

# IN SEARCH OF AUSTEN'S 'MISSING SONGS'

BY JEANICE BROOKS

Jane Austen was a trained musician who regularly played and sang during much of her adult life, yet song has not figured prominently in understandings of her relation to literary tradition. Music was not only a polite entertainment, however, but provided Austen with a significant source of textual transmission and unique opportunities for critical engagement through performance. This study identifies three songs that Austen performed at Chawton after 1809, during the years she was drafting her late novels. They appear in music albums owned by the Austen family in the early nineteenth century, currently held in private collections that have until recently been unavailable to scholars. The songs set texts by Robert Burns, 'Monk' Lewis, and Claris de Florian, and all three treat the topic of fidelity within different generic and stylistic frameworks. I trace the literary sources of the poems and outline the musical networks of transmission through which Austen obtained them. I then examine the musical settings, investigating the affective aspects of performance and exploring how attention to this aspect of song illuminates Austen's treatment of Burns in the 'Sanditon' draft and her handling of themes of romance in *Persuasion*. I argue that resituating song within Austen's intellectual and emotional landscape can not only generate new understandings of her relation to literary antecedents but also contribute new perspectives to long-debated questions of Austen's relation to feeling.

In summer 1816, Jane Austen rewrote the conclusion of her final completed novel, posthumously published as *Persuasion*. In a pivotal new scene, Anne Elliot and Captain Harville debate whether men or women love most faithfully in adversity. Scholars have read Austen's involvement in her niece Fanny Knight's situation in late 1814, when Fanny was agonising over a marriage proposal, as one stimulus for the reworking.<sup>1</sup> In letters to her young relation, Austen tested Fanny's feelings and offered opinions on the difficulty of maintaining a long and uncertain engagement. But Austen's fiction is not a simple exercise of life into writing: her reflections on

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constancy in *Persuasion* are framed in the context of literary tradition and presented as an act of literary criticism. Harville claims: 'But let me observe that all histories are against you, all stories, prose and verse [...] Songs and proverbs, all talk of woman's fickleness. But perhaps you will say, these were all written by men'. Anne concurs: 'Yes, yes, if you please, no reference to examples in books. Men have had every advantage of us in telling their own story. Education has been theirs in so much higher a degree; the pen has been in their hands. I will not allow books to prove any thing'.<sup>2</sup>

In this celebrated passage, Austen opens striking perspectives on her position as a female author and a woman reading books by men. But while Anne's response refers particularly to books, the conversation as a whole relates to a wider range of expressive culture, including song. At the turn of the nineteenth century, music involved even more strongly gendered patterns of creative and affective agency than books. Although women composers enjoyed some success, particularly with songs, harp and keyboard music intended for domestic consumption, male composers overwhelmingly dominated musical production. At the same time, the market for domestic repertoires relied heavily on the activities of amateur female performers such as Jane Austen herself. Music had long been central to the suite of accomplishments acquired by aristocratic and gentry women, and England's burgeoning wealth in the eighteenth century helped to ensure that by 1800, greater numbers of girls than ever before were trained to provide musical entertainment in the home. Thus while men were the main beneficiaries of compositional training and acclaim, in many different contexts women exercised decisive roles in creating the emotional appeal and persuasive power of music in sound.

Accounts of Austen's relation to literary tradition rarely consider song.<sup>3</sup> Despite Austen's lifelong engagement with musical culture and the prominence of music in her novels, as Gillen D'Arcy Wood has commented, her musical life 'remains at the margins of Austen biography and academic criticism of her fiction'.<sup>4</sup> D'Arcy Wood posits that scholarly deafness to Austen's music derives from her ambivalence about musicality in the novels, in which Austen's musical characters often embody negative

1 Gillian Beer, introduction to Jane Austen, *Persuasion*, ed. G. Beer (London, 1998), vii-ix; Jocelyn Harris, *A Revolution Almost beyond Expression: Jane Austen's Persuasion* (Newark, DE, 2007), 27-9.

2 Jane Austen, *Persuasion*, ed. J. Todd and A. Blank (Cambridge, 2006), 254-5.

3 Jane Stabler, 'Literary Influences' and Alan Richardson, 'Reading Practices', in J. Todd (ed.), *Jane Austen in Context* (Cambridge, 2005), 41-50 and 397-405; Isobel Grundy, 'Jane Austen and Literary Traditions', in E. Copeland and J. McMaster (eds), *The Cambridge Companion to Jane Austen*, 2nd edn (Cambridge, 2011), 192-214; Gillian Dow and Katie Halsey, 'Jane Austen's Reading: The Chawton Years' *Persuasions Online*, 30 (2010) <<http://www.jasna.org/persuasions/on-line/vol30no2/dow-halsey.html>>. On *Persuasion* in particular, see Jocelyn Harris, *Jane Austen's Art of Memory* (Cambridge, 1989), 188-212; Janet Todd, 'Literary Context' in Austen, *Persuasion*, ed. Todd and Blank, xlv-lviii.

4 Gillen D'Arcy Wood, *Romanticism and Music Culture in Britain, 1770-1840* (Cambridge, 2010), 155. For bibliography of specialized studies of Austen and music see Jeanice Brooks, introductory essay to *The Austen Family Music Books* <<https://archive.org/details/austenfamilymusicbooks>>.

traits, and from a tendency to collapse Austen's relation to music into one side of contemporary debates about feminine education. Thus Austen's own musical activities become 'empty' accomplishments, examples of the obligatory but ultimately inconsequential acquisition of polite social trappings, and can be written out of accounts of the development of her authorial self or the psychological lives of her characters.<sup>5</sup>

But if domestic music making has often been considered a form of disempowerment or constraint—a mode of reproducing patriarchal ideologies and promoting decorative confinement in the home—much recent scholarship has instead emphasized how women's musical activity could offer creative, critical and emotional agency in both professional and amateur contexts.<sup>6</sup> Considering Austen's music as the practice of an artistic discipline rather than a trivial pastime can open new perspectives on the intellectual landscape she inhabited, which was shaped by musical as well as literary currents: it is significant that intelligent conversation between Austen's characters—as in the example of Anne Elliot and Captain Harville—very frequently involves music as well as books. Domestic music served as an important textual crossroads, drawing on an extensive range of literary sources and creating new modes of dissemination through specifically musical networks of distribution. Equally importantly, songs provided opportunities for critical reading through performance: Austen was not a silent reader of the texts that entered her life through music, but a performer who engaged with the affective claims of materials produced by male poets and composers. Here I explore three newly identified pieces that Austen owned and sang in the final decade of her life, showing how music mediated different literary traditions and textual practices and brought them into Austen's daily existence through performance. All three songs treat questions of fidelity, offering a productive counterpoint to Austen's fictional working of this terrain in her late novels, including both *Persuasion* and the unfinished 'Sanditon' draft. At the same time, I argue, attention to Austen's 'missing songs' allows new insights into Austen's relation to feeling and her complex engagement with the culture of sensibility.

### I. Jane Austen's 'missing songs'

Although Austen's writing often refers to music making, most of what we know about her own performance comes from much later family memoirs. The most frequently cited account is by her niece Caroline, produced during the preparation of James Edward Austen-Leigh's *Memoir of Jane Austen* (1870):

5 D'Arcy Wood, *Romanticism and Music Culture*, 158–59. Further on the need to transcend the accomplishment narrative about Austen's music, see Pierre Dubois, *Music in the Georgian Novel* (Cambridge, 2015), 273–96.

6 Matthew Head, *Sovereign Feminine: Music and Gender in Eighteenth-Century Germany* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA, 2013). See also Leslie Ritchie, *Women Writing Music in Late Eighteenth-Century England: Social Harmony in Literature and Performance* (Aldershot, 2008), 34–36, and Ruth Solie, *Music in Other Words: Victorian Conversations* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA, 2004), 85–117.

Aunt Jane began her day with music—for which I conclude she had a natural taste; as she thus kept it up—tho' she had no one to teach; was never induced (as I have heard) to play in company; and none of her family cared much for it. I suppose that she might not trouble *them*, she chose her practising time before breakfast—when she could have the room to herself—She practised regularly every morning—She played very pretty tunes, *I* thought—and I liked to stand by her and listen to them; but the music, (for I knew the books well in after years) would now be thought disgracefully easy—Much that she played from was manuscript, copied out by herself—and so neatly and correctly, that it was as easy to read as print—<sup>7</sup>

Caroline was born only in 1805, so these memories must relate to years after her aunt settled at Chawton in 1809, during the period of intense literary activity when Austen revised and published *Sense and Sensibility* (1811) and *Pride and Prejudice* (1813) and composed her later works.

Caroline supplied further details when Austen-Leigh was preparing the expanded *Memoir* of 1871. On receipt of the first edition, the Reverend Fulwar William Fowle wrote to reminisce about Jane Austen's performance of a popular Scots song, 'The yellow-hair'd laddie'. This prompted Caroline to flesh out her own memories:

My Aunt Miss Jane Austen had nearly left off singing, by the time I can recollect much about her performances—but *some* songs of hers I do remember—One was—  
 Her groves of green myrtle, let foreign lands reckon,  
 Where bright beaming summer exalts their [...]   
 Far dearer to me are the Braes of [...]   
 With the wind stealing over the long yellow broom  
 My memory fails at the last word of the 3d. line—and one or two of the 4<sup>th</sup>. are a guess. The Song, as she sang it, was in M.S. I never saw it in print—  
 Another, already mentioned, was entitled Oh! no my Love no! or The Wife's [Farewell] I believe from the Farce of Age to-morrow[.] I had a printed copy of this once, myself ages ago— But the song I heard her sing oftenest, was a little French ditty in her M.S. book[.]  
 The 2 first lines were  
 [']Que j'aime à voir les Hirondelles  
 Volent ma fenêtre tous les jours'—  
 As a child, this was my favourite—& was what I asked for the oftenest.<sup>8</sup>

In 1999, Deirdre Le Faye identified Robert Burns as the author of 'Their groves o' sweet myrtle,' but could not attribute the poems of the other two songs, or find musical sources for any of the three.<sup>9</sup> As Le Faye pointed out, none of these 'missing songs' appears in the music albums compiled by Austen and her family that are owned by Jane Austen's House Museum. These volumes include two complete manuscripts in Austen's hand as well as printed sheet music compilations bearing her signature. Formerly part of the Knight family library at Chawton

7 James Edward Austen-Leigh, *A Memoir of Jane Austen and Other Family Recollections*, ed. K. Sutherland (Oxford, 2002), 170-1.

