



The 1816 Philadelphia *Emma*: A Forgotten Edition and Its Readers

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2016 MARKS THE BICENTENNIAL of not one but two noteworthy first editions of Jane Austen's novel *Emma*. 1816 appears on the title pages of both John Murray's London *Emma*, which was actually released in late December 1815, and a Philadelphia edition published by "M. CAREY." Known today chiefly to book historians and serious literary collectors, the 1816 Philadelphia *Emma* was the first Austen novel published in America and the only one printed in the United States during her lifetime (1775–1817). This earliest American edition of an Austen novel made little impact in its own time. Far from inaugurating Austen's transatlantic fame, the reprinted *Emma* did not inspire any contemporary U.S. publisher to issue further American editions of her novels to compete with expensive imported English editions. Indeed, the 1816 Philadelphia *Emma* remained the only American printing of Austen's works until a complete set of her novels was issued in 1832–1833, again in Philadelphia, by the firm of Carey & Lea.¹

What's more, the very existence of this earliest American publication of Austen failed to be remembered. Geoffrey Keynes's *Jane Austen: A Bibliography* (1929), the first catalogue of historic editions of Austen's novels, included no mention of the 1816 Philadelphia *Emma*. David Gilson's *A Bibliography of Jane Austen* (1982) restored this first American edition to the historical record, together with descriptions of the very few copies known to survive—just four, by the time of his 2002 "Jane Austen's 'Emma' in America." In that article, Gilson compared in some detail the text of the first London and Philadelphia

editions. Yet he left unanswered many crucial questions about the latter's origins and reception.

I have identified two copies of the 1816 Philadelphia *Emma* unknown to Gilson, bringing the total of confirmed copies to six. (For a descriptive list—what book historians call a census—see the Appendix.) Five copies are held in American college, university, research, or private membership libraries: at Goucher, Yale, the New York Society Library, Dartmouth, and Winterthur. One is in England, at King's College, Cambridge. In numerical terms, this first American edition of *Emma* is significantly more rare than either Shakespeare's first Folio, of which there are 235 known copies and counting (Smith), or the Bay Psalm Book, the first book printed in the American colonies, of which eleven copies remain ("Census"). Notably, the 1816 Philadelphia *Emma* is *not* in the collections of the most distinguished libraries in the English-speaking world, including the Library of Congress and Oxford's Bodleian.

Why have so few copies of this first American printing of Austen survived? Why, how, and exactly when in 1816 did the Philadelphia *Emma* come to be? How many copies of it were printed? What did its first readers think of it? Pursuing these questions has taken me to libraries and archives on both sides of the Atlantic.² Through studying the copies themselves, the personal papers of known original owners, publishers' records, and newspaper advertisements—sources that, in nearly every case, have never been published or digitized—I have uncovered stories about the people who first printed, published, sold, bought, and read Austen's novels in North America, well before she became a household name.

Throughout my efforts at literary detection, I have been reminded of the wonderful essay "*Emma* Considered as a Detective Story," in which the late, great English crime novelist P. D. James approached *Emma* as a mystery, the forerunner of her own genre. The clues with which I have worked, however, lie not in Austen's words but rather in traces left by her publishers and readers: evidence in print, in manuscript, and in the physical form of books. Because the 1816 Philadelphia *Emma* was once forgotten, and because so little has been known about it for so long even after its rediscovery, it was a thrill to me in my archival research every time I saw the word "*Emma*" appear.

My account of the publication of the 1816 Philadelphia *Emma* is divided into four parts, each headed by one or two crucial questions about the edition's origins. In the final section, I present highlights of this edition's reception by readers, drawn from surviving copies and personal documents. (My forthcoming book, *Reading Austen in America*, will treat all these topics in

more depth.) For the benefit of readers less familiar with book history, I briefly explain the nature of the early-nineteenth-century publishing business in the U.S. and U.K. and the material process of producing books in this period.

