

JANE AUSTEN SOCIETY of NORTH AMERICA

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HERMSPRONG AND PRIDE AND PREJUDICE - E. Sutherland

Jane Austen owned a copy of Robert Bage's novel, Herm sprong, (published 1796), and it seems likely that it was the inspiration for many ideas in Pride and Prejudice (written in 1796-7).

Herm sprong is about "3 or 4 families in a country village" (JA's letter to her niece Anna), and the characters include a tyrannical aristocrat, a pert and witty young lady, a noble suitor, a toadying clergyman, and a man who married "a pretty face" and lived to regret it.

Robert Bage (1728-1801) was the son of a paper-maker in Derbyshire. No details of his early life are known. Although he remained a middle-class mill-owner near Lichfield all his life, he was a friend of Erasmus Darwin and William Godwin. In his spare time Bage taught himself music, French and Italian, and studied mathematics. After a long and painful illness he died in 1801, aged 71. His obituary mentioned his benevolence, integrity, gentle unassuming manner, and vigour of intellect.

Bage's novel examines the areas of controversy of this period: the institution of aristocracy, colonialism and the exploitation of native races, the religious establishment, and the inferior position of women. His first book was published in 1782 and received great praise; three more followed at two-year intervals. His last two novels, Man As He Is and Herm sprong, or Man As He Is Not, were considered his best.

One can see why Jane Austen would have enjoyed Herm sprong:

- *Mr. Corrow had a prodigious respect for Lord Grondale, and for money; and would have done for one, or both of them, anything or everything that the law, in any of its latitudes, would have enabled him to do.*
- ...
- *Notwithstanding all this, he grew weary of rural tranquillity, and was obliged to marry, to prevent excess of ease. In this he succeeded well.*
- ...
- *To think at all was then become a heavy task; and to think of œconomy, an insupportable one. He did however advance so far in reformation as to make several prudential resolutions; and nothing was wanting but the power of keeping them.*
- ...
- *[Lord Grondale has threatened to disinherit his daughter]. The conscious sense of dignity which swelled his lordship's features, on the conception and delivery of this sublime and beautiful sentiment, cannot be described.*

The hero, Herm sprong, is a mysterious stranger who arrives in the village in time to rescue the heroine by stopping her runaway horse at the edge of a cliff. The two young people of course fall in love, although it takes the rest of the book before their happiness together is secured.



Hermesprong is the "Grandison hero" - manly, handsome, brave, intelligent and generous - one of the "pictures of perfection" that Jane Austen said made her feel "sick and wicked". He has a romantic and exotic background: both his parents were disinherited by their fathers and fled to America, where they lived with the Indians. His mother tried unsuccessfully to convert them, while his father made a fortune trading for furs. The hero at the end turns out to be a long-lost heir to an English barony.

Hermesprong takes part in - and invariably wins - intellectual discussions with all the main characters. He and the lord take instant dislike to each other, and the lord does all he can to antagonize and get rid of the hero. But the hero pursues his noble and charitable deeds, helping anyone in distress.

One of the weaknesses of the novel to a modern reader is the character of the heroine, Caroline Campinet. It is difficult today to be in sympathy with the idea of total filial obedience and duty to a tyrannical father who first banishes his daughter to live in obscurity, then recalls her to his mansion when it suits his purpose, and finally threatens her with physical harm if she refuses to marry his choice, a man she abhors.

Trembling at her father's fury, and shocked by his menaces, Miss Campinet dared not to utter a syllable in reply; but receiving her dismissal, retired to pour her tears in the bosom of her friend.

She is described by the narrator: *Nature had been extremely indulgent to her, both in mind and person...Hitherto, indeed, her beauty had bloomed to the desert air, and her benevolence had been confined to the distressed and humble beings of the valley. The character of her dress...was elegant simplicity; a term, which, with equal justice, might be applied to her mind.*

Miss Campinet is a typical heroine of 18th century didactic novels; it is Jane Austen's heroines who are unusual for their time, thinking for themselves, judging with common sense, and setting a reasonable limit to blind obedience.