8 Caroline Austen to James Edward Austen-Leigh, undated [after 9 January 1870], in *A Memoir*, 193.

9 Deirdre LeFaye, 'Three Missing Jane Austen Songs', *Notes & Queries*, 46 (1999), 454-5.

House, these albums became more widely known in the mid-1930s, and since their donation to the Jane Austen Memorial Trust in 1952 they have been regularly drawn upon by both musicologists and Austen scholars.<sup>10</sup> One of the books contains a version of 'The yellow-haired laddie' that helps to substantiate Fowles's recollection of Austen's performances. But they shed no further light on the music Caroline remembered.

Le Faye did not have access to other extant Austen music books from the Knight library that were not donated to the museum. None contains Jane Austen's signature, and at the time of the donation they were apparently considered less significant and remained in family possession. Two stayed in the Knight library at Chawton House, where they remained unknown to modern scholarship until discovered by Samantha Carrasco in 2009. Seven others passed to another branch of the family, and until recently were rarely seen by scholars.<sup>11</sup> These largely unstudied books prove to be just as interesting as the better-known albums owned by the museum, and they contain all three songs that Caroline Austen remembered.

## II. Performing criticism—the 'Song from Burns'

'Their groves o' sweet myrtle'—like 'The yellow-haired laddie'—arises from the Scots and other traditional song collection and composition that so distinctively marked the period's musical culture. Austen family members acquired many of these pieces, and Jane not only copied several into her firmly attributed manuscript albums but also owned at least two published sets, containing over fifty Scots songs between them.<sup>12</sup> Music of this type features in Austen's novels: in *Pride and Prejudice*, Caroline Bingley plays a 'lively Scotch air' and Mary Bennet performs Scots and Irish traditional songs; in *Emma*, Jane Fairfax's piano arrives with a set of Irish melodies, and the only song mentioned in that novel, 'Robin Adair,' belongs to this corpus.

The Austen family's example of 'Their groves o' sweet myrtle' is a manuscript probably made by Jane and included in Jenkyns 03, a binder's volume of songs, glees and keyboard works from the 1790s and early nineteenth century. The album includes items copied in several hands using different papers and inks. There is no

10 The Museum's books and the nine further volumes discussed below are available as digital facsimiles in *The Austen Family Music Books* <<https://archive.org/details/austenfamilymusicbooks>>, along with information on their history and provenance. Volumes owned by Jane Austen's House Museum are catalogued in Ian Gammie and Derek McCulloch, *Jane Austen's Music* (St Albans, 1996): below I use Gammie and McCulloch's shelfmarks (CHWJA/19/1-8), which are also employed in the digital edition.

11 These nine volumes are discussed in Carrasco, 'The Austen Family Music Books and Hampshire Music Culture'; they are identified below using shelfmarks (Jenkyns 01-07 and Knight 01-02) employed by the digital edition.

12 Austen's copies of *Thirty Scots Songs* and *A Second Set of Scots Songs*, popular publications by Robert Bremner, are bound in CHWJA/19/8; see also Gammie and McCulloch, *Jane Austen's Music*, 30-1.

evident logic to the binding order, and the contents do not always align with paper type (that is, the copying of a musical item often extends over a change to a new batch or leaf of paper). The book was rebound in the twentieth century and the original binding is lost, but there is a contemporary manuscript index signed 'C.E. Austen,' which led Patrick Piggott to speculate that the volume represented loose material owned by Jane Austen and bound up after her death by her sister Cassandra.<sup>13</sup> Whether or not this is correct, the blend of hands—which includes contributions from at least three generations of Austen women—is a graphic illustration of musical exchanges similar to those described in Caroline's memoir, in which female relations of different generations shared their music through copying and performance.<sup>14</sup>

The position of the piece in the album helps to narrow the range of possible copying dates. 'Their groves o' sweet myrtle' appears between a duet by Michael Kelly, 'Twilight glimmers o'er the steep,' and Joseph Haydn's famous 'Mermaid's Song'. The piece is labelled 'Song from Burns' but no composer is identified. The Kelly and Haydn songs are copied in two different hands, and the Burns song is written in a third. The hand of the Burns setting strongly resembles Jane Austen's mature text hand, and there are only minor differences between the music script and earlier, more securely attributed examples of Austen's music copying.<sup>15</sup> The text hand used for 'The Mermaid's Song' is a good match for Elizabeth Bridges (Jane's sister-in-law, Mrs Edward Austen), though there are again some differences between the music hand and that of earlier copies such as Jenkyns 02, Elizabeth's securely attributed personal manuscript album of c.1799.<sup>16</sup> Although the binding of Jenkyns 03 is too tight to determine the construction with confidence, it appears to be made up of folded single sheets, following the same procedure Elizabeth Bridges used for her own manuscript book. The Burns song begins on the verso of the bifolio used for the Kelly song and continues onto the new bifolio used for the Haydn.<sup>17</sup> The copying date of this section of the album can thus be posited as later than 1798, when the Kelly piece was first performed and published, and earlier than Elizabeth's death in 1808.<sup>18</sup>

13 Patrick Piggott, *The Innocent Diversion: A Study of Music in the Life and Writings of Jane Austen* (London, 1979), 155–8.

14 In addition to pieces copied by Jane Austen and Elizabeth Bridges Austen, the book includes mid-eighteenth century 'Lessons for the Harpsichord' in a hand resembling that of Austen's mother Cassandra Leigh, and other items probably copied by Fanny Knight. Austen discusses the exchange of music copies with Elizabeth Bridges Austen in her letter of 8–9 January 1799 (*Jane Austen's Letters*, ed. D. Le Faye, 3<sup>rd</sup> edn (Oxford, 1995), 33).

15 For example, the treble and bass clef forms are slightly different from those employed in Austen's song manuscript CHWJA/19/3, which was begun around 1793–1795.

16 Jenkyns 02 is signed on the inside cover 'Eliz<sup>th</sup> Austen Aug<sup>st</sup> 19 1799', likely the date the book returned from the binder.

17 The Burns song begins on page 68, continuing on to page 69; the two inner pages of the bifolio (70–1) are not filled in, and the Haydn canzonet begins on the verso (72).

A copying date in the first decade of the nineteenth century fits with the years in which musical settings of 'Their groves o' sweet myrtle' were most popular. Burns wrote the poem in 1795 for the Edinburgh publisher George Thomson's collections of Scottish airs. In musical terms it is a *contrafactum*—in which new words are fitted to existing music—to the tune of the Irish traditional song 'The Humours of Glen'.<sup>19</sup> It was first published in several London newspapers after Burns's death in 1796, in one case with the (erroneous) claim that it was the poet's last work.<sup>20</sup> Thomson sent the melody to the Bohemian composer Leopold Kozeluch in Vienna for arrangement, and published the result in 1799 in his fourth set of Scottish airs.<sup>21</sup> Kozeluch's arrangement was followed a few years later by another using the same text and melody, composed by Joseph Haydn for William Whyte in 1804–1805 and published in Whyte's second volume of Scottish songs (1807).<sup>22</sup> Other composers set Burns's poem to newly composed music rather than using the traditional Irish tune: examples include pieces by John Ambrose (c. 1800) and Samuel Porter the younger (c. 1810).<sup>23</sup> Both these settings not only provided new melodies, but also featured minor variants on the text as it had appeared in Thomson's collection. In Ambrose's case Burns's poem is almost completely anglicized ('o' replaced by 'of,' 'Wi' by 'with' and so on).

The song preserved in the Austen manuscript is none of these, however. It too preserves a variant text, and one change appears particularly telling: the name of the sweetheart is 'Jane' rather than 'Jean'. No other settings feature this reading, even when other parts of the text have been anglicized. Since no print source for the song has yet been found, this change to the poem raises the tantalizing possibility that the song was composed in the Austen circle. This is highly unlikely, however, for the same piece appears in another contemporary manuscript album copied by Mary Elizabeth Egerton (1782–1846), only daughter of the wealthy Cheshire landowner William Egerton. The album is held today amid uncatalogued sheet music at the Egerton family seat at Tatton Park. It contains a musically fuller version of the same song preserved in the Austen volume, and the female protagonist in the Egerton version is also 'Jane' rather than 'Jean'. Mary Egerton's

18 Kelly's piece is from his *Blue-beard, or Female Curiosity*, first performed at Drury Lane in 1798; the 'Mermaid's Song', Hob. XXVIa/25, was composed during Haydn's second London sojourn in 1794–1795. The entire section uses a twelve-stave pre-ruled music paper watermarked Portal & Bridges 1794.

19 *The Letters of Robert Burns*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn, ed. G. Ross Roy (Oxford, 1985), vol. 2, 342–3 and 346–7.

20 Lucyle Werkmeister, 'Robert Burns and the London Daily Press', *Modern Philology*, 63 (1966), 334–5.

21 George Thomson, ed., *A Select Collection of Original Scotch [sic] Airs for the Voice* [Fourth Set]. London: Preston & Son, [1799]. 'Their groves of sweet myrtle' is no. 95.

22 William Whyte, ed., *A Collection of Scottish Airs*, 2 vols (Edinburgh: Whyte, 1806–1807).

23 John Ambrose, *Their Groves of sweet myrtles* [sic] (London: Riley, [c. 1800]); Samuel Porter, *On Scotland* ['Their groves of sweet myrtle'] (London: Goulding, [c. 1810?]. Porter's piece is in E flat major, 2/4, and Ambrose's in D major, 3/4; neither relates to the A minor, 6/8 'Humours of Glen' arranged by Kozeluch and Haydn.



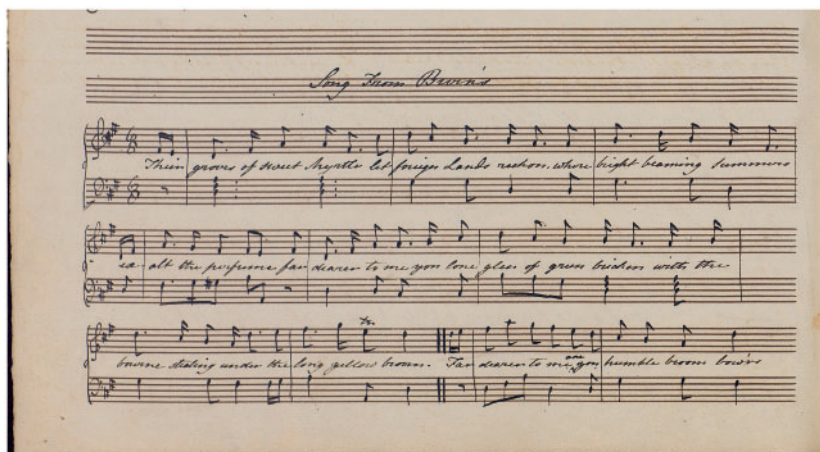


FIG. 1. Opening of 'Their groves of sweet myrtle' from Jenkyns 03. For the complete piece see *The Austen Family Music Books*, < <https://archive.org/details/austen1676477-2001> >, pp. 68-69 (images 76-77). Image by the University of Southampton Digitisation Unit. © Richard Jenkyns.

manuscript can be dated to c.1801, and its more complete musical reading suggests it was copied from an as yet unidentified print source.<sup>24</sup> Caroline Austen remembered that 'The Song, as [Jane Austen] sang it, was in M.S. I never saw it in print—', indicating that no one in the Austen family owned a printed version (unlike many other cases, where music owned in print by one family member shows up in another's manuscript book).

