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THE CAMBRIDGE EDITION  
OF THE WORKS OF  
JANE AUSTEN  
  
PERSUASION

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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 versions of their work towards different audiences. Consequently all states had

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*General Editor's preface*

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, capitalising, italicising 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.

Our texts as printed here remain as close to the copytexts as possible: spelling and punctuation have not been modernised and inconsistencies in presentation have not been regularised. The few corrections and emendations made to the texts – beyond replacing dropped or missing letters – occur only when an error is very obvious indeed, and/or where retention might interrupt reading or understanding: for example, missing quotation marks have been supplied, run-on words have been separated and repeated words excised. All changes to the texts, substantive and accidental, have been noted in the final apparatus. Four of the six novels appeared individually in three volumes; we have kept the volume divisions and numbering. In the case of *Persuasion*, which was first published

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as volumes 3 and 4 of a four-volume set including *Northanger Abbey*, the volume division has been retained but volumes 3 and 4 have been relabelled volumes 1 and 2.

For all these novels the copytext has been set against two other copies of the same edition. Where there have been any substantive differences, further copies have been examined; details of these copies are given in the initial textual notes within each volume, along with information about the printing and publishing context of this particular work. The two volumes of the edition devoted to manuscript writings divide the works between the three juvenile notebooks on the one hand and all 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 allograph copies of occasional verses and prayers. The possible dating of the manuscript work, as well as the method of editing, is considered in the introductions to the relevant volumes. The cancelled chapters of *Persuasion* are included in an appendix to the volume *Persuasion*; they appear both in a transcription and in facsimile. For all the manuscript works, their features as manuscripts have been respected and all changes and erasures either reproduced or noted.

In all the volumes superscript numbers in the texts indicate endnotes. 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 text; 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,

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intellectual and religious context in which she wrote is available in the final volume of the edition: *Jane Austen in Context*.

I would like to thank Cambridge University Library for supplying the copytexts for the six novels. I am most grateful to Linda Bree at Cambridge University Press for her constant support and unflagging enthusiasm for the edition and to Maartje Scheltens and Alison Powell for their help at every stage of production. I owe the greatest debt to my research assistant Antje Blank for her rare combination of scholarly dedication, editorial skills and critical discernment.

Janet Todd  
University of Aberdeen

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CHRONOLOGY  
DEIRDRE LE FAYE

<b>1764</b>	
26 April	Marriage of Revd 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.
<b>1768</b>	
Summer	The Austen family move to Steventon, Hampshire. Five more children – Henry (1771), Cassandra (1773), Francis (1774), Jane (1775), Charles (1779) – are born here.
<b>1773</b>	
23 March	Mr Austen becomes Rector of Deane as well as Steventon, and takes pupils at Steventon from now until 1796.
<b>1775</b>	
16 December	Jane Austen born at Steventon.
<b>1781</b>	
Winter	JA’s cousin, Eliza Hancock, marries Jean-François Capot de Feuillide, in France.
<b>1782</b>	
	First mention of JA in family tradition, and the first of the family’s amateur theatrical productions takes place.
<b>1783</b>	
	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

Chronology

	Jane Cooper, stays for some months in Oxford and then Southampton, with kinswoman Mrs Cawley.
<b>1785</b>	
Spring	JA and Cassandra go to the Abbey House School in Reading.
<b>1786</b>	
	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 <i>Juvenilia</i> .
<b>1788</b>	
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.
<b>1791</b>	
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.
<b>1792</b>	
27 March	JA's eldest brother, James, marries Anne Mathew; they live at Deane.
?Winter	Cassandra becomes engaged to Revd Tom Fowle.
<b>1793</b>	
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 <i>J</i> .

