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JANE AUSTEN
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BY
FRANK W. BRADBROOK
*Senior Lecturer in English, University College of
North Wales, Bangor*



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PREFACE

This study of Jane Austen's relationship to her predecessors is the necessary preliminary, I think, to a detailed critical discussion of her major novels. It is the result of research first undertaken at Cambridge, and it was suggested, as I have made clear at the beginning, by a comment of my former Director of Studies at Downing College, Dr F. R. Leavis. The completion of the dissertation would not have been possible without the generosity of the University College of North Wales, Bangor, in granting me sabbatical leave in Michaelmas Term, 1962. Professor John F. Danby has taken a genuine interest in my work, and I have been greatly stimulated by his criticism of the research at the various stages of its development.

Most of my research has been done at the Cambridge University Library, with the magnificent resources of which I first became acquainted as a student nearly thirty years ago. The unfailing courtesy and kindness of the members of its staff have remained constant over the years. To them, I am extremely grateful. During the later period of my research, I have studied in the Bodleian Library, and received a similar courtesy and co-operation. Since 1947, I have made use of the resources of the library of the University College of North Wales, supplemented by an occasional visit to the National Library of Wales at Aberystwyth, and by the services of the National Central Library, available through the College. Visits to Liverpool and Leeds have resulted in my renewing and gaining acquaintance with the Picton and Brotherton Libraries, from whose staffs I have received every possible assistance. I am greatly indebted to the members of the staffs of these libraries. My feelings of guilt at not having worked at the British Museum are modified by the suspicion that my research would never have been completed, if I had gone there.

I have included, where relevant, brief extracts from my published writings on Jane Austen: *Jane Austen: Emma* (Edward

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Arnold Ltd), 'Style and Judgment in Jane Austen's Novels' (*The Cambridge Journal*, vol. iv, no. 9), 'The Letters of Jane Austen' (*The Cambridge Journal*, vol. vii, no. 5), 'Samuel Richardson' (*The Pelican Guide to English Literature*, vol. iv), 'Lord Chesterfield and Jane Austen' (*Notes and Queries*, February 1958), 'Dr Johnson and Jane Austen' (*ibid.* March 1960), and 'Sources of Jane Austen's ideas about Nature in *Mansfield Park*' (*ibid.* June 1961). Despite these inclusions, the main part of this study is new and original. The lengthy appendices form an essential element in the exposition of the thesis.

I should like to express my appreciation of the generosity of my friends Drs Egon and Jindra Kodíček and Dr Hans and Hazel Schenk, who have offered me ideal *pied-à-terre* in Cambridge and Oxford respectively, when I have been working there during the vacations. I should like to thank as well the many other friends in Cambridge, Oxford, Bangor and elsewhere, who have also helped to create that civilized atmosphere which both stimulates and rewards one's efforts to read and write.

The patience and forbearance of my wife in listening and typing have been beyond what the most enthusiastic and optimistic researcher could hope for or expect. My sister, Dr M. C. Bradbrook, has occasionally offered general advice. Without the encouragement and warnings of these two kind but stern critics, the project would have been much more difficult to complete.

I am greatly indebted to the scholarly labours of the late Dr R. W. Chapman, and especially to his editions of the novels, minor works and letters of Jane Austen, published by O.U.P., though, in the case of my quotations from the major novels, I have given the number of the chapter as published in modern popular editions. Dr Chapman's appendices and notes have been particularly helpful.

Finally, the efficiency and courtesy of the Cambridge University Press have been exemplary, and to them I am very grateful.

F. W. B.

Bangor, Caernarvonshire
November 1965