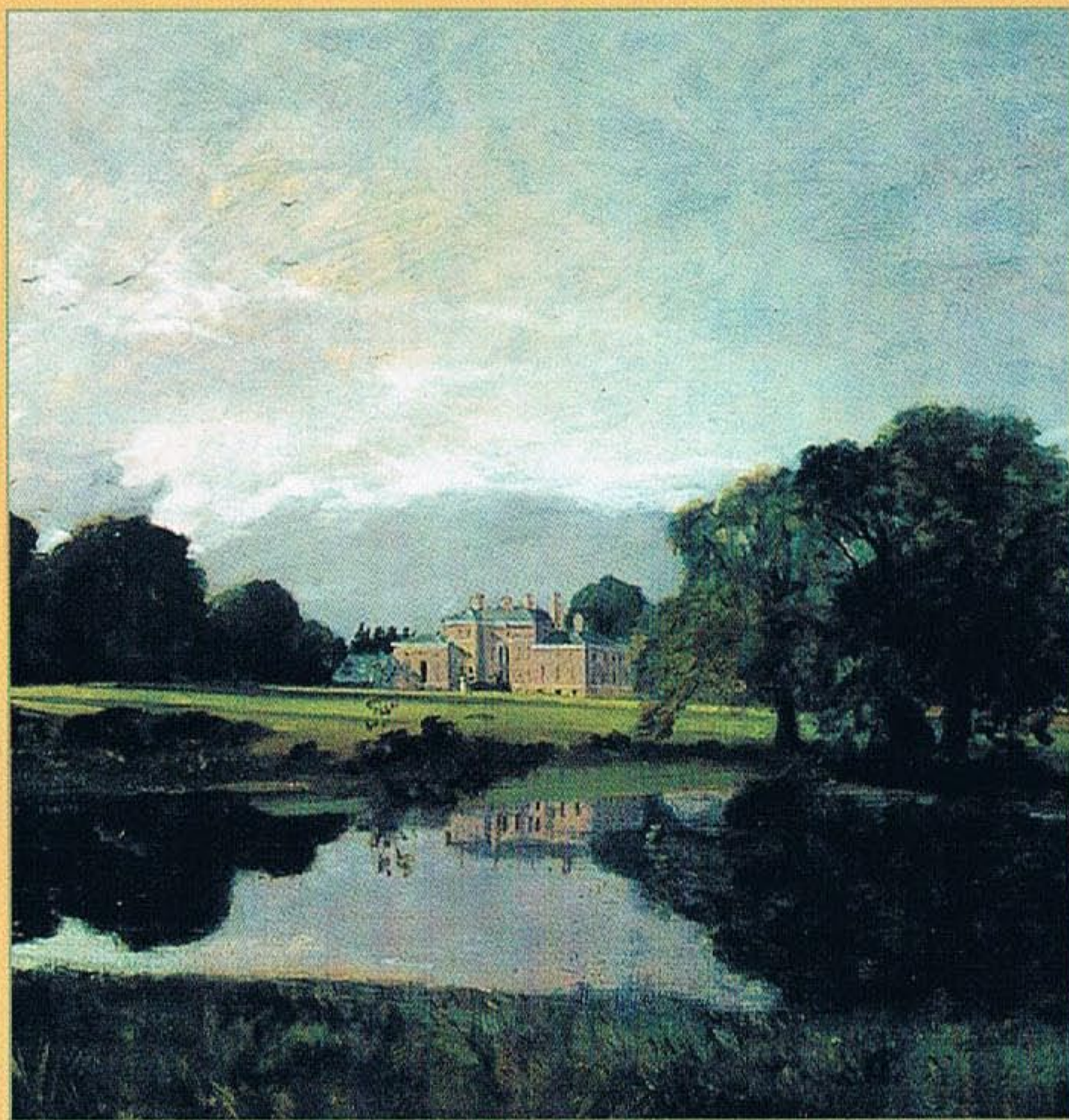


PRIDE
AND
PREJUDICE

JANE AUSTEN



EDITED BY DONALD GRAY

A NORTON CRITICAL EDITION
THIRD EDITION

A NORTON CRITICAL EDITION

Jane Austen

PRIDE AND PREJUDICE



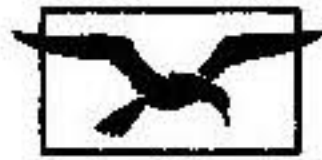
AN AUTHORITATIVE TEXT
BACKGROUNDS AND SOURCES
CRITICISM

THIRD EDITION

Edited by

DONALD GRAY

INDIANA UNIVERSITY



W • W • NORTON & COMPANY • *New York • London*

This title is printed on permanent paper containing
30 percent post-consumer waste recycled fiber.