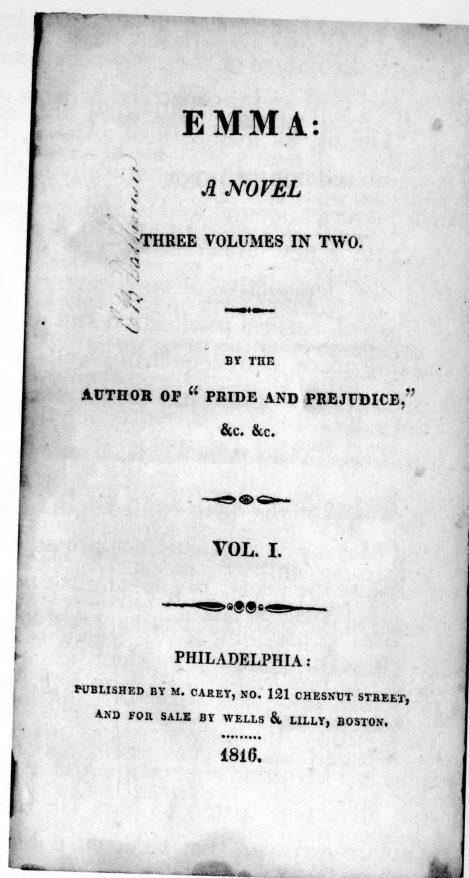
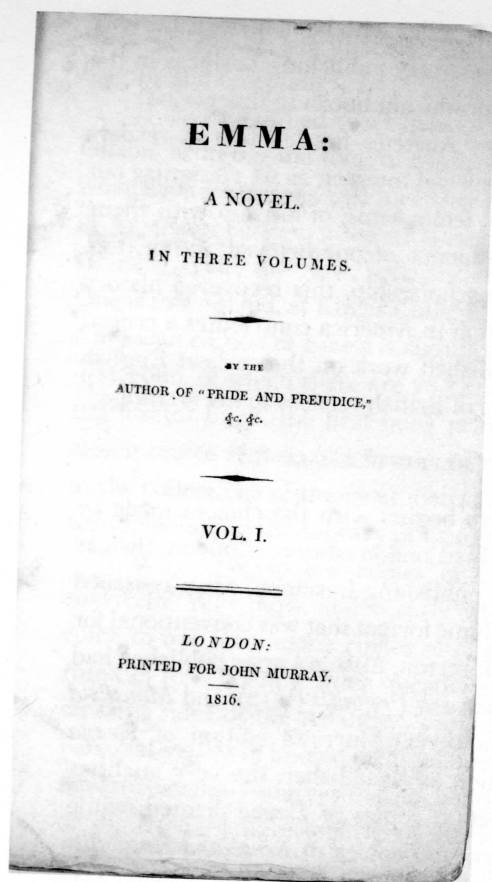
For us, as members of JASNA, how Austen's first American readers encountered her writings naturally holds special interest, as we recognize our own historical counterparts and, perhaps, feel a sense of kinship with them. We gain a new understanding of the influence of our beloved author, too, from the perspective of book history. To scholarship, this recovered history of Austen's earliest publication and reception in America contributes a crucial missing piece, complementing well-established work on the earliest English editions of her novels and on the reactions of British readers to her writings.³

WHAT DID IT MEAN TO "REPRINT" *EMMA*?

The story of the 1816 Philadelphia *Emma* begins with the choices made by John Murray, with Austen's approval, for his London edition. (London, then as now, was the center of the English book publishing business.) Murray issued *Emma* in the spacious, luxurious three-volume format that was conventional for novels at the time, and in which Thomas Egerton, Austen's prior publisher, had presented *Sense and Sensibility* (1811), *Pride and Prejudice* (1813), and *Mansfield Park* (1814). In both size and price, however, Murray's edition of *Emma* reflected his greater prestige and ambition as a publisher: the very qualities that attracted Austen to him. He had 2000 copies of *Emma* printed, while scholars estimate that Egerton published 750 copies of *Sense and Sensibility* and 1250 copies each of *Pride and Prejudice* and *Mansfield Park* (Fergus 131, 145, 191–92). At a guinea (a pound plus a shilling, or twenty-one shillings), Murray's *Emma* cost significantly more than the fifteen- to eighteen-shilling prices of Egerton's editions (Fergus 159). So costly were printed books at this time that Austen herself was able to afford to buy very few; she borrowed most of what she read, either from friends or from libraries (Halsey 17).

Austen negotiated financial terms confidently with Murray and kept a careful eye on the edition's printing. Indeed, her close involvement with the production of *Emma*—the last of her novels she was able to see through the press—remains crucial evidence of her sense of herself as a professional author. So, too, does her lively correspondence with James Stanier Clarke about the Prince Regent's "invitation" to dedicate this novel to him.⁴ Unfortunately for Austen, the royal dedication resulted neither in a sellout edition nor, apparently, in any great increase in her readership or fame.