*Chronology*

<b>1794</b>	
22 February	M de Feuillide guillotined in Paris.
September	Charles leaves the RN Academy and goes to sea.
?Autumn	JA possibly writes the novella <i>Lady Susan</i> this year.
<b>1795</b>	
3 May	JA probably writes ‘Elinor and Marianne’ this year. James’s wife Anne dies, and infant Anna is sent to live at Steventon.
Autumn	Revd 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.
<b>1796</b>	
October	JA starts writing ‘First Impressions’.
<b>1797</b>	
17 January	James Austen marries Mary Lloyd, and infant Anna returns to live at Deane.
February	Revd 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.
<b>1798</b>	
	JA probably starts writing ‘Susan’ (later to become <i>Northanger Abbey</i> ).
17 November	James Austen’s son James Edward born at Deane.
<b>1799</b>	
Summer	JA probably finishes ‘Susan’ ( <i>NA</i> ) about now.
<b>1800</b>	
	Mr Austen decides to retire and move to Bath.



Chronology

<b>1801</b>	
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 traditionary West Country romance presumably occurs between now and the autumn of 1804.
<b>1802</b>	
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> ).
<b>1803</b>	
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.
<b>1804</b>	
	JA probably starts writing <i>The Watsons</i> this year, but leaves it unfinished.
Summer	The Austens visit Lyme Regis again.
<b>1805</b>	
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*

<b>1806</b>	
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.
<b>1807</b>	
19 May	Charles Austen marries Fanny Palmer, in Bermuda.
<b>1808</b>	
10 October	Edward Austen's wife Elizabeth dies at Godmersham.
<b>1809</b>	
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.
<b>1810</b>	
Winter	<i>S&amp;S</i> is accepted for publication by Thomas Egerton.
<b>1811</b>	
February	JA starts planning <i>Mansfield Park</i> .
30 October	<i>S&amp;S</i> published.
?Winter	JA starts revising 'First Impressions' into <i>Pride and Prejudice</i> .
<b>1812</b>	
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&amp;P</i> to Egerton.
<b>1813</b>	
28 January	<i>P&amp;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.
<b>1814</b>	
21 January	JA commences <i>Emma</i> .
5 April	Napoleon abdicates and is exiled to Elba.
9 May	<i>MP</i> published.
24 December	Treaty of Ghent officially ends war with America.

*Chronology*

**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 Revd James Edward Austen-Leigh (JEAL), publishes his *Memoir of Jane Austen*, from which all subsequent biographies have stemmed (title page 1870).

**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 *J*.

*Chronology*

- 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 *J* 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 *J* published.
- 1951** *Volume the Third* of the *J* 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.

## INTRODUCTION

### HISTORICAL CONTEXT

ON 7 April 1815 the London publisher John Murray invited into his rooms in 50 Albemarle Street several literary figures, among whom were two of his most successful authors, Lord Byron and Walter Scott. With his Scottish narrative poems *Marmion* (1808) and *The Lady of the Lake* (1810), Scott, the elder by seventeen years, had begun the Romantic vogue that Byron exploited in his exotic and sensationably popular *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* (cantos 1 and 2, 1812) and *Turkish Tales* (1813–14). With *Waverley* in 1814, Scott achieved further fame as a novelist, fusing private romantic story with historical events and characters: Byron considered it ‘the best & most interesting novel I have redde since—I don’t know when’.<sup>1</sup>

The celebrated Scott and Byron would have been surprised to learn that the slim novels of another of Murray’s writers, who never visited Albemarle Street or met either of them, would in the next centuries become more popular than any of their works. Byron is unlikely to have read Jane Austen, but Scott, urged by Murray to give his new author the benefit of a serious review, was both impressed and influenced by her, while Jane Austen herself showed in *Persuasion*, begun shortly after this famous literary gathering, that her connection with Murray and his writers was more than financial. She was never part of a literary and intellectual circle, but she responded avidly to contemporary writing. She mentioned both Scott’s and Byron’s poems in *Persuasion*, and, when Scott successfully moved into fiction, she grumbled to her niece, ‘It is not

<sup>1</sup> Fiona MacCarthy, *Byron: Life and Legend* (London: John Murray, 2002), p. 248.