Copyright © 2001, 1993, 1966 by W. W. Norton & Company, Inc.

All rights reserved.

Printed in the United States of America.

The text of this book is composed in Electra
with the display set in Bernhard Modern.
Composition by Binghamton Valley Composition.
Book design by Antonina Krass.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Austen, Jane, 1775–1817.

Pride and prejudice : an authoritative text, backgrounds and sources,
criticism/Jane Austen ; edited by Donald Gray.—3rd ed.

p. cm.—(A Norton critical edition)

Includes bibliographical references.

ISBN 0-393-97604-1 (pbk.)

1. England—Fiction. 2. Austen, Jane, 1775–1817. Pride and prejudice.
3. Young women—Fiction. 4. Courtship—fiction. 5. Sisters—Fiction.
I. Gray, Donald J. II. Title.

PR4034.P7 2000

823'.7—dc21

00-033956

W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 500 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10110
www.wwnorton.com

W. W. Norton & Company Ltd., Castle House, 75/76 Wells Street, London W1T 3QT

DONALD GRAY

A Note on Money

It is very difficult to compute contemporary equivalents of the sums of money named in Jane Austen's novels. One commentator uses a factor of 33 to estimate that Mr. Bennet's annual income of £2,000 is worth about \$66,000 in 1988 US dollars. Darcy's income by the same calculation is over \$330,000, and Bingley's is about \$165,000.¹ Another commentator uses a multiplier of 70 to 80 to suggest that Mr. Bennet's income is \$165,000 in 1989 US dollars, and Darcy's is \$800,000—about the sum, Mr. Bennet guesses, Darcy spent to bribe Wickham to marry Lydia ("Wickham's a fool, if he takes her with a farthing less than ten thousand pounds").² Mary Mogford, figuring that Darcy's income is 300 times that of the per capita income of Britain in 1810, multiplies the per capita income of the US in 1989 by that number to give him an annual income of over six million US dollars.³

Even were these calculations consistent with one another, they cannot take into account the difference in purchasing power in a time when labor was cheap, income taxes low, and landowners like Darcy and Mr. Bennet could partially supply their households from their own farms. (Mr. Bennet's daughters sometimes cannot use the horses because they are required for farmwork.) A more accurate measure of the economic status of characters in *Pride and Prejudice* is a comparison of the incomes Austen ascribes to them and the actual incomes of some of her contemporaries. In 1810 the nominal annual income of agricultural workers was £42, of skilled laborers between £55 and £90, of clerks £178, of clergymen £283, and of lawyers £447.⁴ David Spring in an essay reprinted in this volume suggests that the income of a large merchant (perhaps such as Mr. Gardiner) was about that of a member of the "modest gentry," or pseudo-gentry, such as Mr. Bennet (see pp. 396f).

The income of the Austen family, early and late, was less than that of merchants and holders, however temporary, of estates like Mr. Bennet's. Like most other clergymen, Jane Austen's father derived his income from tithes levied on his parishioners and from the profits of farming the "glebe," a section of land set aside for the benefit of the

1. James Heldman, "How Wealthy Is Mr. Darcy, Really." *Persuasions* 12 (1990): 38-49.
2. Edward Copeland, "The Economic Realities of Jane Austen's Day," in *Approaches to Teaching Jane Austen's "Pride and Prejudice,"* ed. Marcia McClintock Folsom (New York, 1993) 33-45. See also Copeland's essay, "Money," in *The Cambridge Companion to Jane Austen,* ed. Edward Copeland and Juliet McMaster (Cambridge and New York, 1997) 131-48.
3. "Darcy's Wealth: An Addendum," *Persuasions* 13 (1991): 49.
4. B. R. Mitchell, *British Historical Statistics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988) 153.