Austen's name did not appear on the title page of Murray's edition of



Title pages of the first London edition of Emma (left) and the first American edition of Emma (right). Courtesy of Goucher College Special Collections and Archives.

Emma, which identified her only as “the author of ‘Pride and Prejudice,’ etc. etc.” The designation “By a Lady” had appeared on Austen’s first title page, that of *Sense and Sensibility*; subsequently, each title page referred to one or more of her previous novels. Austen’s identity as author was made publicly known only after her death. While an explanation of her decision to veil her name has not survived, doing so was in keeping with ideas of the time regarding published authorship for women, especially unmarried women.

So far, all is well known to those steeped in Austen. We enter less familiar territory with the title page of the first American edition of *Emma*—which,

like Murray's, conveys important information about the book's origins. Indeed, what is not present is as significant as what is. No mention appears here of John Murray or of London. One element hints that this edition is not an original publication: the phrase "three volumes in two," which contemporary American bookbuyers would have understood to mean that this book had been reprinted, most likely from a London publication.

Reprinting might seem to us today to be piracy. In the early nineteenth century, however, reprinting an English publication without the author's or publisher's permission in America, on the Continent, or in Ireland was perfectly legal, since British copyright law banned republication only within England and Scotland (Gross 21–22). International copyright laws came into existence only later in the nineteenth century, as a result in part of forceful advocacy by such internationally famous authors as Charles Dickens.

Austen's lifetime fell at the end of what is known as the "hand-press period," when books were still, in the words of the book historian David Pearson, "unique handcrafted objects" created using much the same artisan techniques as in the era of Gutenberg (22). By the early nineteenth century, when American-authored literature was still nascent, all the materials involved in bookmaking were produced within the United States. In the young nation, so recently and proudly independent from British laws and taxation policies, producing and consuming American-made goods was considered decidedly patriotic. Buyers of an American reprint supported not only local booksellers, publishers, printers, and binders but also paper-makers, type-casters, ink-makers, and leather-tanners—all while paying a price significantly cheaper than an English import (Green, "Rise" 79).

With no permission required for legal reprinting in the United States, an author and publisher in the United Kingdom may well never have known that a transatlantic reprint existed. No evidence indicates that either Austen or John Murray was aware of the 1816 Philadelphia *Emma*. Certainly neither of them profited from it.

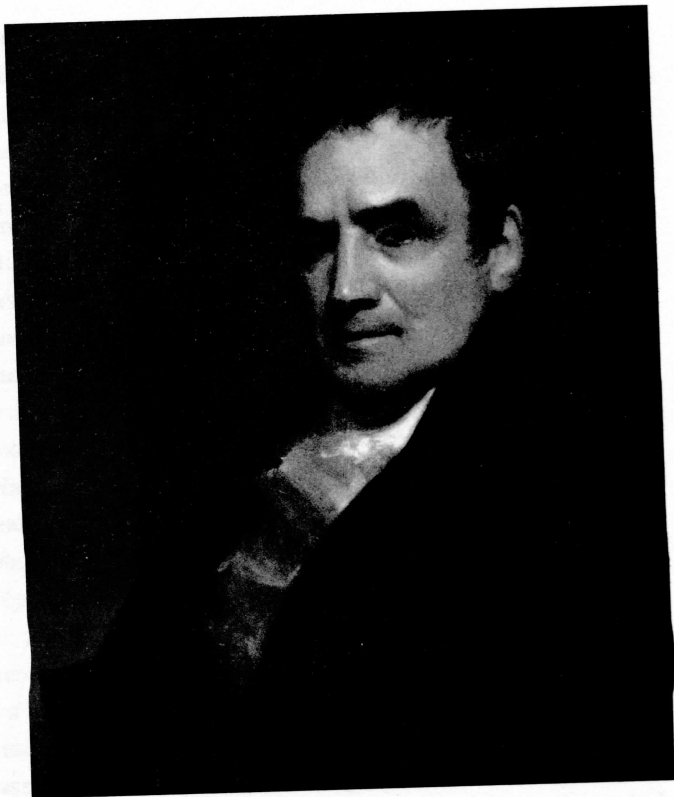
Would Austen have cared that her novel was published in the United States? I believe that she would have. Austen seems, as Patricia Ard has persuasively argued, to have given very little thought to America in general. Yet she certainly concerned herself with the "Profits of [her] Novels," as she headed the scrap of paper on which she kept track of some of her earnings. The list she compiled of "Opinions of *Emma*" makes clear her desire, too, to know what her readers thought of her writings. It seems reasonable to guess that she would also have been interested in her international reception.