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fair.—He has Fame & Profit enough as a Poet, and should not be taking the bread out of other people's mouths.'<sup>2</sup>

Jane Austen's career as a novelist coincided with the twenty-two-year Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars. Just before she began *Persuasion* the wars ended after one of the most remarkable reprises in western history. On 11 April 1814 the emperor Napoleon Bonaparte had unconditionally surrendered and been exiled to Elba; the Bourbon monarch Louis XVIII was restored in Paris. In London the populace was regaled with the spectacle of bonfires, fireworks and the indolent Prince Regent in full military gear while in Alton, near Austen's home, there was a public supper for the parish poor. The army and navy were wound down into a peacetime force – seamen and soldiers were always paid off swiftly to save money and prevent disorder in the unpaid. Then, to the astonishment of the British public, Napoleon escaped from Elba, and on 1 March 1815 landed back in France. Exploiting dissatisfaction with the reestablished royal regime and the resentment of those who had lost property under it, he regained a good number of his followers. On 20 March he arrived in Paris, from which Louis XVIII had fled. The British government suspended demobilisation and kept the fleet in commission. Five days after Napoleon's coup Britain formed a defensive coalition with Prussia, Russia and Austria; Napoleon retaliated by attacking before the scattered allied forces could be assembled. The war had started again. As usual the Royal Navy was required to get soldiers and supplies to the Continental battlefields.

This time hostilities were short. On 18 June Napoleon was defeated at Waterloo by the British under the command of the Duke of Wellington and the Prussians under Marshal Blücher; in just over eight hours nearly 50,000 men were killed (many more in the two days of fighting leading up to the final battle). Before the close Napoleon left the field and returned to Paris, where opponents

<sup>2</sup> Jane Austen to Anna Austen, 28 September 1814, in *Jane Austen's Letters*, ed. Deirdre Le Faye, third edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. 277; hereafter referred to as *Letters*.

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urged him to give himself up. After considering flight to America, he approached the British by contacting a naval ship patrolling the French coast, an old frigate called the *Bellerophon* (later commanded by Jane Austen's brother Charles). On much disputed terms he surrendered to its captain declaring, 'I am come to throw myself on the protection of your Prince and laws.'<sup>3</sup> After a heated debate about his status, to his disgust he was exiled to St Helena. Once again the old order was established in Europe and the British army and navy were reduced. Between 1814 and 1820 the number of commissioned ships dropped from 713 to 134 and the number of seamen from 140,000 to 23,000.<sup>4</sup>

Fiercely exciting the national imagination, the final defeat of Napoleon achieved mythic status: 'Nothing in ancient or modern history equals the effect of the victory of Waterloo,' wrote *The Times* for 28 June 1815. The commercial exploitation of the battle set in rapidly; its site turned into a tourist location and in pictures, poems and memorabilia Wellington and Napoleon became embodiments of their country's supposed qualities: the modest, down-to-earth Englishman versus the vainglorious Frenchman. Uneasiness mingled with euphoria, however. The *Annual Register* for 1815 (published in 1816) commented in its preface, 'all the triumphant sensations of national glory seem almost obliterated by general depression'. It urged those who contemplated the aftermath of the war – unemployment, the national debt and high taxes – not to lose sight of the great achievement. Others in 1815 worried that the national identity and unity provided by war would break apart in peace: 'Perhaps in this glory may be the seeds of ruin & commotion', the artist Benjamin Robert Haydon remarked, 'perhaps the effort may have been so great and the strain so violent that it may be long before the [country] may attain solidity, peace & real prosperity after it.'<sup>5</sup>

<sup>3</sup> *The Life and Battles of Napoleon Bonaparte . . . selected from the Most Authentic Sources* (London, 1798), p. 322.

<sup>4</sup> Margarette Lincoln, *Representing the Royal Navy: British Sea Power, 1750-1815* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002), p. 186.

<sup>5</sup> *The Diary of Benjamin Robert Haydon*, ed. Willard Bissell Pope (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1960), vol. 1, p. 463.