The song preserved in both the Egerton and Austen manuscripts includes gestures typical of the Scots song, from the melodic emphasis on leaps through the tonic triad and its upper octave, to the abundance of dotted rhythms (Figure 1). It may have been derived from a traditional tune: a similar melody was published as 'Open the door to me, oh!' in Alexander Smith's *The Musical Miscellany*, published in Perth in 1786.<sup>25</sup> Mary Egerton's copy includes a violin line, as well as the vocal and keyboard parts, and is copied on four staves, with the violin and vocal parts above a fully realized keyboard accompaniment. The Austen copy has no violin part and omits the right hand of the piano accompaniment, laying the song out on two staves devoted to the vocal line and the piano left hand.

<sup>24</sup> The piece appears in a pre-ruled music book produced by Monzani and Cimador between 1800 and 1803, when they occupied premises at the address on the printed title page (Charles Humphries and William C. Smith, *Music Publishing in the British Isles from the Beginning Until the Middle of the Nineteenth Century*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn (Oxford, 1970), 236.) The hand matches that of pieces signed by Mary Egerton and dated August 1801 in another Tatton Park manuscript, MR 2-4.33.

<sup>25</sup> The two melodies diverge enough that this print is probably not the direct source for 'Their groves o' sweet myrtle', but the resemblance indicates how strongly the 'Song from Burns' hews to the style of traditional song.



Since the left hand of the accompaniment is almost entirely an unharmonized bass line, the Austen copy effectively presents a reduction to melody and unfigured bass. The music collections of both Jane Austen and her sister-in-law Elizabeth Austen include many music prints with figured or unfigured bass lines; the ability to realize a bass was common among women whose keyboard education preceded the general adoption of fully realized keyboard accompaniments in English music prints after 1800.<sup>26</sup> This also meant they did not need to use realized accompaniments even when they did have them—they may have played from the bass and ignored the upper part, or varied it according to the patterns they regularly used for realizing bass lines in other music—and they did not need to write out fully realized accompaniments when copying music for later use.

The Austen copy differs from the more complete Egerton manuscript in a number of other ways beyond the reduced accompaniment and absent violin part. The Austen and Egerton versions of the bass line are slightly different. Dotted rhythms regularly appear in the Austen copy (either dotted quaver-semiquaver, or the reverse order 'Scotch snap') in the place of even quaver rhythms in the Egerton manuscript. Vocal trills, absent in the Egerton copy, appear in the Austen version in the cadences ending the song's two major sections. The Austen copy also contains a simple two-bar piano postlude that is completely missing from Egerton. This postlude erroneously omits a clef change in the left hand (which should move from treble to bass clef for the upbeat to the final bar), though the need to move the left hand down to the bass range may have been so obvious, or well known to the copyist, that she did not feel the need to include it.

While the Egerton copy was clearly made from a written or print source, these factors suggest that the Austen copyist was instead setting down the basic outlines of a song she had already mastered in performance, incorporating her habitual ways of rendering the piece. She may have consulted a print source while copying and adjusted to reflect her own performance habits as she went along, but it is more likely that she worked entirely by ear and from memory. Another possibility is that the Austen copy was made from an intermediate manuscript in which these changes had already occurred. The copy may not have been made for the scribe's own use, but may represent the notation from memory of a favourite piece for someone else. That these questions are impossible to resolve demonstrates the relatively loose transmission of songs in English musical culture and the continuation of copying practices that figure in personal music manuscripts stretching back for at least a hundred years. Even as print dissemination became increasingly the norm in the late eighteenth century, women continued to spend enormous amounts of time copying out music for their own and others' use. Work by Margaret Ezell and Michelle Levy has emphasized the importance of manuscripts

26 In the eighteenth century, performers created accompaniments by improvising chords above a bass line, often supplied with numbers to indicate which harmonies to use ('figured bass'). Around 1800, publishers began to replace figured bass with fully notated keyboard parts, although extemporized practices such as preluding and ornamentation remained a standard component of amateur keyboard performance throughout the period.

to women's literary culture in this period, and manuscript production occupied a similarly central place in female musical practice.<sup>27</sup> Typical of the relationship between performance and text preserved in such manuscripts is variability in ornamentation; flexibility in rhythmic notation; concern for preserving melody and words above all, with bass and other parts notated only to the extent necessary to realize a performance; and creative engagement with the materials that may extend to the composition and notation of new parts or sections.<sup>28</sup>

The fluidity of musical representation renders the differences between the words preserved in the Austen and Egerton copies even more interesting. Both manuscripts include 'Jane' in the final line, and both present anglicized versions of Burns's text. But there are many minor differences between the texts and two instances of substantially different readings (Table 1). These occur in line 2, where Egerton's 'bright blooming summer exalts' appears as 'bright beaming summers exalt' in Austen, and lines 9-11, the opening of the second stanza, where the texts diverge completely.

In both cases, the text as preserved in the Austen manuscript matches the reading of more authoritative publications of Burns's poetry, such as the Thomson collection for which 'Their groves o' sweet myrtle' was written.<sup>29</sup> In stanza 2, Austen restores the comparison between warm exotic breezes and cold Scottish winds that the Egerton version destroys, and which are the principal means of carrying forward into the second strophe the juxtaposition of images—seductive foreign beauty versus rougher but beloved native land—that structures the first. In contrast, the changes to the poem in the Egerton version seem motivated by musical concerns; the new words in line 11 mean that the words 'Far dearer' fall on the same melodic motif as they did in the first strophe, and make the passage easier to remember and to sing. Since Mary Egerton was almost certainly reproducing the text as it appeared in her musical source, the Austen text seems to represent a 'corrected' version resulting from comparison to a printed edition of Burns's poetry. A further indication of such a process is the insertion of the missing 'are' in line 5, which Mary Egerton left out—presumably because it did not figure in her printed source—but which Austen has inserted with a carat above the rest of the line, as if its absence was realized only after copying out the passage, on further comparison with a Burns edition. Musically this line works with or without the 'are' (a two-note melisma on 'me' can fit the

27 Margaret J. M. Ezell, *Social Authorship and the Advent of Print* (Baltimore, MD, 1999). Michelle Levy *Unprinted: Manuscript Culture and Social Media in the Romantic Age* (forthcoming).

28 See Rebecca Herissone, 'Daniel Henstridge and the Aural Transmission of Music in Restoration England' in L. Austern, C. Bailey, and A. Eubanks Winkler (eds), *Beyond Boundaries: Rethinking the Circulation of Music in Early Modern England* (Bloomington, IN., forthcoming).

29 *The Poems and Songs of Robert Burns*, ed. J. Kinsley (Oxford, 1968), vol. 2, 787-8; vol. 3, 1481-2.

Table 1. ‘Their groves o’ sweet myrtle’ textual comparison

THOMSON	AUSTEN MS: <i>italics</i> indicate deviation from Thomson <sup>1</sup>	EGERTON MS: <b>bold</b> indicates deviation from Austen
<i>THEIR GROVES O’ SWEET MYRTLE, &amp;c.</i> BY ROBERT BURNS. AIR. – THE HUMOURS OF GLEN.	Song from Burns	
1 Their groves of sweet myrtle let foreign lands reckon, 2 Where bright beaming summers exalt the perfume; 3 Far dearer to me yon lone glen o’ green breckan, 4 Wi’ the burn stealing under the lang, yellow broom: 5 Far dearer to me are yon humble broom bowers, 6 Where the blue-bell and gowan lurk, lowly, unseen; 7 For there, lightly tripping amang the wild flowers, 8 A-listening the linnet, oft wanders my JEAN. 9 Tho’ rich is the breeze in their gay, sunny vallies, 10 And cauld, Caledonia’s blast on the wave;	<i>[first stanza underlaid to music]</i> Their groves of sweet Myrtle let foreign Lands reckon, where bright <b>blooming summer exalts</b> the perfume far dearer to me, yon lone Glen of green <b>Breckon</b> with the <b>burn</b> stealing under the long yellow broom. Far dearer to me [ <b>are’ missing</b> ] yon humble broom bowers Where the gowan & bluebell lurk lowly unseen for <b>there</b> lightly tripping among the wild flowers a list’ning the linnet oft wanders my Jane. <i>[second stanza separately laid out below]</i> <b>Oh welcome they are</b> to their gay sunny Vallies <b>Tho’ cold Caledonia lies bleak to the wave</b>	

(Continued)

Table 1. Continued

THOMSON	AUSTEN MS: <i>italics</i> indicate deviation from Thomson <sup>1</sup>	EGERTON MS: <b>bold</b> indicates deviation from Austen
11 Their sweet-scented woodlands that skirt the proud palace,	Their sweet scented Woodlands that skirt the proud palace	<b>Far dearer his rocks, than the proud painted palace</b>
12 What are they? – the haunt of the Tyrant and Slave!	What are they? The <i>haunts</i> of the Tyrant and Slave.	What are they? The haunt of the Tyrant and slave.
13 The Slave's spicy forests, and gold-bubbling fountains,	The Slave's spicy forests & gold bubbling fountains	The slave's spicy Forests & gold bubbling <b>fountain</b>
14 The brave Caledonian views with disdain;	The brave Caledonian views with disdain;	The brave Caledonian can view with disdain;
15 He wanders as free as the winds of his mountains,	He wanders as free as the winds <i>on the</i> mountains	He wanders as free as the winds on <b>his</b> Mountains,
16 Save LOVE's willing fetters, the chains of his JEAN.	Save love's willing fetters, the charms of his <i>Jane</i> .	Save love's willing fetters, the charms of his Jane.

<sup>1</sup> Only differences to the substance of the text are noted; as a line-by-line comparison shows, the Austen version also presents anglicized spellings for a significant number of words, as well as variants in capitalization and punctuation.

text to the vocal melody), but its absence affects the scansion of the poetic text by removing a syllable.

