**Notes for MC**

I’ve put in links to /19c/19c-canterbury/ because Martin is writing one any minute now. We can hold off and publish both articles together? Or just create a placeholder for Canterbury?

Image: Canterbury. Engraved by J. Roper, from a drawing by G. Cole (1806). ©The British Library. Maps 11.b.3, page 63 Board.

Canterbury race course was at Ileden on Barham Downs on the other side of Wingham Road opposite Nonington Parish – nonington.org.uk. Seeking additional image.

**Jane Austen: Canterbury**

Frequent visits between 1796 and 1813.

**Place** Canterbury

Jane Austen frequently visited Canterbury between 1794 and 1813 whenever she was staying with her brother Edward Austen-Knight, who lived nearby (first at Rowling House, and later at Godmersham Park). Foremost among the social calls that Austen made in Canterbury were those to Edward’s adoptive mother, Catherine Knight. Mrs Knight, as she was called by Austen, moved from Godmersham Park to White Friars in Canterbury in 1798. Jane and her sister Cassandra had a close relationship with Mrs Knight, who was fond of both sisters and showed an interest in Jane’s writing. In early 1811, she eagerly awaited the publication of \_*Sense and Sensibility\_*, and asked Cassandra about the novel’s progress when Jane was absent. Austen also made other social calls around [Canterbury](/19c/19c-canterbury/) and in the Cathedral precincts. One family who resided in [Canterbury](/19c/19c-canterbury/), the widowed Mrs. Charles Milles and her daughter Molly, are likely to have been the real-life models for the characters of Mrs. and Miss Bates in \_*Emma\_* (1815).[[1]](#footnote-1)

Austen and her family also made the most of the other attractions [Canterbury](/19c/19c-canterbury/) had to offer. They visited the Cathedral and went shopping during the day, and enjoyed concerts and balls in the evening, such as the one that took place in August of 1805 during [Canterbury](/19c/19c-canterbury/) Race Week. By the early nineteenth century, horse-racing had become a popular spectator sport for both men and women. Austen was not as keen on it as other members of her family, though, and she does not appear to have gone to the races on this particular visit.[[2]](#footnote-2) Horse racing only features once in Jane Austen’s published work, and that is in connection with Tom Bertram, who leaves Mansfield Park to attend the races.

The [Canterbury](/19c/19c-canterbury/) gaol also numbers among Canterbury places that Austen went to see. Escorted by her brother Edward, who was inspecting it in his capacity as a visiting magistrate, Austen toured the Canterbury gaol in 1813, five years after it opened in 1808. She alludes to the unspeakable experience in a letter to her sister, remarking that she “went through all the feelings which people must go through, I think, in visiting such a building”.[[3]](#footnote-3)

Article by Susan Civale

**Bibliography**

Harris, Jocelyn, “Jane Austen and the Subscription List to Camilla (1796).” *Persuasions Online* 35:1 Winter 2014.

Selwyn, David. *Jane Austen and Leisure*. London: Hambledon Press, 1999.

1. Harris. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. David Selwyn, 113. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. To Cassandra Austen, 3 November 1813. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)