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In the weeks and months following the war's ending the shifting attitudes within the nation and individual were caught in the 'Waterloo poems' written by visitors to the battlefield, among them the older generation of Romantic poets, Scott, Robert Southey and William Wordsworth; they joined the younger Byron in acting out a collective fantasy of being part of the momentous event.<sup>6</sup> Given the importance of Waterloo for defining the future in Britain and the rest of Europe, its representation was inevitably much contested. Treatments were criticised or praised for being too much or too little triumphalist, too quickly deflecting the great battle inward, or too hastily pronouncing its meaning for the nation and post-war era.

In the earlier part of the war Jane Austen knew of events but seemed little engaged, remarking on news of an action where many people were killed: 'what a blessing that one cares for none of them!'<sup>7</sup> But, from the reading mentioned in her letters during this period, especially her correspondence with Murray, it is evident that her interest in war and foreign affairs had accelerated and that she was fascinated by accounts of Waterloo. On 23 November 1815 she thanked her publisher for sending her the requested copy of Scott's *The Field of Waterloo* (1815). This poem described the battle as a 'crisis' of 'destiny'. Prefaced by a portrayal of the pain and suffering of war, the battle action quickly resolves itself into the clash of titans, Napoleon and Wellington. Napoleon's heroic stature is reduced by the disparity between the Roman examples he aspired to when he 'enterprized' for empire and the final ignoble trafficking for his life. Meanwhile the true Roman, Wellington, becomes agent of the nation and God under 'rightful Heaven's decree'. At the end of the poem Scott returns to the domestic misery of war's aftermath, yet allows a sense of the dawning of a new age when the 'Ocean Queen' will justify her victory by 'constancy in the good cause alone'.<sup>8</sup> Here,

<sup>6</sup> For a full account see Philip Shaw, *Waterloo and the Romantic Imagination* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2002).

<sup>7</sup> Jane Austen to Cassandra Austen, 31 May 1811, *Letters*, p. 191.

<sup>8</sup> Walter Scott, *The Field of Waterloo* (Edinburgh, 1815), xiii.33; xix.13; 'Conclusion', 27, 53.



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as in so many of the Waterloo works, there is an effort to see the warrior as the hero of a new civil society brought about by peace. The poem did not please everyone. As joint tourist and poet Scott had been quickest off the mark – urged on by Murray he was at Waterloo barely six weeks after the battle, arriving in time to pick up gruesome souvenirs – and *The Field of Waterloo* was attacked for turning the event into immediate commercial copy. A lampoon in the *Morning Chronicle* called it Scott’s ‘holloa bellou’, an effort to ‘mangle’ the dead over again; in another poem the rhetoric of peace was translated into a reality of ‘Widows, Taxes, Wooden legs and Debt!’<sup>9</sup>

Jane Austen’s response to Scott’s *The Field of Waterloo* is unrecorded (although she expressed her dislike of his earlier *Marmion*) but Southey’s more romantic and bellicose Waterloo poem, we know, stirred her, although only in ‘parts’. In October 1808 she had criticised his fictitious Spanish narrator in *Espriella’s Letters* for being ‘horribly antienglish’<sup>10</sup> – she may have been especially irritated at the criticism of London’s St Paul’s Cathedral as a ‘whited sepulchre’ with half naked statues of naval heroes.<sup>11</sup> No such lack of patriotism marred the long *Poet’s Pilgrimage to Waterloo* (1816), which glorified both the battle, the scene of which he visited in October 1815, and himself – William Hazlitt lamented the poet laureate’s ‘inordinate, restless, incorrigible self-love’.<sup>12</sup> Austen it seems disagreed and on 24 January 1817, after finishing *Persuasion*, she wrote, ‘We have been reading the “Poet’s Pilgrimage to Waterloo”, & generally with much approbation. Nothing will please all the world you know; but parts of it suit me better than much that he has written before.’ It is not known which parts she admired except the beginning, which described Southey’s homecoming and

<sup>9</sup> ‘The Mirror of Fashion’, *Morning Chronicle*, London, Monday, 4 December 1815 and Friday, 29 December 1815.

