

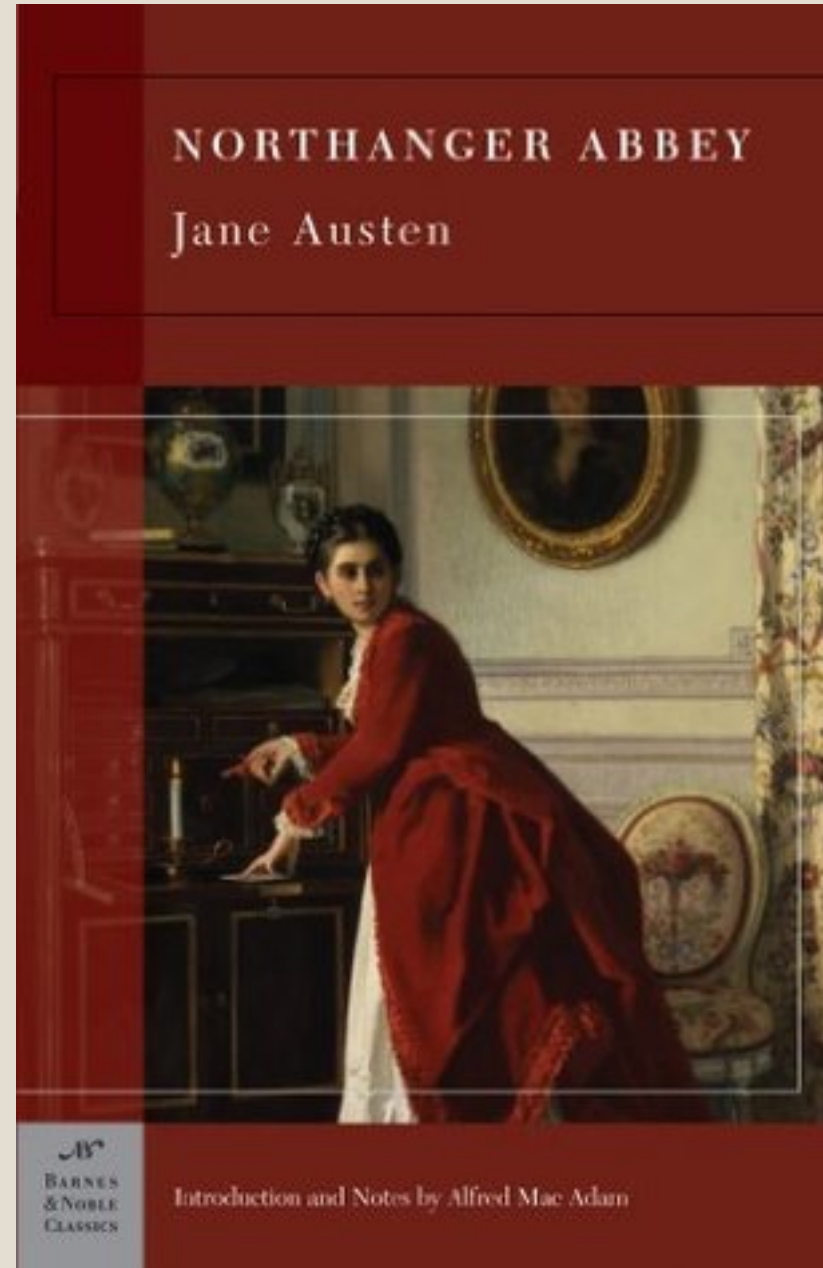


NORTHANGER ABBEY

Some Background

Publication

- Completed in 1803 when Austen was 28 years old
- That same year, Austen's brother sold the book to a publisher who paid 10 pounds for the copyright but never published it
- Austen bought the copyright back in 1816
- Book published posthumously in 1818



Romance vs Realism

Romance

"In its broadest possible meaning, a continuous narrative in which the emphasis is on what happens in the plot, rather than on what is reflected from ordinary life or experience. . . .

.Romance is closely related to myth. The chief characters are human beings . . . but the setting is a world in which the laws of nature do not consistently operate. . . Such proximity to myth gives a dimension of dream and wish fulfillment."

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- "...prose fiction that is conceived in terms of the fanciful and idealistic, rather than in terms of observation and faithful description of fact."

Realism

"In literature, faithful representation of life. Realism carries the conviction of true reports of phenomena observable by others. It may be contrasted with romanticism, impressionism, and expressionism, which are less true to external phenomena, although each carries its own kind of truth. . . . realism does not exaggerate or play down, but looks at life squarely, reporting it as it is. Realists often thought of their art as a mirror, convinced that if they reflected the surface of life accurately, they would also reflect it truthfully. Underlying their practice was a materialistic belief that truth is a commodity accessible on the surface of things, perceptible to the senses."



BATH AND THE PUMP ROOM





Valancourt and Tilney



St. Aubert thinking about Valancourt:

- “This young man has never been at Paris” . . . He determined not to leave Valancourt till he should be perfectly recovered; and, as he was now well enough to travel, though not able to manage his horse, St. Aubert invited him to accompany him for a few days in his carriage. This he the more readily did, since he had discovered that Valancourt was of a family of the same name in Gascony, with whose respectability he was well acquainted” (*Mysteries* 40).



Mr. Allen thinking about Mr. Tilney:

- How proper Mr. Tilney might be as a dreamer or a lover, had not yet perhaps entered Mr. Allen’s head, but that he was not objectionable as a common acquaintance for his young charge he was on inquiry satisfied; for he had early in the evening taken pains to know who her partner was, and had been assured of Mr. Tilney’s being a clergyman, and of a very respectable family in Gloucestershire (*Northanger* 13).



Wollstonecraft on Novel Reading

- Another instance of that feminine weakness of character, often produced by a confined education, is a romantic twist of the mind, which has been very properly termed *sentimental*
- These are the women who are amused by the reveries of the stupid novelists, who, knowing little of human nature, work up stale tales, and describe meretricious scenes, all retailed in a sentimental jargon, which equally tend to corrupt the taste, and draw the heart aside from its daily duties.

--From *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, 1794