This editing process was not entirely consistent, as in a few places the Austen version does not correct deviations from Burns (for example line 7, where Burns's 'there' appears as 'here' in Austen; see also line 15); but in all but one case these are minor differences rather than substantive changes to meaning or structure. In this single case, line 6, where the words 'bluebell and gowan' appear in reverse order in both Austen and Egerton, the vocal line may have discouraged a change back to Burns's original text ('gowan and bluebell' fits the musical phrase far better, with 'gowan' on a downbeat and 'bluebell' on the Scotch snap in the middle of the bar). In the context of a corrected text, that Austen did not change the beloved's name back to Jean—despite the disruption that 'Jane' causes to the rhyme of the first strophe—is significant, suggesting that the enjoyment of name play seen in other Austen family documents might have been at work here as well.

More important still is the evidence for Austen's direct engagement with Burns's poetry. Though the Austen manuscript is musically less complete than Egerton, gesturing toward the continued importance of performance and aural transmission in the circulation of songs, at the same time it manifests a concern with stable poetic text more characteristic of developing practices of literary editorship. And the knowledge that Jane Austen could have engaged this closely with Burns's work at a textual level in the first decade of the nineteenth century, and that she certainly performed this song for her niece during the Chawton years, helps to contextualize a scene from her unfinished final novel, known as 'Sanditon,' which she began drafting in early 1817.

'Their groves o' sweet myrtle,' like much nationalist poetry, works through conflation of the poet's beloved with the national landscape: it claims that the enticements of other women or other countries have no effect on the true Scotsman, whose faith to the more modest attractions of his homeland is matched by his loyalty to his beloved. Yet it is precisely the reliability of such poetry as a gauge of fidelity that is questioned in a passage from 'Sanditon' in which Austen's characters engage in an extended comparison between Burns and his compatriot Sir Walter Scott.<sup>30</sup> Scholars have read this passage partly as a form of revenge on Scott, whose assessment of *Emma* as a new kind of realist novel in the *Quarterly Review* had characterized Austen as unfeeling and passionless.<sup>31</sup> In 'Sanditon,' Austen both casts Scott himself as 'tame' and critiques his endorsement of the emotional ultimacy of romance.

30 See Austen's autograph of 'Sanditon' in *Jane Austen's Fiction Manuscripts*, ed. K. Sutherland, booklet 2, 31-3 <<http://www.janeausten.ac.uk/search/sanditon/b2-31.html?hl=Burns>>. See also Jane Austen, *Later Manuscripts*, ed. L. Bree and J. Todd (Cambridge, 2008), 174-6 and 471-5.

31 In Scott's view, instead of 'pictures of romantic affection and sensibility', Austen aims at 'a correct and striking representation of that which is daily taking place' in the reader's own world. The reader pursues the work 'with pleasure, if not with deep interest' as feelings are not engaged. Sir Walter Scott, 'Emma', *Quarterly Review*, 14 (1815), 188-201.

The scene is the first of two in which Charlotte Heywood tests the intentions and character of Sir Edward Denham through a discussion of literature. Austen mocks conventional modes for expressing literary taste by juxtaposing Sir Edward's hyperbolic clichés and inept quotations with Charlotte's attempts to bring textual accuracy and reasoned reading into the frame. About his favourite poet, Sir Edward claims that, 'if ever there was a man who *felt*, it was Burns;' in comparison, 'If Scott *has* a fault, it is the want of passion—Tender, elegant, descriptive—but *tame*'. Burns 'is always on fire.—His soul was the altar in which lovely woman sat enshrined, his spirit truly breathed the immortal incense which is her due'.<sup>32</sup> Charlotte's response underlines the gap between the fine feelings evinced in Burns's poetry and the morality of the man:

I have read several of Burns's poems with great delight [...] but I am not poetic enough to separate a man's poetry entirely from his character;—and poor Burns's known irregularities greatly interrupt my enjoyment of his lines.—I have difficulty in depending on the *truth* of his feelings as a lover. I have not faith in the *sincerity* of the affections of a man of his description. He felt and he wrote and he forgot.<sup>33</sup>

Sir Edward, undeterred, carries on with ecstatic praise of Burns's 'ardour and truth,' conflating them in a way that Charlotte cannot.

This passage from the 'Sanditon' draft and the singing of 'Their groves o' sweet myrtle' figure as two instances of Austen's performance of Burns criticism in the years after 1809. In musical performance, the song acts to heighten the emotional content of Burns's verse; it intensifies the sentiment of the lines in a bid to make performers and listeners complicit with Burns's extravagant affective claims. The Celtic-flavoured melodic line and typical 'Scottish' rhythms serve as markers of authenticity, asserting a truth value for the poem's claims for fidelity to the land and, by extension, to 'Jane'—the sweetheart who represents it. Although the extent of the song's persuasive success is strongly dependent on the quality of the performance, only a parodic rendition could completely undercut the music's enhancement of the poem; and there is no hint in Caroline's memoir that her aunt sang it ironically. In 'Sanditon,' Austen calls this kind of performance into question precisely as a performance: the temporary adoption of an illusory role, felt but soon forgotten. The constructed relationship of expressive culture to feeling is exposed. By staging Sir Edward's rapturous endorsement of the emotional appeal of Burns's verse alongside Charlotte's more pragmatic assessment of the fictional representation of love, Austen also by extension interrogates the meaning of her own singing of this poetry, proffering criticism as an antidote to its potential persuasive power.

### III. Performing theatre: 'No, my love, no'

In my interpretation of Austen's relationship to the emotional content of the 'Song from Burns,' I have presented her in the familiar guise of an anti-sentimental and

32 Austen, *Later Manuscripts*, 174. 33 Austen, *Later Manuscripts*, 174–5.



anti-romantic figure. Scott's review of *Emma* was a significant intervention in the early history of Austen criticism, and typical of how Austen was cast as a dispassionate realist by the Romantics. This quality was re-cast as irony in later nineteenth-century views of Austen's work, and in more recent criticism has most often been seen as biting moral commentary.<sup>34</sup> The second of Austen's 'missing songs' fits neatly into such an understanding of Austen's relation to feeling and its expression in cultural production. 'No, my love, no' and its source history underline the unreliability of lovers' vows and the theatricality of music's sentimental appeal.

Caroline Austen was correct in thinking that the song came from the farce *Of Age To-morrow*. Its text is by Matthew Lewis, whose scandalous novel *The Monk* (1796) has drawn attention away from his extremely successful career as a lyricist. The play, by Thomas Dibdin, was based on *Der Wildfang* (1798) by August von Kotzebue, and fits into a broader craze for English adaptations of Kotzebue's works that swept the London stage in the late eighteenth century. Most important of these for Austen scholars is *Lovers' Vows* (1798), Elizabeth Inchbald's adaptation of Kotzebue's *Das Kind der Liebe* (1789/1790), which became the central play in Austen's *Mansfield Park*, but Austen also knew many other adaptations. On her earliest documented trip to the professional theatre she saw *The Birthday*, Dibdin's adaptation of Kotzebue's *Die Versöhnung*; she also knew *The Beehive*, a musical farce based on Kotzebue's *Das Posthaus in Treuenbrietzen*, as well as Sheridan's *The Stranger*, based on Kotzebue's *Menschenhass und Reue*, and his wildly successful *Pizzaro*, based on Kotzebue's *Spanier in Peru*.<sup>35</sup>

*Of Age To-morrow* was an afterpiece produced for Drury Lane in 1800, written for some of the same performers who had successfully presented *Pizzaro* there the previous year. Most of the music for both plays was by the Irish tenor Michael Kelly (1762–1826), whose singing career had flourished in Italy and then Vienna (where the roles of Don Basilio and Don Curzio in Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro* had been written for him) before he settled in London in 1787. Kelly's memoirs claim that the main impulse behind *Of Age To-morrow* came from the actor John Bannister, who saw the opportunity for a juicy comic turn as the high-spirited suitor who adopts various disguises in order to meet his beloved.<sup>36</sup> Bannister enjoyed great success in what became something of a signature role, as did the well-known singer Maria Theresa De Camp, who played the clever maidservant who aids the young man in his plans.

Although most of the plays we know Austen attended were comedies with music, and Austen included song texts in her own theatrical parodies, the musical element is usually missing from discussions of her experience of the

34 Robert P. Irvine, *Jane Austen* (London, 2005), 91–147; Laurence W. Mazzeno, *Jane Austen: Two Centuries of Criticism* (Rochester, 2011); Nicola Trott, 'Critical responses, 1830–1970', in J. Todd (ed.), *Jane Austen in Context* (Cambridge, 2005), 91–2.

35 David Selwyn, *Jane Austen and Leisure* (London, 1999), 236–9; Paula Byrne, *Jane Austen and the Theatre* (London, 2002), 50–1.

36 Michael Kelly, *Reminiscences*, vol. 2 (London, 1826), 167–8. See also John Adolphus, *Memoirs of John Bannister, Comedian*, vol. 2 (London, 1839), 52.

theatre. The sheet music Austen acquired, or borrowed for copying into her manuscript music books, advertized its connections with venues and performers on elaborate title pages designed for the benefit of singers' reputations, theatre owners' receipts and music publishers' sales. Sheet music provided domestic performers with opportunities not only to represent characters in a drama, but also to imitate the delivery of famous singers whom they may have heard in London theatres or on tours to the provinces; these marketing and distribution practices were crucial to changing attitudes towards singing actresses, helping to foster the complex mix of fascination, emulation, and unease that would mark relationships between gentry women and professional singers in the Victorian age.<sup>37</sup> Austen herself was a keen critic, though she seems to have been less impressed with famous singers than many of her contemporaries, placing more emphasis on acting skill and less on the quality of the voice—as in her somewhat disparaging assessment of the vocal sensation Catherine Stephens, whom Austen heard in March 1814.<sup>38</sup>

In the case of 'No, my love, no' we know that Austen had the opportunity to see how a professional singing actress delivered the piece. While living in Southampton between 1806 and 1809, Austen attended plays at the city's French Street Theatre, and during a visit from her brother Edward and his family in September 1807, the group saw John Bannister there in a benefit performance of *Of Age To-morrow*.<sup>39</sup> The local newspaper announcements do not specify who played the role of Maria, but it was likely De Camp; and Austen certainly experienced how 'No, my love, no' fit into the play.<sup>40</sup>

The song figures in the opening scene as the first solo and the first piece of original music in *Of Age To-morrow*.<sup>41</sup> It is sung by Maria, maidservant to the stingy Lady Brumback and her beautiful niece Sophie. The impetuous suitor, Frederick, who will inherit his title and fortune the next day, tries to get the maid to broker an introduction. Maria asks where he has seen Sophie, and when Frederick's responds 'At church, yesterday for the first time,' she immediately casts doubts upon the durability of his attachment, recounting her own experience of a young man's infidelity:

Maria. The acquaintance is rather young?