<sup>10</sup> Jane Austen to Cassandra Austen, 1 October 1808, *Letters*, p. 141.

<sup>11</sup> Robert Southey, *Letters from England by Don Manuel Alvarez Espriella, translated from the Spanish* (London, 1807), vol. 2, pp. 1 and 5.

<sup>12</sup> *The Complete Works of William Hazlitt*, ed. P. P. Howe, after the edition of A. R. Waller and Arnold Glover (London: J. M. Dent & Sons, 1930–4), vol. 16, pp. 243–4.

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family: ‘The opening—the *Proem* I believe he calls it—is very beautiful. Poor Man! One cannot but grieve for the loss of the Son so fondly described.’<sup>13</sup> Austen knew from friends that the boy had died in April 1816. Her concern – in particular the empathetic inquiry after the poet’s condition, ‘Has he at all recovered it?’ – contrasts with the narrator’s mordant attitude to the dead Dick Musgrove in *Persuasion*. At the same time, Southey’s imagined homecoming – ‘O joyful hour, when to our longing home / The long-expected wheels at length drew nigh! / When the first sound went forth, “they come, they come!”’<sup>14</sup> – resembles Captain Harville’s touchingly remembered one after a long sea voyage: ‘if I could convey to you the glow’ of a returning sailor’s soul when he calculates how soon he might see his family again, ‘all the while hoping for them twelve hours sooner, and seeing them arrive at last, as if Heaven had given them wings’ (vol. 2, ch. 11). Like Southey’s ‘Proem’, the whole of *Persuasion* deals with homecomings: not only of the sailors but also of the heroine Anne Elliot, homeless throughout most of the book and eventually accepting that, above all, home is a state of mind.

Like Scott, Southey heroised the British soldier. Waterloo was a deliverance from Napoleon-Satan, the man of blood. ‘[G]raced with England’s laurel crown’, his duty as a poet was to ‘Exalt a nation’s hymn of gratitude’ and show ‘A Christian thankfulness, a British pride’. With Haydon Southey noted England’s inevitable disappointment with peace and he contrasted two visions, the first a cynical worldly one of war as part of the human condition and of the country displaying the ‘dread malady of erring zeal’ like ‘a cancer’ and a second Christian heavenly one of commercial and agricultural England as especially destined to peace-making through its defeat of the worst tyrant in history, its emancipated people and its religious courage. In Southey’s poem, ‘the State in perfect health!’ moves out to share its civic and domestic virtues with cruder and

<sup>13</sup> Jane Austen to Alethea Bigg, 24 January 1817, *Letters*, pp. 327–8.

<sup>14</sup> Robert Southey, *The Poet’s Pilgrimage to Waterloo* (London, 1816), ‘Proem’. v. 1–3.

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runder places.<sup>15</sup> This habit of gloating over victory and of seeing heaven on England's side irritated writers like Hazlitt, who contested the notion that all was quite so well with the nation. Yet Southey's contrasting visions provide a context for Austen's uncommonly solemn remark in an earlier letter concerning the possibility of renewed war with America, 'If we *are* to be ruined, it cannot be helped—but I place my hope of better things on a claim to the protection of Heaven, as a Religious Nation, a Nation inspite of much Evil improving in Religion, which I cannot beleive the Americans to possess.'<sup>16</sup>

In *Pilgrimage to Waterloo* Southey, like Scott before him, blamed Napoleon for lacking personal heroism after the battle: 'Oh wretch! without the courage or the faith / To die with those whom he had led to death!'<sup>17</sup> In his 'Ode to Napoleon Bonaparte', published in April 1814, Byron had made a similar point about Napoleon's failure to die heroically. But in 1815, just after Napoleon left for St Helena, he restored the re-vanquished emperor to heroic, even mythic grandeur in a monologue which appeared anonymously in *The Examiner* on 30 July. It was prefaced by a disclaimer from the editor, Leigh Hunt, stating that it did not represent the magazine's – or even perhaps entirely the author's – opinion. From its style the poem was easily recognisable as Byron's, a fact confirmed when it appeared as 'Napoleon's Farewell [from the French]' in his *Poems* published by Murray in April 1816.