Lord Grondale is the noble tyrant of the story, equal to Lady Catherine in pride and rudeness, but with more malignancy and less sense of responsibility. His character is sketched in with barbed remarks that must have delighted Jane Austen:

The tyranny of Lord Grondale over Miss Campinet...assumed variety of shapes. When his lordship was under the gentle influence of pure genuine ill humour, it was the stern frown of authority, that bears not the shadow of disobedience or contradiction. When the dining table had procured him a cessation of this overflow of bile, and disposed him to hilarity, it was the most bitter irony, that his lordship, and for this he did not want talents, could invent.

....

Her spirited reply, though not very grateful to his pride, or the present state of his feelings, furnished him with an opportunity of resentment exactly adapted to his wishes. Accordingly he resented with great dignity and prudent perseverance.

...

Lord Grondale soon perceived the state of Sir Philip Chestum's intellects; but his rent-roll was sound, and that ought to be, and generally is, the care of every good father.

Dr. Blick is a worthy brother-clergyman to Mr. Collins, toadying to his noble patron, full of flattery, ingratiating and humble in all his speeches, but self-important and pompous in stating his opinions to his inferiors.

To Lord Grondale, his patron: *Undoubtedly, my lord, very convincing...I dare say your lordship is right...Certainly, for true humour your lordship has no equal...Your lordship is perfectly happy in your terms...That is a just observation, my lord...You look quite into human nature, my lord...Exceedingly probable, my lord...etc. etc.*

The banker, Mr. Sumelin, and his wife are painted with short, brisk strokes:

A banker, opulent and respectable... A man of integrity, indeed, in his dealings, but of insanity in his notions, as wisdom goes now. In short, a very odd man. But neither Mrs. Sumelin, nor her eldest daughter, Harriot, were ever charged with oddity. On the contrary, they were so extremely like ladies in general, that every man's eyes and ears may save me the trouble of drawing their portraits...

At eighteen [Mrs. Sumelin] was angelic; for she had a smooth white skin and £12,000. In intellect, not super-abundant; nor was it necessary; for to the shining qualities above mentioned, understanding may or may not be added; it is of little consequence, especially in genteel life. Its want may be copiously supplied by vanity. Miss Sumelin... was a perfect copy of her mother...

Against these innocent and elegant penchants, [Mr. Sumelin] frequently darted his keenest arrows; but they fell dead to the ground, repelled by the panoply of this mother and daughter; and Mr. Sumelin had the satisfaction, in common with most husbands, to see these charming inclinations grow into passions, under his reprobation.

The most interesting character is the heroine's friend, Miss Maria Fluart. She is an orphaned heiress, independent, attractive, clever and outspoken. She thinks and acts for herself, holds her own in verbal sparring with importunate suitors, and eventually prevails upon the heroine to run away before being forced into marriage, making her own escape from the enraged Lord Grondale by pulling out a pistol and threatening to shoot. Her repartee is bright and acute:

- *It is possible, Miss Fluart, you mean to trifle with me.*
- *Not quite impossible, my lord. To this little inconvenience men generally subject themselves when they become lovers.*
- *I was in hopes my fortune, rank and title might have claimed an exemption.*
- *Could not your lordship have established a better claim upon age and wisdom?*
- *Philosophic ladies, like Miss Fluart, know how to appreciate and despise the foolish things of this world, such as rank, fortune, and title.*
- *Oh no - they are vastly alluring; I dote upon them. When did a woman despise brilliant trifles?*
- *They, possibly, would be Miss Fluart's principal objects in an union with lord Grondale?*
- *To be sure, - one never hears of young women marrying for the venerable qualities of their lovers.*

Occasional echoes from Hernspong can be found in Jane Austen's works:

At sixteen she was taken from the boarding school - I beg pardon -, seminary. In Emma, Mrs. Goddard was the mistress of a school - not of a seminary, or an establishment... but a real, honest, old-fashioned boarding-school.