37 Rachel Cowgill, "Attitudes with a Shawl": Performance, Femininity, and Spectatorship at the Italian Opera in Early Nineteenth-Century London', in R. Cowgill and H. Poriss (eds), *The Arts of the Prima Donna in the Long Nineteenth Century*, (New York, NY, 2012), 217–51.

38 Byrne, *Jane Austen and the Theatre*, 56–7. 39 Byrne, *Jane Austen and the Theatre*, 40–1.

40 The notice in the *Salisbury and Winchester Journal*, 31 Aug 1807, 4, lists only Bannister (since the performance was a benefit for him). By this time De Camp had married the actor Charles Kemble; they were in Southampton in August 1808 (Penny Gay, *Jane Austen and the Theatre* (Cambridge, 2002), 11), and the city probably also figured in their out-of-season provincial activities the previous year.

41 The play opens with an overture and trio adapted from an opera by Giovanni Paisiello (Michael Kelly, *The Overture and Music in the Musical Entertainment Of Age To-Morrow* (London: printed for Michael Kelly by Corri, Dussek & Co [1800])).

Fred. Well, and she is young, and I am young, and I shall love her for ever.

Maria. Such constancy is unusual in gentlemen of your age – ah! I had a sweetheart once myself, and when another attracted him—

Fred. Another attract him from you!—impossible!—what could he say for himself?

Maria. He said nothing, but I'll tell you what I said to him:<sup>42</sup>

Maria then performs 'No, my love, no,' a portrayal of her faithful response to her lover's betrayal.

*Of Age To-morrow* is anchored in the *commedia dell' arte* and comic opera traditions; Maria links to the stock type of Colombina, the resourceful servant, and to related operatic soubrettes such as Susanna in *Le nozze di Figaro*. As an experienced Italian *opera buffa* singer, Michael Kelly knew this tradition from the inside out. He set 'No, my love, no' in a light sentimental idiom in keeping with the *mezzo carattere*—semi-serious rather than broadly comic—nature of Maria's role. The song is harmonically extremely simple and the words are set in a tuneful declamatory style within a relatively limited vocal range (e1 to g2). That De Camp was able to deliver much more demanding music is clear not only from her prior performance career, but also from Maria's 'Medley Song' in *Of Age To-morrow*, which includes a brief passage of Italian operatic fireworks complete with difficult ornamentation and a virtuosic mini-cadenza. In contrast, the point of 'No, my love, no,' was not to demonstrate vocal prowess but to be affecting, as its *Espressivo* marking confirms.

Cues on how to achieve this goal are in the pauses that measure out the delivery of the words. The song falls into two broad sections, each opening with symmetrical four-bar phrases that disintegrate into shorter fragments for rhetorical effect. The first section is built as an ABAC antecedent-consequent structure, cadencing on the dominant at the end of B and returning to the tonic to close. The third phrase—the repeat of A—ends on a notated pause, as the accompaniment rests on the downbeat while the vocal line falls a further third before its own pause. This suggests stretching the tempo to emphasize the words 'ac-cuse you,' providing a rhetorical hiatus before the final C material. The four bars of C are then split into two-bar segments, broken up by a further pause to highlight the narrator's sorrowful question ('Did I ever upbraid you?') and its impassioned response ('Oh no, my love, no'). The pause on 'up-braid you' allows the question to hang in the air briefly before the speaker's final phrase (Figure 2).

Kelly intensifies these musical procedures for affective delivery in the second half of the song. The piece moves into a higher register, creating a more fervent impression as the singer remains mainly in the upper third (e2–g2) of the overall range. Two new symmetrical four-bar phrases lead to a pause on a rest; this silence precedes a more asymmetrically structured final section, which begins with a rushing six-bar phrase before disintegrating again into two-bar fragments marked by pauses, rests and repetition. Throughout the song, Kelly's melodic writing enhances his disruption of the phrase structure and his use of pauses to

42 Thomas Dibdin, *Of Age To-morrow* (Dublin, n.p., 1801), 8.

3

if it gives plea - sure to you my dear Har - ry shall I blame your de -  
 par - ture! oh no my love no shall I blame your de - par - ture! oh  
 no my love no.

2

Now do not dear Hal, while abroad you are straying,  
 That heart which is mine on a rival bestow;  
 Nay banish that frown such displeasure betraying,  
 Do you think I suspect you, oh no my love no.  
 I believe you too kind for one moment to grieve me,  
 Or plant in a Heart which adores you such woe;  
 Yet should you dishonour my truth and deceive me;  
 Should I ever cease to love you, oh no my love no.

FIG. 2. Closing section of Michael Kelly, 'No, my love, no' from Jenkyns 05. For the complete piece see The Austen Family Music Books < <https://archive.org/details/austen1677429-2001> >, pp. 105-107 (images 139-141). Image by the University of Southampton Digitisation Unit. © Richard Jenkyns.

emphasize expressive punctuation and encourage declamatory delivery. He uses rising thirds and fourths to end each question (mimicking the spoken mode of ending questions on an uplift), following them each time with a forceful cadential descent that emphasizes the firmness of the speaker's 'Oh no' replies.

As Stefano Castelvechi has shown in his study of sentimental opera, such techniques were important tools for composers who adapted the literary *style haché* (also called the *style entrecoupé* or the *style haletant*) for the theatre.<sup>43</sup> Characterized by interrupted speech, repetition, and references to non-verbal sounds such as sighs, this literary representation of heightened emotion lent itself particularly well to musical realization. Short or asymmetric phrases and the effective placement of pauses and silence could evoke the sounds of broken speech, sobs and sighs, in contrast to the longer, balanced melodies of conventional song. Though Michael Kelly was frequently mocked for his shortcomings as a composer (abundantly clear in the feeble accompaniment to 'No, my love, no'), he was a skilled singer-actor, adept at setting words, and the song shows his familiarity with the pan-European musical language of affect associated with sentimental drama and the cult of sensibility.

Kelly's simple but effective strategies mean that in *Of Age To-morrow* the song produces a mini-scenario in which Maria acts out an impassioned encounter with an unfaithful lover for Frederick's benefit. While the rhetorical effects could be more or less exaggerated by any individual singer, they are so integral to the musical materials that any performance of the piece, including by amateurs at home, would produce some dramatic effect. 'No, my love, no' establishes Maria as the young lovers' accomplice, depicting her as a constant and forbearing lover despite betrayal by her sweetheart. But it also provides a cynical counterpoint to Frederick's fervent vows that he will love Sophie forever, juxtaposing those claims with a musical scene in which a once no doubt equally passionate lover has proved unreliable. If Maria sang the piece to Frederick on stage rather than to the footlights, his likely future as a straying husband would have been even more firmly produced in spectators' minds.

To add a further complication, Austen probably knew the song before she saw the play in 1807, and she may have learned it first not in its theatrical guise but in the form in which it circulated as sheet music. As Michael Kelly recounted in his memoirs,

[*Of Age To-morrow*] was very productive to the treasury, at little or no expense. In it there was a ballad, written by Mr. M. G. Lewis, and composed by myself, which was sung by Miss Decamp, entitled, 'No, my love, no'. I believe I may say, it was the most popular song of the day; it was not alone to be found upon every piano-forte, but also to be heard in every street, for it was a great favourite with the ballad-singers: but the primitive cause of its gaining such popularity was, its being sung delightfully by a distinguished amateur, and more completely too, with the expression I intended, than by any other person I ever heard;—I allude to Mr. Charles Calvert, the present Member for Southwark. Many and many a time have I heard him sing it charmingly, and often have I enjoyed his kind hospitality and social qualities. To Miss Decamp I had also great obligations for the animation and spirit she infused into it.<sup>44</sup>

43 Stefano Castelvechi, *Sentimental Opera: Questions of Genre in the Age of Bourgeois Drama* (Cambridge, 2013), 138-9.

44 Kelly, *Reminiscences*, vol. 2, 168-9.



The popularity of 'No, my love, no' is confirmed by evidence that several Austen family members owned copies of it. One appears in Jenkyns 05, a volume of individually purchased sheet music items from c.1795–c.1810, bound for Eleanor Jackson Austen (d. 1864), Jane Austen's brother Henry's second wife. Henry and Eleanor did not marry until 1820, three years after Jane Austen's death; although Eleanor was known to the Austen family many years before the marriage, it seems unlikely that this was Jane's copy.<sup>45</sup> Caroline Austen claims that she herself once owned a printed copy, implying that Jane performed the song from manuscript. This may be the copy that appears in an album formerly owned by Austen descendant Henry Rice, whose current location is unknown. A catalogue prepared at the time of its sale, however, indicates that it includes a copy of 'No, my love, no,' notated as a melody and bass line and with alterations to the verbal text, that is, preserved in the same form as the 'Song from Burns'.<sup>46</sup> As we have seen, this format is an efficient shorthand often used by Austen family members for notating songs and it is possible that this is the copy Austen prepared for her own use.

In his memoir, Kelly attributes the success of the song partly to its enthusiastic adoption by a male amateur, already suggesting that the piece acquired different connotations once separated from its dramatic context. What Kelly does not mention is that 'No, my love, no' circulated as sheet music in a different form than it had appeared in the play. It was published under the title 'The Wife's Farewell': rather than portraying the loss of a flighty suitor, the song now appears as the reaction of a wife who suspects her husband of cheating.<sup>47</sup> This scenario was completed by a companion piece, 'The Husband's Return,' that Kelly soon produced on the back of the first song's success.<sup>48</sup> The text of 'The Husband's Return' makes it clear that 'Harry' has been dallying with a mistress, but now, 'disgusted with pleasure the sense alone knows,' he begs his wife's forgiveness (Table 2). In the same key and metre (F major, 6/8) as 'No, my love, no,' the companion song features a similar use of declamatory techniques for the final verses of each stanza, emphasizing the obfuscating questions that Harry uses to justify his infidelity:

I could not be true, if I could not—how could I?  
I could not unless I could—could I? could you?

45 Deirdre Le Faye, *Jane Austen: A Family Record*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn (Cambridge, 2004), 263; Austen, *Letters*, 539.

46 This composite manuscript, similar to Jenkyns 03, appeared in the May 1996 catalogue of the London book dealer Simon Finch. Prior to the sale, it was inventoried by Jon A. Gillaspie, afterwards Nessa Glen, 'Music Collections in the Austen Family with Especial Reference to the Rice Music Manuscripts', typescript, c. 1990; 'No, my love, no' is described p. 66.