It opens with 'FAREWELL to the Land where the gloom of my Glory/Arose and o'ershadow'd the earth with her name'. Expressing the heroics of war, it absolves a thoroughly Romantic Napoleon for not dying this second time by assuming that he is saving himself for the mythic pledge of yet another homecoming – Byron alludes to the fact that, in the 1814 surrender, Napoleon had promised to return to see the violets bloom. Although there is no evidence she knew Byron's main 'Waterloo poem' – part of canto III of

<sup>15</sup> Southey, *Pilgrimage to Waterloo*, 'Part the First'. I 'Flanders', iv.5, vi.4, 6; IV 'Scenes of War', ii.5; 'Part the Second'. II 'The Evil Prophet', xxii.5–6; IV 'Hopes of Man', xli.5.

<sup>16</sup> Jane Austen to Martha Lloyd, 2 September 1814, *Letters*, pp. 273–4.

<sup>17</sup> Southey, *Pilgrimage to Waterloo*, 'Part the First'. IV 'Scenes of War', xvi.5–6.

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*Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* (1816) – Jane Austen read and copied out ‘Napoleon’s Farewell’. She probably took her text from *The Examiner* since she gave it no title and omitted a word added to the later version; so her copying is likely to have occurred just before she began *Persuasion* in 1815.<sup>18</sup> Through intention or carelessness, she made some changes, the oddest being the substitution of ‘bloom’ for Byron’s ‘gloom’ in the opening line. Perhaps, since ‘bloom’ is such a crucial concept in *Persuasion*, where it suggests a second chance for the heroine, the word was running in her head, or perhaps she shared with Byron a sense that Napoleon might have another chance and return from St Helena. This would be surprising if one took as the Austen family view, including Jane’s, the only reference to the emperor’s defeat, the 8 April 1814 diary entry of her niece Fanny Knight: ‘glorious news of Buonaparte vanquished and dethroned’.<sup>19</sup> Jane Austen also changed ‘Liberty’ to ‘Victory’ in the lines ‘Farewell to thee, France—but when Liberty rallies / Once more in thy regions, remember me then’ – so keeping Napoleon’s Romantic status but severing him from the Revolution out of which he grew and whose terrifying aspect she knew personally through the guillotining of her cousin Eliza de Feuillide’s husband.

Two prose works which Jane Austen requested from Murray completed her recorded political reading of the crucial year 1815: Helen Maria Williams’ *A Narrative of the Events which have lately taken place in France* and Scott’s *Paul’s Letters to his Kinsfolk*.<sup>20</sup> Williams, famous for her radical endorsement of the French

<sup>18</sup> The manuscript is in the Southampton University Library and is transcribed and described in detail by Brian Southam in ‘Was Jane Austen a Bonapartist?’, *Collected Reports of the Jane Austen Society 1949–2000* (2000), pp. 312–20.

<sup>19</sup> Fanny Knight’s diary held in the Centre for Kentish Studies, Maidstone, Kent (U951/F24/11).

<sup>20</sup> It seems unlikely that Murray would have had much to send Austen in response to her request of 23 November 1815 since *Paul’s Letters to his Kinsfolk* did not appear in London until 10 February 1816. But Scott’s visits to Waterloo and Paris were widely reported in contemporary newspapers and the *Letters* was probably already advertised in November. Scott rarely managed to supply his publishers with copy on time and, in this case especially, he found writing up wearisome – so that it is not surprising that Jane Austen had already ‘heard much of Scott’s account of Paris’ long before it was printed by Murray (*Letters*, p. 297).