Fittingly, the man who brought out the 1816 Philadelphia *Emma* was one of the foremost publishers, if not *the* foremost publisher, in the United States at the time, although his name is not well known today. Mathew Carey was born in Dublin in 1760, where he learned the printing trade, as well as the business of unauthorized but legal reprinting. After emigrating to the U.S. in 1784, Carey quickly established himself as an ambitious, well-connected businessman, as well as a civically engaged man and a noted political writer (Green, "Rise" 84–85). Carey's keen intelligence and certainty of purpose can be described in John Neagle's 1825 life portrait of him, which hangs at the Library Company of Philadelphia. (Founded in 1731 by Benjamin Franklin, the Library Company is now a research institution; it holds almost every title printed by Carey, except his 1816 *Emma*.) In the early nineteenth century, Philadelphia was the center of American publishing, having only recently—in 1800—been replaced by Washington, D.C., as the capital of the nation.

Book historians identify Carey, who died in 1839, as one of the first printers and booksellers in the United States to become a publisher as we understand that term today: an entrepreneur who selected books to publish, supplied capital for their production, and coordinated their sales and marketing (Green, *Mathew Carey* 9–10). Highlights of Carey's extensive publishing record include the first Catholic Bible printed in America, in 1790, and the first American atlases, a few years later, which were a landmark in printing technique and quality in the U.S. (Green, *Mathew Carey* 17–20). The steady production of King James Bibles in a variety of formats kept Carey's publishing business solvent for decades. As was typical at the time, Carey sold books in his own bookshop as well as by mail, both to individual purchasers and to booksellers in other cities. His son Henry C. Carey (1793–1879) worked with him increasingly in the late 1810s before becoming his full partner in 1817 and taking over entirely in 1824 (Green, *Mathew Carey* 30). Henry was the "Carey" of Carey & Lea, the firm that published the first complete American edition of Austen's novels; "Lea" was Isaac Lea, Mathew's son-in-law.

Mathew Carey's diaries make clear that he greatly enjoyed reading novels. Unfortunately, he did not keep a regular diary during 1816—one of several gaps in the archival history related to his edition of *Emma*. He also took a keen interest in publishing novels, many of them reprints from English originals and many by women authors ("Catalogue of Novels"). As Green has pointed out, Carey's reprinting of English novels accelerated in 1816, following the tripling of

Portrait of
Mathew Carey, by
John Neagle (1825).
Courtesy of the
Library Company
of Philadelphia.



customs duty on books imported from England from 5% to 15% (*Mathew Carey* 22). Developing a market for novels in the United States represented a challenge, however, when all books—even reprints—were expensive, and when only very cultured and privileged Americans owned more than Bibles, schoolbooks, and practical reference works (*Green, Mathew Carey* 10).

Publishing Austen fit in well with Carey's personal predilection for novels and his professional emphasis on reprinting English fiction for American bookbuyers. But why did he choose *Emma* in particular to reprint? The bibliographer David Gilson guessed that Carey was influenced by the laudatory review of *Emma* that appeared, with no byline, in the March 1816 issue of John Murray's periodical, the *Quarterly Review* ("Jane Austen's 'Emma'" 517). The first serious critical appraisal that Austen received, this review was written by Walter Scott, by invitation from their mutual publisher, Murray (Fergus 158). (Scott's novels were international bestsellers, unlike Austen's,

and while he, too, published his fiction anonymously, his identity was widely guessed.) That Carey knew of this review is confirmed by his quotation of a key portion of it in his advertising of "Novels and Romances" for sale by him:

The work before us proclaims a knowledge of the human heart, with the power and resolution to bring that knowledge to the service of honour and virtue. Keeping close to common incidents, and to such characters as occupy the ordinary walks of life, she has produced sketches of such spirit and originality, that we never miss the excitation which depends upon a narrative of uncommon events, arising from the consideration of minds, manners, and sentiments, greatly above our own. ("Catalogue of Novels")

Only a few other publications on this list are likewise accompanied by critical praise. Carey's inclusion of the *Quarterly Review* quotation could indicate that he shared the critic's admiration of Austen's writing. Or perhaps Carey simply hoped to improve sales of a novel by someone whom he could identify only as "the author of 'Sense and Sensibility,' 'Pride and Prejudice,' &c" ("Catalogue of Novels").