... They settled at Winchester; and as they are little visited, have the more time to despise and plague each other, which they do with great sincerity... In Mansfield Park, Maria and Mrs. Norris shut up together with little society... it may be reasonably supposed that their tempers became their mutual punishment.

More important than what Jane Austen used from Hernspong is what she did not: the form of Bage's novel is loose and awkward. The story begins with a first-person narrator, who gives a long account of his birth and parentage. For the rest of the novel, the narrator is an omniscient observer, with occasional reversions to address the reader, or slip in little remarks about his own life. These distractions are short, however.

Much of the story is told in dialogue, and moves along at a fast pace. But Bage was influenced by Rousseau and Voltaire, and brings in long digressions when the hero tells the story of his early life, and later enters into long discussions on the healthy pastimes and moral lives of the "noble savages" in America.

Hermesprong ends with the deathbed repentance of the wicked baron, and universal forgiveness by all. *Lord Grondale...cast his eyes on his nephew, to whom he now held out his hand. Sir Charles took it with respect. He pressed it gently; Lord Grondale, with what strength he had, returned the pressure. Sir Charles understood this as an expression of contrition, and he marked his sentiment of it by raising his uncle's hand to his lips...His uncle's last look seemed to express a faint degree of pleasure. But no longer able to support the effort of keeping awake, his head sunk upon the pillow, oppressed with his last sleep. He awoke and died.*

It is easy to find in Hermesprong a source for many of the characters and events in Pride and Prejudice. Jane Austen's genius is evident in what she did with these "borrowings".

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PROBLEMS AND COMMENTS

Riddles in "Emma" - There are three riddles (called "charades" in the text) in Emma, and two of them have the answers given: "Kitty, that fair and frozen maid..." is a chimney-sweep; and "My first displays the wealth and pomp of kings..." refers to courtship. Dianne Kerr pointed out that the third one has no answer:

My first doth affliction denote,
Which my second is destin'd to feel
And my whole is the best antidote
That affliction to soften and heal"

In the discussion, "marriage" was suggested as an answer, but I think a better one is "woman". Does anyone else have a suggestion?

Special Licence - In P&P, Mrs. Bennet goes into effusions of joy when she learns that Elizabeth is to marry Mr. Darcy:

"Ten thousand a year, and very likely more! 'Tis as good as a Lord! And a special licence. You must and shall be married by a special licence".

Irene Howard asks what is the meaning of a "special licence". In the Chapman edition, the editor makes no note about this, but in the Norton Critical Edition (Ed. Donald J. Gray) there is a footnote: "Permission to marry procured from a bishop or archbishop and used in lieu of the publishing of banns".

In The World We Have Lost, by Peter Laslett, this is elaborated slightly: "People could marry by licence as well as by banns in England then, just as they still can in the Church of England today. They had to apply for the licence to the bishop of the diocese they lived in..."

The significance of Mrs. Bennet's desire for a special licence is, of course, that this would cost a lot of money, and would be evidence to everyone that Elizabeth was marrying a wealthy man. Do you think Elizabeth and Darcy did have a special licence?

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P.E.N. JUDGE

One of our members, Leila Vennewitz, has been asked by P.E.N. to be one of the three judges to determine the best translation published in the U.S. this year. She writes, "...a large undertaking that will make our house bulge with books! One doesn't have to read all of each, because so many reveal in the first few pages that the translation does not warrant a P.E.N. award, or any other." Leila enjoyed the notes on translations in Japanese that Keiko Parker made for the last Newsletter. As Mr. Elliot says to Anne: "A little learning is by no means a dangerous thing in good company".

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MRS. ELTON

A British politician made reference to Jane Austen's Emma in a speech about the recent Birmingham summit conference. He quoted Mrs. Elton:

"They came from Birmingham, which is not a place to promise much, you know, Mr. Weston. One has not great hopes from Birmingham. I always say there is something direful in the sound".