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Revolution, especially in her enthusiastic series *Letters from France* (1790–6), was disinclined to recall recent history. In her new chronicle she expressed dismay at the course of the Revolution and confessed to an ‘insuperable repugnance to returning on the past’; like the similarly placed Southey, she offered instead an inspirational account of the fall of Napoleon’s ‘iron hand of despotism’ and the restoration of Louis XVIII. Despite her change of heart, Williams used the same excessive sentimental discourse with which she had once welcomed ‘the day-star of liberty’ in 1790.<sup>21</sup> Austen read the *Narrative* three months after beginning *Persuasion* and there is no surviving record of her response,<sup>22</sup> but it can be surmised that she enjoyed the irony of Williams’ ideological, if not stylistic, conversion.

A curious passage in the *Narrative*, which, like Williams’ previous publications, seeks to bypass political reasoning by representing historical events through individual emotional vignettes, condenses Napoleon’s rule to the pain felt by French women who had found ‘tyranny brought home to their very bosoms’. What could have become a legitimate critique of military conscription and the countless dead caused by political ambition and territorial expansion was invalidated by Williams’ sentimental absorption in her own persona: the grief of the ‘many Rachael’s’ of France mourning for their children was swiftly forgotten beside her own sorrow over her two nephews, ‘dear relics’ of her dead sister who were ‘unto [her] as children!’ Against this swelling pathos, the climax deflates expectation to an almost comic effect: the worst that had befallen the eldest nephew was the threat of conscription and a subsequent exemption from military service for being a theology student.<sup>23</sup> It is of course risky to equate Williams’ narcissism with fictional Mrs Musgrove’s ‘large fat sighings’ over a son actually dead, but it does seem justifiable to suggest that Austen liked to mock the sort of self-indulgent sentimentality that underlay both.

<sup>21</sup> Helen Maria Williams, *A Narrative of the Events which have lately taken place in France* (London, 1815), pp. 4, 6, 7.

<sup>22</sup> Jane Austen to Cassandra Austen, 24 November 1815, *Letters*, p. 298.

<sup>23</sup> Williams, *A Narrative*, pp. 65–7.

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With a much finer sense for the *Realpolitik* of the restored Bourbon monarchy, Scott in *Paul's Letters* avoided Williams' celebratory depiction of the restoration and denied it a potential to bridge the ideological gulf between ranks. Concerned with the difficulties Louis XVIII faced in establishing an efficient administration and in filling the power vacuum left by the collapse of Napoleon's regime, Scott reveals the returned exiles as largely inept: they had all retained their prejudices and claims as a 'privileged class' and were thus more than ever alienated from the liberal ideas of a community of rights that had taken root in France. Those who had fled the first stirrings of the French Revolution as adults were now too old for public business, those who were children at the time now strangers to 'the habits of their country'. Yet, despite seeing the danger of further political division, Scott emphatically endorsed the monarchy. With Byron he prophesied another Napoleonic escapade – 'while life lasts', he wrote, 'there will not be wanting many to rely upon a third *avatar* of this singular emanation of the Evil Principle' – and recommended a firm stance to cement royal authority: the sooner that 'two or three criminals can be executed' and 'dangerous agitators banished', the better.<sup>24</sup>

Jane Austen began *Persuasion*, her last completed novel, on 8 August 1815, the day it was generally known that Napoleon had gone into permanent exile and shortly after the return of Louis XVIII to Paris on 18 July. Considering the triumphalist mood momentarily sweeping Britain on the restoration of the old order, it seems less surprising that Austen located her critique of the decadence of the ruling class in the period just before Waterloo, so avoiding any facile exultation over victory. Perhaps the decision also gave her ending a gloomier edge in the certain knowledge what dread the future would actually hold. Yet, although it closes before the end of the French Wars, in many ways *Persuasion* reflects a postwar mood, a national sense that many old certainties, some worthy and some unworthy, had disappeared. Like the Musgroves'

<sup>24</sup> Walter Scott, *Paul's Letters to his Kinsfolk* (Edinburgh, 1816), pp. 34–7, 443, 458.