Evidence indicates, however, that Carey first came across *Emma* independently of the *Quarterly Review*. Packing lists from a London bookseller who regularly supplied Carey with new English publications show that Carey received not one but two copies of *Emma*, in quick succession, in April 1816, each time as part of a large shipment. Green, who located the second invoice, has conjectured that this apparently accidental duplication drew *Emma* to Carey's attention ("Introduction"). Furthermore, it seems likely that both shipments of *Emma* resulted not from a particular request of Carey's but instead from a standing order for new releases. Given transatlantic shipping times, it would have been impossible for Carey to have received and read the March *Quarterly Review*, then sent an order to London for *Emma*, and already had the book in hand by mid-April.

It appears, then, that Carey initially noticed *Emma* essentially by chance. Yet his decision to reprint *Emma* must have been intentional, Green believes ("Introduction"). A savvy businessman like Carey would have invested in reprinting a novel by an unknown author only if he thought that the work had merit and would sell. Thus, while no thoughts of Carey's about reading *Emma* are known to have survived, the very existence of his reprint edition can be taken as proof of his esteem for Austen's writing.

Carey may also have been influenced, as Gilson hypothesized, by the *Quarterly Review*. Carey's correspondence indicates that he initiated the

printing of *Emma* in August 1816, a full four months after receiving the duplicate copies. So the *Quarterly Review* could well have contributed to Carey's decision to reprint *Emma*, even though the periodical was not responsible for first bringing the novel to his notice.

WHEN IN 1816 WAS CAREY'S *EMMA* PUBLISHED, AND
HOW MANY COPIES WERE ISSUED?

That Carey published, rather than printed, *Emma* is discernible from the title page, which identifies the volumes as having been "PUBLISHED BY M. CAREY." (Note that John Murray conveyed the same meaning on his edition's title page using different words: "PRINTED FOR JOHN MURRAY.") The names of Carey's printers appear on the last page of the second volume of *Emma*: "Justice & Cox" of Trenton, New Jersey. Located a relatively short distance away from Philadelphia via the Delaware River, Trenton was a manufacturing city rather than a cultural center.

The short-lived printing firm of Justice & Cox was formed of an experienced printer, Joseph Justice (1785–1864), and a much younger associate, Horatio Cox (1801–1883), whose age suggests that he may have been an apprentice (*Printers' File*). During their brief partnership, which lasted from June 1816 till March 1818, Justice & Cox printed several titles for Carey.

No record remains of Carey's commission of Justice & Cox to print *Emma*. Unfortunately, the set of "Letterbooks" for Carey's firm, into which clerks copied the text of outgoing correspondence, is missing the volume covering the spring and summer of 1816. Letters from Joseph Justice to Carey do survive, however, and these make clear that the printing of *Emma* started off promisingly. On August 12, Justice wrote to Henry C. Carey, Mathew's son and business partner, to estimate the total length of a book that we can deduce must be *Emma*, though Justice did not mention the work by name: "it will make as nigh as we can calculate from 260 to 270 pages per Volume."⁵ Justice's estimate was quite accurate: each finished volume contains 264 pages. In the same letter, Justice noted that he included a sample printed page for the Careys to review: "The page we send you does not look very well—we did not lock it—only [tie]d it and took a proof—however it gives you the size and number of ms," meaning the increment by which printing costs were calculated. In this era, when type was set by hand, the type compositor's calculation of the work's eventual length served two purposes: to reckon the total cost of the printing work and to allow the proper quantity of paper to be ordered—itsself a considerable expense, given that all paper was handmade by skilled artisans.

did not provide enough paper at the outset to complete the job of printing *Emma*. Presumably, Carey was experiencing supply problems with his network of paper manufacturers. Pleas for more paper came again and again from Trenton, while on Carey's end, impatience evidently grew. "We are doing nothing for want of paper send some if you possibly can," Justice entreated at one point. On November 4, Carey complained, "On Saturday Week I sent you Six Bundles of paper for Emma which I presumed you had rec'd early last Week. It would be well to make some arrangement with the Shippers so as to prevent the Trouble & Disappointment that so frequently occur in our intercourse. There are more miscarriages in my parcels to Trenton than any other direction" (Letterbook).