In refuting Mrs. Elton's opinion of Birmingham, the speaker called her "a strait-laced Victorian lady". He should re-read Emma. Mrs. Elton was neither Victorian nor a lady.

Emma called her "a little upstart, vulgar being, with her Mr. E., and her *caro sposo*, and her resources, and all her airs of pert pretension and under-bred finery".

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HISTORIC COLLECTION NEEDS NEW HOME

At the end of the 18th century, a collection of paintings was assembled to form a National Gallery in Poland. But in 1795 that country disappeared, partitioned among its neighbours. The paintings ended up at Dulwich, just outside London, in a building especially designed for them by Sir John Soane, now one of his finest surviving buildings. The two Rembrandts, ten Rubens, six Van Dykes, seven Poussins, one Watteau, two Canalettos, seven Gainsboroughs and others, became the first public gallery of art in England.

The museum today is popular and progressive, with a strong programme of lectures, classes and exhibitions, but it cannot survive on the meagre funding which it receives from the Dulwich Foundation. A new home, or a new patron - the National Trust? - must be found.

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JASNA DUES

After all that romancers may say, there is no doing without money. (NA)

JASNA's annual fee of \$15 remains a great bargain. The due date was December 16th. If you have not yet done so, please send in your cheque to the Membership Secretary:

Nancy Thurston, 200 Kingsmount Boulevard, Sudbury, Ontario, P3E 1K9

The Vancouver regional group charges no annual dues, but a fee of \$3 per member is charged at each meeting, to cover the cost of hall rental, postage, and incidental expenses.

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RUTH PIDDINGTON

I sincerely regret to announce the death of Ruth Piddington, on December 16 th.

Ruth was a long-time member of the Vancouver Chapter of JASNA. She volunteered to be treasurer of the Annual Conference in Vancouver in 1986, and carried on as treasurer of the Vancouver group until failing health last November made it necessary for her to give up this duty. We are grateful for her calm efficiency through the years keeping our financial affairs in order, and we'll miss her sensible comments and chuckles of amusement in our discussions.

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NEW BOOK.

One of our members has had a book published recently: The Struggle for Social Justice in British Columbia, by Irene Howard, is the biography of "Helena Gutteridge, the Unknown Reformer". Gutteridge, who was the first woman on Vancouver city council, spent most of her life working for votes for women, decent labour conditions, adequate wages, and low-income housing, among other social reforms.

The reviewer in The Sun wrote: "Irene Howard has done a meticulous job of piecing together the life of this woman, who died in 1960 without leaving diaries or personal papers. The amount of information she offers on Gutteridge and her era is simply overwhelming in scope...the book is, without doubt, a valuable contribution to the archival record of Vancouver".

Congratulations, Irene!

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LIMERICK WINNERS

Some delightful examples were submitted during the course of our Limerick Contest last Fall. Two winners were chosen (only one vote apart) - Irene Howard and Dianne Kerr. Here are the prize-winning verses:

*At Hartfield there's no wassail ho-ell
But a nice soft-cooked egg is the ru-ell.
Mr. Woodhouse says "tch",
Plum pudding's too rich -
Have a ho-ell of gru-ell for Yu-ell.* - Irene Howard

*Lady Catherine went for a jaunt,
Elizabeth Bennet to haunt:
She declared she'd make sure
She'd keep Darcy's name pure -
She was rightly named Catherine de Boor.* - Dianne Kerr

Congratulations to both the winners, and thanks to all who participated.

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SOME "AWEFUL" OCCASIONS: Eileen Sutherland

The use of the word "awe" is not common in Jane Austen's novels, compared, for instance, to "admiration", "love" or "respect".

