. W. Chapman publishes *Jane Austen's Letters to her sister Cassandra and others*, giving letters unknown to Lord Brabourne.
- 1933
 'Volume the First' of the Juvenilia published.
- 1951
 'Volume the Third' of the Juvenilia published.
- 1952
 Second edition of R. W. Chapman's *Jane Austen's Letters* published, with additional items.
- 1954
 R. W. Chapman publishes *Jane Austen's Minor Works*, which includes the three volumes of the *J* and other smaller items.
- 1980
 B. C. Southam publishes *Jane Austen's 'Sir Charles Grandison'*, a small manuscript discovered in 1977.
- 1995
 Deirdre Le Faye publishes the third (new) edition of *Jane Austen's Letters*, containing further additions to the Chapman collections.

William Austen = (1) c. 1727 Rebecca Walter née Hampson = (2) 1736 Susanna Kelk
1701-37 1697-1733 1688-1768



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INTRODUCTION

Virginia Woolf famously claimed that Jane Austen was the most difficult author to catch ‘in the act of greatness’.¹ If there are to be glimpses, some must come from the handwritten changes, elisions and revisions in the few prose manuscripts that survive: the small, closely written pages that form the unfinished works now entitled ‘The Watsons’ and ‘Sanditon’ and the cancelled chapters of *Persuasion*.

This volume of The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Jane Austen contains ‘The Watsons’, ‘Sanditon’, the novella ‘Lady Susan’, comments on fiction in a series of letters Austen wrote to her niece Anna Lefroy,² the burlesque ‘Plan of a Novel’ and the comic letter to ‘Mrs. Hunter of Norwich’, as well as the opinions she collected on her own novels, *Mansfield Park* and *Emma*. It also prints poems, both serious, such as ‘To the Memory of Mrs. Lefroy’, written in 1808, and lightly frivolous, such as ‘On the Marriage of Mr. Gell of East Bourn to Miss Gill’, provoked simply by the oddity of names. An appendix includes works that have been ascribed to Jane Austen but for which there is insufficient certainty to warrant placing with the texts which are securely hers. The cancelled chapters of *Persuasion*, which would otherwise have found a place in the volume, have been included with *Persuasion* in this edition.³

The novels published in Jane Austen’s lifetime have for us now no private rehearsals – although two of them, *Sense and Sensibility*

¹ Virginia Woolf, ‘Jane Austen at Sixty’, *Nation*, 34 (15 December 1923), p. 433.

² In accordance with the usual custom of Austen scholarship, and for the sake of clarity, we refer to Anna by her married name of Lefroy throughout. Anna (1793–1872), daughter of Jane Austen’s eldest brother James, married Ben Lefroy in November 1814.

³ *Persuasion*, ed. Janet Todd and Antje Blank (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

Introduction

and *Mansfield Park*, received small revisions between published versions⁴ – and so the unfinished, fragmentary ‘The Watsons’ and ‘Sanditon’, frustrated attempts at finished works and meant in this state only for her own or her family’s eyes, indicate habits of writing about which the published texts are secret. Their revisions, including the ‘scratching out’, may be placed beside the advice Jane Austen gave to Anna concerning descriptive minuteness, characterization, social verisimilitude and the paring down of detail when composing fiction.⁵

The two fragments of ‘The Watsons’ and ‘Sanditon’ can of course only hint at the process behind the published works. They are equally secretive about how they themselves might have looked in their final state, though the comparison between them and the printed works clearly indicates the kind of changes that Austen’s publishers made to her writing. They have significance in their own right, as manuscript texts unmediated by print and compositor. They expand Jane Austen’s oeuvre and indicate other directions from those taken in the six works published in or just after her lifetime. Together they suggest a greater range than the finished novels alone display.

The third substantial prose work in this volume, the novella ‘Lady Susan’, exists only in a fair, untitled copy probably made much later than its composition and intended, as far as we know, for readers within the circle of friends and family rather than as a prepared text for a printer to publish – we have no idea of the state of manuscripts Jane Austen or her siblings Henry and Cassandra actually sent to the printer. But, because, outside the juvenilia, ‘Lady Susan’ is the only example of her work in letters and because Jane Austen first composed *Sense and Sensibility* and possibly *Pride and Prejudice* in epistolary form, this also may tell us something distinctive about her creative habits in the major novels. And it too interests in its own right. The story of a designing society woman has many antecedents, English and French, but there

⁴ See the volumes in the Cambridge edition for full details of the changes.

⁵ See pp. 214–225.

is nothing quite like ‘Lady Susan’ in earlier fiction and nothing in Jane Austen’s published novels prepares us for its ebulliently amoral effect.

Families often control literary remains of a famous author, feeling themselves appropriate stewards of genius. Rivalry plays a part in the withholding and delivery of items, along with discretion and sense of family honour. The Shelley family struggled hard to create a saintly image of the poet by selecting, excising, rewriting and destroying part of the surviving archive. The Austen family members were less extreme but presumably had less to hide. They did however seek to control the image of their only famous relative. It was an image that could be much affected by the manuscripts they owned.

Cassandra Austen was her sister’s legatee and executrix; and to her came all Jane Austen’s finished and unfinished fictional manuscripts. She was prepared to destroy letters which she did not want to leave for the eyes of her younger relatives, as being perhaps too intimate or too trivial, but she appears not to have interfered with the creative work left unpublished or unfinished at Jane Austen’s death, except for small points of editing when making copies. In Cassandra’s lifetime, none of the manuscripts and fragments was printed; instead they were, when she died in 1845, carefully apportioned out among those family members who, it was thought, would most appreciate them.

In a ‘Biographical Notice of the Author’, prefixed to the posthumous volume *Persuasion and Northanger Abbey* (published December 1817, dated 1818), Henry Austen alluded to some stanzas ‘replete with fancy and vigour’ which his sister had written a few days before she died; these were ‘When Winchester races first took their beginning’. He later thought better – or was persuaded to think better – of the allusion and he suppressed it when he revised his 1817 ‘Biographical Notice’ into the ‘Memoir of Miss Austen’, supplied to accompany Richard Bentley’s ‘Standard Novels’ edition of *Sense and Sensibility* in 1833. No other relative of Jane Austen’s generation found it appropriate to mention the completed manuscript