47 Michael Kelly, *The Wife's Farewell or No My Love No* (London: the author, n.d.)

48 Michael Kelly, *The Husband's Return, or the Answer to No My Love No* (London: the author, n.d.).



Table 2. Texts for ‘Oh no, my love no’ (Thomas Dibdin) and ‘The Husband’s Return’ (author unknown)<sup>2</sup>

‘The Wife’s Farewell’	‘The Husband’s Return’
While I hang on your bosom, distracted to lose you, High swells my sad heart and fast my tears flow, Yet think not of coldness they fall to accuse you,  Did I ever upbraid you? oh! no my love, no!	I own I was captur’d by Emmily’s beauty,  I own I have bow’d at a mistress’s shrine;  In vain did I strive to return to my duty,  And bring back a heart which should ever be thine:
I own it wou’d please me, at home cou’d you tarry, Nor e’er feel a wish from Maria to go, But if it gives pleasure to you, my dear Harry,  Shall I blame your departure! oh no, my love, no.	When beauty invited resist it how could I.  How fly from attraction so pleasing, so new! I could not be true, if I could not – how could I?  I could not unless I could – could I? could you?
Now do not dear Hal, while abroad you are straying, That heart, which is mine, on a rival bestow, Nay, banish that frown, such displeasure betraying, Do you think I suspect you, oh no my love, no.	With love for the fair one, my heart no more burning, Disgusted with pleasure the sense alone knows; Have I quitted my mistress – and homeward returning, Now come in the arms of my wife to repose:
I believe you too kind, for one moment to grieve me, Or, plant in a Heart which adores you such woe; Yet shou’d you dishonour my truth and deceive me,  Shou’d I e’er cease to love you, oh no, my love, no.	Then spoil not by frowning your features, my Fanny, Forgive me, for ever most constant, most true; Will I be if I can – if I cannot how can I?  I cannot unless I can – can I? can you?

<sup>2</sup> Text as in musical publications, which differ only in punctuation from that printed with the play. The incoherence in the female protagonist’s name (Maria in the first song, Fanny in the second) is unexplained.

The songs make a successful scene when performed in succession, whether by two singers or a single performer acting two roles (and a copy of 'The Husband's Return' appears in Eleanor Jackson's album with 'The Wife's Farewell,' suggesting such a practice). It is unclear if the wronged wife will accept her husband back—her 'frowning features' in stanza 2, like Harry's own frowns in 'No, my love, no' imply that they remain at odds—and the fate of the couple remains unclear. This lack of resolution, as well as the amusing word play at the end of 'The Husband's Return,' suggests that any performance of the songs as a pair might produce comic as well as sentimental effects.

Both as a lyric component of a stage work and as a separately circulating piece of sheet music, 'No, my love, no' highlights the ontological status of musical emotion as a theatrical creation rather than expression of deeper human truth. It provides a model of working with tropes of sensibility within a satirical context, an example of the kind of 'dissonance' that Castelvechi sees as characteristic of late eighteenth-century operas—including most notably *Le nozze di Figaro*—in which sentimental and anti-sentimental currents are intricately entwined.<sup>49</sup> The song invites multiple readings, its slipperiness in relation to 'genuine' emotion emphasized by its complex history of dissemination and its potentially ironic deployment both on stage and at home. Kelly's own flippant treatment in his memoirs ('very productive to the treasury, at little or no expense') seems somehow typical of the dispassionate or mocking approach that this mode of cultural expression encouraged towards its own emotional claims. It is easy to imagine Jane Austen taking pleasure in the way that the heart-tugging quality of the song was undercut by its textual and paratextual frames, much in the manner of her own satirical deployment of tropes of sentimentality and romance—openly in her early burlesques, and more subtly in later novels such as *Northanger Abbey*.

#### IV. Performing romance: 'Que j'aime à voir les hirondelles'

Austen's final 'missing song' and its literary source have a less ambiguous relation to the cultural arena of sensibility. 'Que j'aime à voir les hirondelles'—the 'little French ditty' Caroline Austen requested most often—both derives from the literary tradition of prose romance, and deploys the musical conventions of the French *romance* genre of strophic song.<sup>50</sup> The text of the song is from *Estelle* (1788), a *pastorale* by Jean-Pierre Claris de Florian (1755–1794), a well-known writer of fables and stage pieces. Building on the tradition of early modern pastoral romance (a genre Florian defended in a preface to some editions of the work), *Estelle* recounts the sufferings of the eponymous heroine and her beloved

49 Castelvechi, *Sentimental Opera*, 188–209.

50 Originally used to refer to settings of narrative texts, in the late eighteenth century *romance* came to describe a setting of sentimental poem to a simple melody: see Jack Sage, et al. 'Romance', section 3.i 'France' by Roger Hickman, *Grove Music Online* <<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/23725>> accessed August 13 2013.

Némorin.<sup>51</sup> The pair are repeatedly separated through ill fortune or others' malice, and Florian employs the intensely emotional language of *sensibilité* to treat the alternation of exaltation and despair produced by the twists and turns of their fate. Contemporary accounts suggest that readers were deeply affected by the tears of his characters (so copious that Victor Hugo could later describe one of his own as 'weeping like a Némorin'), and *Estelle* was among the most successful of the French sentimental novels and plays of the period. Although its aristocratic author did not survive the Revolution, the work remained immensely popular throughout the 1790s and into the early nineteenth century, going through multiple editions in France and rapidly reaching English readers. At least one English translation was already in print by 1791; further translations appeared in 1798 and 1803, and London publishers also produced editions of the work in French.<sup>52</sup>

*Estelle* is peppered with lyrics representing musical performances by the principal characters, and these song texts swiftly began to circulate in musical setting. In 1788, the year of *Estelle*'s publication, a spin-off melodrama by Jean-Louis Gabiot included music by Rigel for three of the poems.<sup>53</sup> Independent song settings also rapidly appeared: at least five collections of selected songs from *Estelle* were in print by 1795, featuring music by composers ranging from the relatively little known, such as Louis de Persuis and Madame de Musigny, to international figures such as Luigi Cherubini and Anton Reichardt.<sup>54</sup> Most included settings of 'Que j'aime à voir les hirondelles' in their collections.

The most enduringly popular setting of the poem, however, was by Florian's sometime collaborator François Devienne (1759-1803) whose operas, including *Le mariage clandestin* (1790) and *Les visitandines* (1792), were among the most admired French stage works of the day. This was the song Jane Austen seems to have known and performed. The first French print of Devienne's settings of romances from *Estelle* appeared shortly after the novel's publication in 1788. Reprints and arrangements soon followed, and within less than a decade the London firm of Corri and Dussek had produced a version for the English market.<sup>55</sup> 'Que j'aime à voir les hirondelles' became a favourite from Devienne's set,

51 *Estelle, roman pastoral, par M. de Florian* (Paris: Debure et Bailly, 1788).

52 Stella. *A Pastoral Romance*, trans. by Elizabeth Morgan, 2 vols (London: the author, 1791); subsequent translations were by Susanna Cummyng (1798) and Samuel Maxey (1803).

53 Jean-Louis Gabiot, *Estelle et Némorin, mélodrame pastoral* (Paris: Cailleau, 1788).

54 A volume featuring tunes only, attributed to various composers, for all the songs appeared as *Collection complète des romances d'Estelle* (Paris: Desnos, c. 1790). Collections of *Estelle* settings as accompanied song include Louis Luc de Persuis, *Recueil de sept romances d'Estelle* (Paris: Imbault, [1788]); Madame de Musigny, *Six Romances d'Estelle* 1er recueil (Paris: de Roullède, [1788] and *Six Romances d'Estelle* (2nd recueil) (Paris: de Roullède, [1789]); Luigi Cherubini, *Romances du Roman d'Estelle* (Paris: n.p. 1788); Johann Friedrich Reichardt, *Romances d'Estelle* (Berlin: Au Nouveau Magazin de Musique, [1794]).

55 François Devienne, *Romances d'Estelle* (Paris: Imbault, [1788]); the songs were available as a set or to purchase individually. The British print is the *Complete Collection of the Twenty Romances of Estelle* (London: Corri, Dussek, and Co., [1797]); the British Library catalogue incorrectly attributes the music to Persuis.

circulating separately in both manuscript and print. It was eventually absorbed into the repertory of traditional song, and was regularly printed and performed in France well into the twentieth century.<sup>56</sup>

Florian's *Estelle* was so successful that Austen must have known the work at least by reputation, and it is likely that she read it—whether in French or in translation—and was aware not only of the literary source of 'Que j'aime à voir les hirondelles' but also of its context in the narrative. Estelle performs the song at a crucial turning point at the end of book 1 of the text. She and her fellow shepherd Némorin have been constant companions since childhood, but just as they realize these feelings have transformed into love, her father reveals that she is promised to someone else, and her betrothed will soon arrive for the wedding. Devastated by the news, Némorin leaves the region to allow Estelle's father to fulfil his promise. The intended spouse arrives and her father orders the distraught Estelle to sing for their entertainment. She responds with this piece, which the text specifies she had learned from Némorin.

Following conventions established in prose romance from the Renaissance onward, songs in *Estelle* figure as expressions of the singer's affective situation in reaction to plot events. In 'Que j'aime à voir les hirondelles', the lovelorn Estelle casts herself as the imprisoned swallow pining for her soulmate. The text (Table 3) describes how the singer welcomes the arrival of the swallows each spring, who sing to her of faithful love's return. If a cruel child captures one of the pair during their winter migration, it will soon die of chagrin; and its mate, although uncaged and ostensibly free, will die at the same moment, unable to live on its own and flourishing only in the springtime warmth of love. In F major with a lilting 6/8 signature, Devienne's setting exhibits all the musical hallmarks of the *romance*, including a relatively simple melody, regular phrase structure, and strophic form, and it operates within the same idealized sentimental aesthetic as the pastoral novel that furnished its text.

Within this general mood there are moments of increased affective appeal. In sung *romances*, this is often achieved by expansion of the melodic register in the later parts of the song. Here each strophe is set in an A A<sup>1</sup> B structure (Figure 3), and the melody initially occupies a restricted compass of only a fourth (F–B flat) until the end of A<sup>1</sup>, where it moves to the upper octave f. The initial phrase of the B section exploits almost the whole of the song's range in preparation for the emotional 'hook' at the end—the octave leap on the words 'amans fideles' (faithful lovers). While the degree of emphasis and affective urgency might differ from singer to singer depending on performance variables such as tempo and timbre, the vocal effort required to move higher into the range and to produce the octave leap, along with the generally expanded melodic range and greater rhythmic energy of the B section, would produce some effect in any performance—

56 For example, Devienne's 'Que j'aime à voir les hirondelles' figured in *Chants et chansons populaires de la France* (Paris: H. L. Delloye, 1843); it was included in the Supplément musical no. 2735 of *L'Illustration* (July 1895) and appeared in *Les 15 plus jolies chansons d'amour des siècles passés*, ed. H. Lemarchand (Lyon, 1942) as late as 1942.