Wickham shows his insincerity or self-centred blindness by attributing "awe" to Darcy's feeling for Lady Catherine. The ones who are most obviously awe-struck are Mrs. Bennet and her sister Mrs. Phillips, with respect to Darcy becoming a member of their family, and Sir William Lucas on being present at Rosings.

Sir Thomas Bertram brings out feelings of awe in his own daughters and in Fanny. Mrs. Weston's mind "glanced...with awe and compassion" at Mrs. Churchill's death, but it was a momentary feeling only.

Otherwise, the character who is most often "awed" by her surroundings and circumstances is, as one would expect, the young and inexperienced Catherine Morland. She is awed by Isabella Thorpe's vast knowledge of the ways of the world, by General Tilney's conversation and behaviour, by the expectation of her first glimpse of Northanger Abbey, by the storm raging outside the "ancient building", by the closed doors which might lead to the place of the unfortunate Mrs. Tilney's fateful confinement, by the sight of the strange abandoned manuscript in the deepest corner of the old black cabinet in her bedroom, and by the awful effect of the sudden snuffing of her candle - in short, "everything seemed to speak the awfulness of her situation".

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FROM NAPOLEON TO ALEXANDER MACKENZIE TO DR. SYNTAX TO JANE AUSTEN: A Tenuous and

Trivial Thread: Eileen Sutherland

During the wars with Britain, Napoleon planned an attack on British North America, by landing troops at New Orleans to go up the Mississippi River and take Canada by surprise. In preparation, he was interested in any books about the Canadian wilderness.

In 1793, Alexander Mackenzie left the Northwest Company and returned to England, where he was fêted as a frontier hero by the aristocracy, and published his book of his trek to the West Coast, "Voyages...to the Frozen and Pacific Oceans in the Years 1789 and 1793" (1801), written with the aid of a "ghostwriter", William Combe. A special edition of the book was translated into French, and a copy was found among Napoleon's effects after his death on St. Helena.

The writer William Combe (1741-1823) was best known as the author of the satirical book, "The Tour of Dr. Syntax in Search of the Picturesque" (1812).

Jane Austen was well acquainted with this comic look at picturesque attitudes to nature. In a letter to her sister Cassandra of March 2, 1814, on her arrival in London, "I have seen nobody in London yet with such a long chin as Dr. Syntax..."

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RE-READING CLASSICS

"Nobody ever reads the same book twice", said Robertson Davies in a recent talk. He called it a "great sin" to "assume that something that has been read once has been read forever". Davies used as an example Thackeray's Vanity Fair, but he could as easily have mentioned Jane Austen.

The classic you read in your youth, Davies went on, is actually "a lesser book of your own". It should be read again when you are 36, again in middle age, and when you are growing old, "in order to see how the irony stands up to your own experience of life", and to find out "how great it is, or how great it has remained, to you".

Thackeray (like Jane Austen) was an artist, and "artists deserve this kind of careful observation".

- The Tanner Lectures on Human Values, quoted in "Noted With Pleasure",
(NYT Book Review, Aug. 9/92)

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MR. COLLINS FURTHER CONSIDERED - Kathleen Glancy

His friends may well rejoice in his having met one of the very few sensible women who would have accepted him... I am not certain that I consider her marrying Mr. Collins as the wisest thing she ever did... (P&P)

While I agree with Keiko Parker that Ivor Morris overestimated Mr. Collins' worth [Newsletter No.33, February, 1991], he is really getting a raw deal here. He has two legitimate claims on Elizabeth's loyalty. He is a member of her family, however distant a cousin, and at the time she speaks he is also her host. Her spirits really have led her wrong here. If she says such things at all it should not be to someone she does not know all that well and thinks she dislikes. Such remarks could only be appropriate when addressed to someone close, or someone to whom she would like to be close. No wonder Darcy misinterprets her behaviour.

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LIFE AT SEA - E. Sutherland

I believe I have lived as much on board as most women, and I know nothing superior to the accommodations of a man of war. (Pers.)

