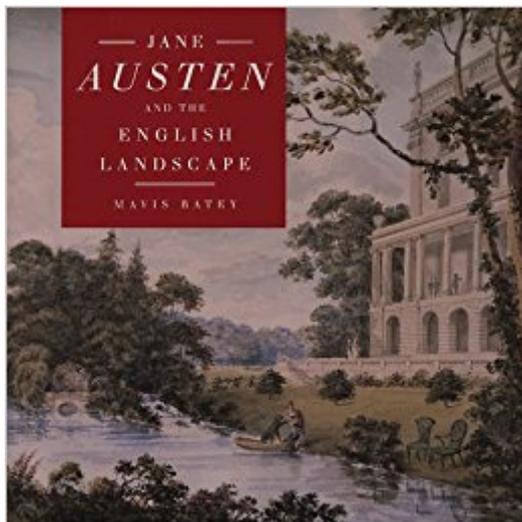


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# Jane Austen And The English Landscape



## Synopsis

Jane Austen was deeply inspired by the landscape and rural comforts of southern England. Her family's final move to Chawton, in the depths of the Hampshire countryside and so near the Steventon rectory of her childhood, gave her great satisfaction and led to her most creative period. This comprehensive work provides a guide to the ideas and subtleties behind the real and fictional settings of Jane Austen's novels, with illustrations chosen to demonstrate how the changes in response to nature and landscape were reflected by the greatest painters and landscape gardeners of the day. This book should appeal to confirmed Janeites but also to those with an interest in social and landscape history, and for all those who are newly discovering the world of Jane Austen. --This text refers to an alternate Hardcover edition.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This is a beautiful book and I'm so glad I got a copy. It's also quite informative. I think it's worth the price for the chapter that focuses on Humphrey Repton/Stoneleigh Abbey alone, but there is much more to the book than that. It gives a great context for the landscape design movements popular in Jane Austen's day. There is a chapter about the area in and around Steventon that she would have known. As for Stoneleigh Abbey, the chapter "A Mere Nothing Before Repton" describes this great country house on 700 +/- acres in Warwickshire that Jane Austen's cousin Thomas Leigh inherited in 1806. Jane, her mother, and sister Cassandra visited Stoneleigh Abbey with Thomas Leigh that year, and Mrs. Austen described it in a surviving letter to her daughter-in-law Mary. Leigh later engaged Repton to make over the grounds (though didn't live to see them carried out - the next

heirs did). The reproductions of Repton's "before" and "after" watercolors from the "Red Book" he produced for Stoneleigh Abbey are a highlight of the book for me. They're gorgeous (also depicted on the dust jacket) and shown to advantage on the large-sized pages of the book. There are also b&w views of Repton's watercolors for the ancient gatehouse at Stoneleigh, and "before" and "after" views of the walls Repton suggested for removal. The author believes, and I have to agree, that this property and the 1806 visit would later show its influence in Mansfield Park. There is also a chapter on landlords, which focuses on Edward Austen (later Knight), Jane's brother, and his estates Godmersham and Chawton, compared to Mr. Knightley. The illustrations here include photos of Godmersham House and the park, etc. today, and period engravings of both houses, and a (unfortunately, very small) reproduction of a 1741 map of Chawton grounds.

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