Table 3. Text and translation ‘Que j’aime à voir les hirondelles’

Que j’aime à voir les hirondelles A ma fenêtre tous les ans, Venir m’apporter des nouvelles De l’approche du doux printemps; Le même nid, me disent elles, Va revoir les mêmes amours, Ce n’est qu’à des amans fidèles A vous annoncer les beaux jours.	How I love to see the swallows at my window every year, coming to bring me news of the arrival of sweet springtime; the same nest, they tell me, will see again the same love, the duty falls only to faithful lovers to herald the good weather to you.
Lorsque les premières gelées, Font tomber les feuilles des bois, Les hirondelles rassemblées S’appellent toutes sur les toits; Partons, partons se disent-elles Fuyons la neige et les autans, Point d’hiver pour les cœurs fidèles, Ils sont toujours dans le printemps.	When the first frosts make the leaves fall in the woodland, the swallows, gathered together, call each other from roof to roof; let us leave, let us leave, they say, let us flee the snow and the wind, let there be no winter for faithful hearts, they are always in springtime.
Si par malheur dans le voyage Victime d’un cruel enfant, Une hirondelle mise en cage Ne peut rejoindre son amant; Vous voyez mourir l’hirondelle D’ennui, de douleur et d’amour, Tandis que son amant fidèle Près delà meurt le même jour.	If by misfortune during the voyage, victim of a cruel child, a swallow, put in a cage, cannot rejoin its beloved; you will see the swallow die of ennui, pain and love, while its faithful lover nearby will die the same day.

including Jane Austen’s own renditions. In the production of increasingly heightened sentiment through melodic gesture, ‘Que j’aime à voir les hirondelles’ employs musical techniques similar to those we have seen in both the ‘Song from Burns’ and ‘No, my love, no’. But in contrast to the latter, there is no irony in the relation of the song to its literary source: ‘Que j’aime à voir les hirondelles’ not only produces an idealized image of mutual fidelity, but its source text casts song itself as an authentic gauge of emotional truth.

Where might Austen have learned this piece? The Austen family music books include a substantial number of Parisian music prints featuring fashionable French repertory of the late eighteenth century. ‘Que j’aime à voir les hirondelles’ figures there in a simplified version for harp and voice from a 1789 instalment of the Parisian periodical *Feuilles de Terpsichore*. The arrangement is by the harpist Pierre Philibert Dufeuille, known as Blattman, who was responsible for many of the arrangements published in the *Feuilles*.<sup>57</sup> The Cousineau firm of instrument builders had started this series in 1784, in imitation of the *Journal*

57 Little is known of Blattman’s biography, but the catalogue of the Bibliothèque Nationale lists a set of accompanied sonatas for harp and violin (1798) and two sets of harp arrangements of sonatas by Ignaz Pleyel (1790, 1794) as well as contributions to anthologies and periodicals.



9

*Feuille de Terpsichore, Prix 1.<sup>re</sup> 4.<sup>re</sup> A Paris Chez Cousineau rue des Pouilles, 83*  
*Romance. Musique de M. ... Accomp.<sup>t</sup> par M. Blattman.*

*Amoroso*

3<sup>e</sup> Année  
 N<sup>o</sup> 21.  
 Harpe

Que j'aime à voir les hi-ron-del-les, à ma fenê-tre, tous les ans, venir rap-  
 porter des nou-velles de l'ap-pro-che du doux prin-tems! le même ail, me disent-  
 el-les, va re-voir les mê-mes a-mours: ce n'est qu'à des a-mans fi-del-les à veus an-  
 non-cer les beaux jours, à vous an-non-cer les beaux jours.

Lorsque les premières gelées  
 Font tomber les feuilles des bois,  
 Les Hirondelles rassemblées  
 S'appellent toutes sur les toits:  
 Partons, partons, se disent-elles;  
 Fuyons la neige et les citains.  
 Point d'hiver pour les cœurs fidèles;  
 Ils sont toujours dans le printemps.

Si par malheur dans le voyage,  
 Victime d'un cruel enfant,  
 Une Hirondelle mise en cage  
 Ne peut rejoindre son amant;  
 Vous voyez mourir l'Hirondelle  
 D'ennui, de douleur et d'amour,  
 Tandis que son amant fidèle  
 Près de là, meurt le même jour.

FIG. 3. Blattman Dufeuille's arrangement of François Devienne, 'Que j'aime à voir les hirondelles', from the *Feuilles de Terpsichore*, as preserved in Jenkyns 04. See The Austen Family Music Books <<https://archive.org/details/austen1676487-2001>>, no. 9 (image 41). Image by the University of Southampton Digitisation Unit. © Richard Jenkyns.



*d'airs choisis* begun by their rivals Leduc in 1782.<sup>58</sup> Both series featured arrangements of the latest *romances*, dances and overtures, largely taken from successful recent stage works. A year's full volume of about 200 pages was delivered to subscribers in weekly instalments, each containing one or two pieces. The intended target audience is suggested by the original subtitle of the *Feuilles*, which advertised in its first year of production that it was 'dedicated to the Ladies' (*dediée aux Dames*).

The Austen music books include two volumes almost entirely made up of selections from the *Feuilles* and the *Journal*, and a third volume includes one further instalment. Jenkyns 04, the album containing 'Que j'aime à voir les hirondelles,' is mainly composed of instalments from the *Feuilles*, with a separately published set of music by Philippe Joseph Hinner, Marie Antoinette's harp teacher, bound in at the end. The album does not represent a complete subscription, but rather a collection of 22 scattered instalments from the years 1785–1790, with the largest number (8) from 1789–1790. A similar volume, Knight 02, retains a paper label on the front cover marked 'French Songs,' and features instalments from the Leduc *Journal d'airs choisis* series for harp, also bound together with an independent publication at the end: here song settings from *Estelle* by Musigny, another harpist with fashionable court connections, are included.<sup>59</sup> This volume also includes scattered instalments rather than a complete run. All date from 1784–1789, with the greatest number from 1788. As well as its paper label, 'French Songs' retains most of its original binding of marbled paper over board. Though the heavily damaged binding of Jenkyns 04 has lost most of its marbled paper (as well as any label it may once have had), the fragments that remain match the binding of 'French Songs'. The two volumes use the same paper in the binding flyleaves and both also include a signature—'Mrs Austen'—in the same hand and ink, suggesting that they were bound up for the same owner at the same time.<sup>60</sup> One further instalment from the *Journal*, from 1783, appears in Jenkyns 07, a compilation of miscellaneous sheet music otherwise devoted to English prints.<sup>61</sup>

The most likely original owner of all this material—and Jane Austen's main source for French song in the 1790s—was her cousin Eliza Hancock de Feuillide

58 See Robert Grandroute, 'Feuilles de Terpsichore (1784–1799?)' in J. Sgard (ed.), *Dictionnaire des journaux 1600–1789* (Paris, 1991), notice 477, available through the Centre International pour l'Étude du 18<sup>e</sup> Siècle, <<http://c18.net/dp/dp.php?no=477>>. See also Catherine Massip, 'Periodical Editions of Music', in M. Boyd (ed.), *Music and the French Revolution* (Cambridge, 1992), 57–66, and the entry s.v. 'Cousineau' in Anik Devriès and François Lesure, *Dictionnaire des éditeurs de musique français* (Geneva, 1979), vol. 1, 52–4.

59 Musigny, *Six Romances d'Estelle* [2nd recueil]. This print does not include her setting of 'Que j'aime à voir les hirondelles', which had appeared in her first collection of *Estelle* settings.

60 The inside front cover of Jenkyns 04 also features a manuscript index in a different hand, however (Knight 02—'French Songs'—has none).

61 This volume includes sheet music owned by several different Austen women, suggesting that the stray instalment of the *Journal* had been separated from the others, before eventually being bound up with other miscellaneous sheet music.

(1761–1813), whose own tumultuous life story could easily be narrated as romance. As a child, Eliza remained in London with her mother Philadelphia Austen Hancock while her father sought his fortune in India. At his insistence, her education was aspirational, including fine accomplishments commensurate with his financial ambitions. Her early training in London included keyboard lessons from the German composer Georg Berg (d. 1776); her parents apparently purchased an expensive Kirckman harpsichord for her use, and she may also have studied the guitar.<sup>62</sup> After her father's death, Eliza and her mother moved to the Continent, leaving England in 1777 and settling in Paris sometime before October 1779.<sup>63</sup> By 1780 she had taken up the harp, which she described in a letter as 'at present the fashionable instrument' in the French capital.<sup>64</sup> In 1781, she married Jean-François Capot de Feuillide, son of a minor landed family; they lived in Paris at first, attending concerts and the opera, before moving to Feuillide's estates near Nérac in late 1784.<sup>65</sup>

Eliza returned to England with her baby son in June 1786, and over the Christmas season of 1786–1787 she made an extended visit to the Austen family home at Steventon, where Jane had just returned from school. Eliza's musical skills were much in evidence: Jane Austen's mother wrote,

Madame has grown quite lively, when a child we used to think her too grave. We have borrowed a Piano-Forte, and she plays to us every day; on Tuesday we are to have a very snug little dance in our parlour, just our own children, nephew & nieces, (for the two little Coopers come tomorrow) quite a family party.<sup>66</sup>

Eliza brought a French book—*L'ami des enfans*—for Jane's eleventh birthday present, and the music she played must also have reflected her previous decade of life in France. Although 'Que j'aime à voir les hirondelles' did not yet exist in 1786, Eliza may have brought earlier numbers of the *Feuilles de Terpsichore* or the *Journal des airs choisis* with her to England; the interchangeability of the harp and piano repertoire means that she could have performed this music at the piano. She certainly served as a source of Continental airs and *romances*, and the strong impression she seems to have made on her young Austen cousins may have rendered the repertoire even more attractive.

62 Eliza's father was particularly eager for her to become musically skilled: see his letters from 1772–1773, edited in Deirdre Le Faye, *Jane Austen's 'Outlandish Cousin': The Life and Letters of Eliza de Feuillide* (London, 2002), 30–4.