Mrs. Croft, in 1814, was speaking of the comfort of living on board one of her husband's ships. Life at sea in 1821-23 could not have been much different. A new book, The Captain's Wife: The South American Journals of Maria Graham, published originally in 1824, describes gruelling voyages, earthquakes and storms, plants and gardens, slavery and freedom, and the plight of Englishwomen stranded all over the world. Reviewing the book in Country Life (Feb.11/93), Ronald Blythe calls it a "candid, elegant and touching" account of South America in the struggle for liberation from Spain and Portugal, by "one of the finest journalists of her day".

"Her eye for the domestic and the political gives her writing an enchantment and intimacy which raises it above so many of the popular travel diaries of the period. Small but significant details catch the attention. "Dreadnought", the name given to battleships, was originally thick cloth from which to make warm gloves for sailors. As for her female compatriots in Brazil: 'What can I say? They are very like all one sees at home, in their rank of life and...would require Miss Austen's pen to make them interesting'. " It certainly sounds like a book worth reading.

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DECEMBER MEETING

The December meeting, combining a Christmas Party and a celebration of Jane Austen's Birthday, was one of our most successful and enjoyable. The programme began with a reading by Mary Anderson and Mavis Jones of the Collect for Christmas Day and a section of the Book of Common Prayer. Turning to more frivolous things, the entries in the Limerick Contest were read and voted on, and Irene Howard led two "longways" sets in a folk dance of the late 18th century. To catch our breath and relax, we had a great variety of readings, including a poem by André Chénier, La jeune captive written only a few weeks before he himself was guillotined during The Terror in France, read - and translated - by René Goldman; Byron's poem, The Waltz, read by Margaret Howell; contrasting journal entries for Christmas Day of Captain Vancouver in mid-Pacific describing a sumptuous Christmas dinner served on board, and Alexander Mackenzie, in the northwest wilderness, who mentioned Christmas Day as an ordinary working day, read by Annabel Smith; and familiar and favourite readings from the novels and letters. The lavish and interesting pot-luck luncheon ended with trifle and syllabub, and a toast to Jane Austen.

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CHARITY BALL IN BATH

If you are going to be in Bath on May 1st, you may wish to attend a "Grand Georgian Charity Ball" in aid of Cancer Research. In the Assembly Rooms, starting at 8:30 p.m., the programme includes supper, an auction of antiques, and dancing. King George III and Queen Charlotte are expected to arrive at 9:00 p.m., and carriages may be called for 1:00 a.m. (Late 18th century dress is optional). For further details, call Eileen Sutherland, 988-0479.

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A book is a gift you can open again and again.

WORDS - E.Sutherland

In our recent, unusual, icy weather, did you speak of the footing as "slippery" or "slippy"? Don McGillivray discussed the two words in an interesting short article in the Sun in December. Most of us these days say "slippery", but the other word, older but still respectable (its earliest appearance in print was in a 1548 commentary on the Bible), is still occasionally in use. McGillivray suggests that it came to Canada with the Scottish settlers, and quotes Sir Walter Scott as having had "one or two falls on the slippy heather", and an Aberdeen newspaper as recently as 1960 did not bother to translate: "The hill was sae slippy we had tae tak tae the ditches". Our Concise Scots Dictionary confirms its use in Scotland: "slippy = slippery (late 18th c.)".

Jane Austen seemingly had no love for the Scots. She used only "slippery" in the novels: Emma and Harriet, visiting a poor family, "crossed the low hedge, and tottering footstep which ended the narrow, slippery path through the cottage garden..." That is the only instance where she used the word, but there were other possibilities. An Oxford English Dictionary definition is "inclined to be fickle or faithless; not to be depended on; shifty, deceitful" - a perfect description for Isabella Thorpe; and Scott wrote to Lockhart: "He is hard and slippery, so settle your bargain fast and firm" - this could have referred to Wickham! Another definition is "Of the tongue, talking too freely". It was used thus in 1727, and could describe Miss Bates "to a T".