church.⁵ Mr. Austen's income from both sources at the beginning of his career was perhaps £200 a year from tithes and additional money from the lease on a nearby farm.⁶ During her childhood he still needed to supplement his income by taking in pupils in the parsonage. But at the time of his retirement Jane Austen wrote in one of her letters, "I do not despair of [his] getting nearly six hundred a year" from his interest in his livings.⁷

Upon his death in 1805, however, this interest lapsed. His wife and two unmarried daughters were left with an annual income of a little over £200. Jane Austen's brothers agreed to contributions that doubled that sum.⁸ After living for three years in Southampton—during one of which Austen recorded her personal expenses for the year as £50⁹—they were given the use of the cottage at Chawton. While she was resuming her work as a novelist and revising the novel in which Elizabeth Bennet becomes mistress of Pemberley, Jane Austen was settling in, with a maid, a manservant, a cook who was paid a little over £8 a year, and a new piano that cost about £30 (Tomalin 207; Nokes 346), to spend the rest of her life in a household managed on an annual income of about £460.¹

Jane Austen's earnings from her writing have a place in these comparisons. During her lifetime Austen made less than £700 from her novels (Honan 393). She sold the copyright of *Pride and Prejudice* outright for £110 and made no more money from the sales of what even during her lifetime proved to be her most popular novel. All her other novels were published on commission, which meant that she was responsible for losses as well as eligible for profits after the publisher subtracted his costs and commission. She received £140 from the sales of the first edition of *Sense and Sensibility* (1811), the first of her novels to be published, and at least £60 from a second edition. The sales of the first edition of *Mansfield Park* earned her perhaps £320, and she wondered whether to risk a second edition: "People are more ready to borrow & praise, than to buy—which I cannot wonder at;—but tho' I like praise as well as anybody, I like what Edward calls *Pewter* too" (*Letters*, 30 Nov. 1814, 287). She did agree to a second edition, but in a memorandum on her earnings as a writer she notes that in 1816 the edition still posted a loss in her account at her publisher of nearly £200,

which reduced her earnings on the sales of *Emma* (1816) to less than £40 (Honan 393). (Eventually the second edition of *Mansfield Park* made a profit, although not until after Austen's death.) The sales of *Persuasion* and *Northanger Abbey*, published posthumously in 1818, returned about £500 to her sister Cassandra (Tomalin 272). In 1832 Cassandra (who inherited Austen's copyrights) and one of her brothers sold the copyrights of all the novels except *Pride and Prejudice* (which they did not own) for £210 (Honan 320). In sum, in twenty years Jane Austen's writing brought her and her family less than £1,500, undoubtedly a welcome supplement to the discretionary incomes of two women who principally depended for support on their mother and brothers, but less than the annual income Austen imagined for Mr. Bennet.

As I have in the preceding paragraph, Austen typically states the wealth of women in lump sums, the wealth of men as annual income. The meaning of a woman's money is not that its income will support her, although at a 4 percent annual return Miss Darcy's £30,000 (Volume II, Chapter XII) and even Miss King's £10,000 (II, IV) would keep a single woman comfortably. (As Mr. Collins makes clear, that is not true of the £1,000 Elizabeth will inherit from her mother [I: XIX].) Rather, its meaning is that on her marriage a woman's money will pass as capital to her husband.² Having been one of the reasons for her desirability, her money will become one of the sources of the income by which his economic status is measured.

5. See Irene Collins, *Jane Austen and the Clergy* (London and Rio Grande, OH: Hambledon, 1993) 49–60.

6. Claire Tomalin, *Jane Austen: A Life* (London: Peters, Frances and Dunlop; New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1997) 7.

7. *Jane Austen's Letters*, ed. Deirdre Le Faye (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1995) 3–5 Jan. 1801, 69.

8. David Nokes, *Jane Austen: A Life* (London: Fourth Estate; New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1997) 274–75.

9. Nokes, 310; Park Honan, *Jane Austen: Her Life* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1987) 244–45.

1. John Halperin, *The Life of Jane Austen* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press; Brighton: Harvester Press, 1984) 145.

2. Judith Lowder Newton, *Women, Power, Subversion* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1981) 56; Mary Evans, *Jane Austen and the State* (London and New York: Tavistock, 1987) 20–21.