63 Deirdre Le Faye, *A Chronology of Jane Austen and Her Family* (Cambridge, 2006), 70–75.

64 Eliza Hancock to Philadelphia Walter, 27 June 1780, edited in Le Faye, *Jane Austen's 'Outlandish Cousin'*, 48–50.

65 Eliza's letters of 1783–1784 provide news of Parisian opera, theatre, and concerts (Le Faye, *Jane Austen's 'Outlandish Cousin'*, 56–62). See also Adrian Rose, 'Jane Austen's Cousin, Eliza de Feuillide, and Music in Paris c. 1780–90', *The Consort*, 69 (2013), 75–83.

66 Cassandra Leigh Austen to Philadelphia Walter, December 1786, cited in Le Faye, *Jane Austen*, 57.

Over the next decade, events in France would render Eliza's life increasingly precarious. She visited Steventon again for Christmas 1787 before returning to Paris in September 1788; after spending the winter of 1788-1789 in the French capital, she travelled to London in June 1789 for what was intended as a short business trip. Her return was prevented when news came of the storming of the Bastille in July.<sup>67</sup> The comte de Feuillide remained in France to protect his estates. Separated from her husband and with the family's French funds in jeopardy, Eliza was left to care for her ailing mother and sickly son in England as best she could. Family letters pointed up the difference between the glittering life she had formerly known and the pathos of her current situation.<sup>68</sup> Eliza's mother died in early 1792; the comte de Feuillide briefly joined his wife in England after her bereavement, but was forced to return to France or risk forfeiting his lands. On his return he became trapped in Paris, where he was guillotined in early 1794.<sup>69</sup> For several years Eliza continued to lead an unsettled existence, moving frequently for her son's medical care and eventually considering several suitors, including two of her Austen cousins, Jane's older brothers James and Henry. In 1797, she chose Henry Austen. Until her death in 1813 the couple were mainly based in London, where Eliza was able to lead something like the fashionable life she had previously enjoyed in France.

The Steventon rectory of her Austen relations was a haven during Eliza's wandering years. She made several stays there between 1789 and 1796, becoming particularly close to Jane Austen.<sup>70</sup> One marker of Jane's affection was the dedication of her most extensive piece of fiction to date, the epistolary mock-romance *Love and Friendship*, composed c.1790. The work provides a hilariously exaggerated narrative of absurd plot twists, dramatic reversals of fortune, and emotional excess; its central character claims to possess all the stereotypical virtues of the romantic heroine, including excellence in music and dancing. *Love and Friendship* mercilessly pokes fun at the conventions of sentimental literature, but as for any burlesque, creating and enjoying it required extensive knowledge of the genre it parodies. Although it could not have escaped anyone that Eliza's real predicament was uncomfortably close to romance, it is easy to imagine Jane and Eliza mocking the tropes of a literature with which both were intimately familiar.

Austen's relationship with Eliza was also built on mutual appreciation of music. Eliza continued to play the piano and harp throughout her life, including after her marriage to Henry Austen.<sup>71</sup> Her stays with the Austen family in the 1790s

67 Le Faye, *Jane Austen's 'Outlandish Cousin'*, 96-7.

68 See, for example, Philadelphia Walter to James Walter, 9 October 1791, in Le Faye, *Jane Austen's 'Outlandish Cousin'*, 103.

69 Le Faye, *Jane Austen's 'Outlandish Cousin'*, 121.

70 Eliza de Feuillide to Philadelphia Walter, 26 October 1792, in Le Faye, *Jane Austen's 'Outlandish Cousin'*, 116. Le Faye surmises that Eliza visited Steventon soon after her return to England (96); see 115-23 for later visits.

71 Eliza's letters refer to continued musical activity: in 1799, she wrote: 'I have not found it possible to persevere in my plan of shunning all society, to which I must honestly confess

provided opportunities to share pieces she had acquired in France, as well as further music obtained through the expatriate French circles she frequented in England. She apparently also encouraged Jane's own performance ambitions, for Jane began keyboard lessons and the Austen family had acquired a piano for her use by around 1795.<sup>72</sup> There were more opportunities to share musical interests during Jane's visits to her brother's house in London after Eliza remarried. One such stay in 1811 included a lavish private concert for around eighty guests, featuring professional glee singers, piano music and solos from the fashionable harpist Johann Erhardt Weippert.<sup>73</sup>

If the French periodicals preserved in the Austen music books belonged to Eliza, her frequent movements in the 1780s and definitive return to England in 1789 could explain the fragmentary nature of the sets. The instalments may have been purchased individually rather than by subscription, or represent only those pieces Eliza particularly liked and wished to keep during her travels. Alternatively, some numbers may have become lost over the years as Eliza moved, since the albums including selections from the *Feuilles* and *Journal d'airs choisis* appear to have been bound much later, suggesting that she continued to use the unbound copies to play from during her London years. The books were probably bound up by Henry Austen's second wife, Eleanor Jackson, who signed the books 'Mrs Austen' before eventually passing them to a younger relation, likely Eliza's harp-playing niece Fanny Knight.<sup>74</sup>

Jane Austen seems never to have owned these copies in any case: Caroline remembered her aunt singing 'Que j'aime à voir les hirondelles' from manuscript rather than print. Eliza's French music was, however, the most likely source for Jane Austen's manuscript, as Jane's extant music books include several exact copies of harp arrangements from Eliza's numbers of the *Feuilles* and *Journal*. Austen's keyboard manuscript CHWJA/19/2, begun in the early to mid-1790s, includes copies of Blattman's arrangements of overtures to Dalayrac's *Renaud d'Ast* and Lemoyne's *Les Pretendus*, both published in the *Feuilles de Terpsichore* instalments that appear in Jenkyns 04. Austen's songbook CHWJA/19/3, begun around the same time, includes a duet by Paisiello ('Duo du roi Théodore,' from the 1786 French version of his opera *Il re Teodoro*), which reproduces the arrangement published in an instalment of the *Journal* included in Knight 02. Jenkyns 03 includes a manuscript copy of an 'Air varié par M. Blattman Dufeuille' in what seems to be Austen's hand. Eliza was also the likely source

that I greatly prefer my Books, my Harp & my Pianoforte' (Le Faye, *Jane Austen's 'Outlandish Cousin'*, 157).

72 In a letter of September 1796, Austen refers to daily practice and suggests she was by then taking lessons from George William Chard (1765-1849) (Austen, *Letters*, 7).

73 Austen describes the event in letters of 18-20 April and 25 April 1811 (Austen, *Letters*, 180-4).

74 Fanny Knight began formally studying the harp in 1814, taking harp lessons in London when staying with her widowed uncle Henry: see Selwyn, *Jane Austen and Leisure*, 127-28.

for other French material: Austen's manuscript books CHWJA/19/2 and 19/3 include songs by Grétry, a version of the *Marseillaise*, and various unidentified French dances, and there are *airs* by Dalayrac on a loose leaf in Austen's hand that has been transmitted with the collection.

Eliza's French songs provided a significant connection not only to the sung *romance*, but also to French prose romance and its musical conventions. The genre is characterized not only by the unrealistic plots and settings, wandering structures and themes, and affective urgency mocked in *Love and Friendship*, but also by a characteristic approach to music. This is best described as a romantic musical dynamic in which the lyric moment—the site of song within the narrative—is conceived as a revelation of perfect emotional truth. Such an approach fit with both the older Neoplatonist understandings of music at the root of prose romance's lyric conventions, and the idealist aesthetics of music developing in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. As a performance art, song was bound up with the contexts in which it was practiced; so narratives of romance that featured song could deliberately or inadvertently invoke the real sounds and social situations in which their audiences consumed music. Conversely, actual performances could be freighted with the ideological weight of the role that song played in fictional narratives. When sung *romances* were performed as stand-alone musical numbers, or inserted into operas and plays, whether they were rendered by professional singers or amateurs at home: they brought with them the affective ultimacy that characterized romance as a literary mode, in which songs are conceived as unmediated expressions of passion and guarantors of emotional sincerity. Austen's performances of 'Que j'aime à voir les hirondelles' might thus be read as a way of performing romance not only in the formal or generic sense, but also as an enactment of a broader romantic sensibility and its affective claims.

In *Persuasion*, Anne Elliot famously 'learned romance as she grew older'. Though Anne and Frederick Wentworth are not conventional romantic figures, the story of their faithful love over time and distance resonates with the picture of swallows joined for life.<sup>75</sup> The trajectory of Austen's relationship to romance, leading from her earlier burlesques to a deeper and more complex relationship with the emotional world of sentimental literature in her later novels, finds a counterpoint in her engagement with the sung *romance*. We can imagine her learning 'Que j'aime à voir les hirondelles' from her glamorous French cousin in the 1790s, admiring Eliza's high spirits and lively character and enjoying opportunities to share in mockery of romantic conventions in music and in prose. But perhaps, when performing the song near the end of her life, Austen's memories of Eliza and her often tragic history were tinged with retrospective pathos. Austen's relationship with her nieces provided a version of her own connection to Eliza, as she offered advice on Anna's early writing efforts and

75 In addition to the broad thematic relationship, particular details of *Persuasion* chime with the text of 'Que j'aime à voir les hirondelles': for example, the 'caged swallow', Anne, physically declines in the absence of her mate; Wentworth rescues her from a child who has trapped her by climbing on her back.

shared music with Fanny and Caroline. Though the younger Austen relations must certainly have absorbed something of their satirical aunt's sceptical approach to the affective claims of expressive culture, they were not only exposed to Austen the steely ironist. The image of Caroline by her aunt's piano, imbibing the story of faithful swallows, confirms that they also learned romance.

## V. Conclusion

Songs have been 'missing' from accounts of Austen's work in more than one sense. She was intimately familiar with a wide range of music, performing sung poetry on a regular basis for much of her life. If we had similar evidence of Austen reading anything else with such close engagement, it would almost certainly have made a greater impression on interpretations of her writing. However, concentration on the negative aspects of feminine accomplishment in both musical and literary scholarship has created substantial obstacles for sophisticated understandings of how song performance may have shaped Austen's relationship to literary tradition. Song afforded entry into rich textual networks that stretched beyond poems to source works, and further to generic and stylistic conventions; musical performance provided a way for Austen to engage with the emotional claims of contemporary literature and to envoice both romantic and satiric currents of thought. Austen suggests in *Persuasion* that song is a form of expressive culture that cannot 'prove anything,' whether to guarantee authenticity of sentiment or predict its durability. Yet singing allowed her to explore varied approaches to many of her central themes: to rehearse, quite literally, the stances and positions taken by male authors and composers, and to interrogate their meaning.

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