The word "footstep" in the Jane Austen quotation above is an interesting use. The OED defines it as "A foot-path, footway", but calls this use "obsolete". The example is from 1620, regarding "High-waies or foot steps stopped up". Another definition is "A step or raised structure on which to set the foot in order to ascend or descend", and among the examples given are a sonnet of Wordsworth (1806), "Methought I saw the footstep of a throne", and the quotation from Emma (1815) mentioned above.

I cannot quite picture just what Jane Austen had in mind. On the next page, she writes of "a narrow footpath, a little raised on one side of the lane..." Perhaps the cottage was on lower land, and rickety steps led up to the roadway.

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THE OXFORD - BERKELEY PROGRAM

Members intending to spend July or August in England may be interested in the study programme at Oxford University, co-sponsored by the University of Berkeley. There is no course this year studying Jane Austen specifically, but some related ones are "The English Village: past and present", "Castles and Countryhouses: a Social, Economic and Architectural Study", "The Interior of the English Country House 1720-1800", "The History and Architecture of Oxford", and "The American Revolution: Was it Necessary?" Also to be given are many other courses on history, literature, archaeology, law and economics. For further information, see Eileen Sutherland.

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Mr. Collins, we know, is a bore;
His manners we truly deplore;
But his utter pomposity
And his verbosity
Tickle our fancy for more. - Norah Morrow.

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CODE DUELLO - Kathleen Glancy

when he returned to town...we met by appointment, he to defend, I to punish his conduct. We returned unwounded, and the meeting therefore never got abroad. (S&S)

This is Colonel Brandon's account of his duel with Willoughby. The Colonel may be accused of many things, but there can be no doubt that dishonesty is not one of them. If he says that's how it happened, that's how it happened. Whatever version of Sense and Sensibility has G.B.Stern read, then? I quote her account in the chapter from Talking/Speaking of Jane Austen called, "You must not expect a prodigy".

...gloomily he goes abroad; gloomily runs Willoughby through the arm; gloomily returns to England again.

The only word I can agree with is "gloomily". The Colonel does not say that they met abroad, and even putting S&S at the earliest date of setting abroad was not a likely contingency. In the earlier part of the 18th century duels were sometimes fought abroad, usually in France which was the easiest country to reach from England. After the French Revolution, duellists gave up France in favour of some quiet spot in the country or an unfrequented bit of the city - Hampstead Heath very early in the morning, for example.

Runs Willoughby through the arm? The Colonel says in the plainest English possible they returned unwounded. Not "I returned unwounded", but "we returned unwounded". And if they did, the duel must have been fought with pistols, not swords. A sword duel could only be stopped when first blood was drawn.

Willoughby probably is the better shot of the two; he is both the more determined sportsman and the less conscientious landlord. He'll have been improving his eye while the Colonel attended diligently to estate business. Most likely he deloped [deliberately fired in the air.(Ed.)] He knew he was in the wrong, and his problems, bad enough as they were, would only be compounded if he killed or wounded Brandon. He would rely on the Colonel being unwilling to shoot him in cold blood if he shot first and purposely shot wide. In his turn, Colonel Brandon either missed or, realising that shooting Willoughby would mean he would have to go into hiding and then who would look after Eliza, also shot wide.

I shall wonder forever - she's dead and can't be asked to explain - from whence G.B.Stern conjured up her version of the duel.

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Mr. Fitzwilliam Darcy was proud.
He thought all the Bennets were loud;
But he met Miss Eliza
And didn't despise her -
But to charm and good humour he bowed. - Mary Anderson

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This Newsletter, the publication of the Vancouver Region of the Jane Austen Society of North America, comes out four times a year: February, May, August and November. All submissions on the subject of Jane Austen, her life, her works and her times, are welcome. Mail to the Editor: Eileen Sutherland, 4169 Lions Avenue, North Vancouver, B.C. V7R 3S2. Price to non-members: \$4.00 per year.