An element of suspense entered the correspondence in December, as winter weather threatened the delivery of *Emma*, by water, from Trenton to Philadelphia. (In the U.S. at this time, shipping by water was faster, more reliable, and less expensive than shipping over land.) On December 11, Justice asked for "one more bundle" of paper so that "we can send it down before the river closes [that is, freezes]—it shall be less expense." He promised that the job would be finished by "Wednesday or Thursday next." On December 17, he wrote again with an elaborate apology: "we was in hopes that we should be able to send Emma this day—but we was disappointed owing to the packet [i.e., vessel] being crowded full so that we could not get it on board. We could not get it ready until she was ready to start—and Capt. Ashmore declared to me that he could not take another article. He said he was sorry, and wished we had come earlier—but it was entirely out of our power, we did our best.—If the river does not close before tomorrow, another packet starts—and Mr. Cox will come down with her and have all Emma along." Carey's account books show that he paid Justice & Cox on December 20, so presumably young Horatio Cox did travel down from Trenton on December 18 with "all Emma along." It's remarkable that this date is almost a year to the day after Murray's London edition was completed, according to his firm's ledger dated December 19, 1815 (Gilson, *Jane Austen* 13).

The protracted, halting process of printing *Emma* for Carey establishes that there was no urgency at all to bring to the market this work by an unnamed, little known English author. In contrast, reprints of bestselling novels by Scott and, later, Dickens were rushed into production to gratify eager American readers—and to enrich entrepreneurial publishers.

The financial risk Carey took in funding the production of *Emma* is underscored by the modest size of his edition. Justice twice asked "what number

is to be printed on *Emma*,” which suggests that Carey may not have made a final decision about the print run in advance. A record of Carey’s payment to Justice & Cox for “press work” on *Emma*, when decoded, reveals the edition’s print run: 500 copies.⁶ In the United States as in England, it made better business sense to print a small edition and, if a title sold briskly, to commission more copies, rather than to sink capital into a large print run that might not sell out—as, unfortunately for Austen, was the case with Murray’s 2000-copy edition of *Emma* (Fergus 159). Evidently, Carey’s edition of *Emma* did not sell well enough to merit a second printing.⁷

Carey’s investment in *Emma* did not end when he paid Justice & Cox for the presswork. What he received from them were large printed sheets, which required binding—a skilled process, also done by hand—to transform them into sellable books. According to Carey’s financial records, on December 26, 1816, just a week after he received “all *Emma*” from Trenton, the bindery of Wakeling & Allen billed him for binding 400 copies of *Emma* in boards and fifty “full bound,” leaving the final fifty to be bound at a later date (Account Book). *In the next section, I will explain the difference between “boards” and “full bound” and the consequences of this very speedy binding work.*

Once books were bound, they were ready to be distributed and advertised. Beginning on December 27, Carey sent copies to fellow booksellers, including the firm of Wells & Lilly of Boston, whose reciprocal sales agreement with Carey is evident on the title page of *Emma*. Newspaper advertisements for *Emma* appeared in the last few days of December 1816 and the first week of January 1817. “EMMA : a novel, three vols. in two, by the author of ‘Pride and Prejudice,’ &c.—price \$2, just received and for sale at No. 3 Wall street, by VAN WINKLE & WILEY” ran one advertisement, in its entirety, in the issue of the *New-York Courier* dated December 31, 1816 (Van Winkle & Wiley). A few days later, in the same newspaper, a rival bookseller on Broadway added its own advertisement, which placed *Emma* in the company of new publications in a variety of genres: “EMMA, a new novel ; Guy Mannering 2d edition ; Sir Matthew Hale’s advice to his Grand Children ; the Maid of Moscow, Mrs. Hoffland’s last work ; Moore’s Irish Melodies and Sacred Songs ; Lord Byron’s works complete ; Hobhouse’s Letters from France” (Th. Longworth, Jr.). As I have noted, Carey advertised *Emma* in his own catalogues, with the aid of quoted praise from the *Quarterly Review*.

Nowadays, publishing companies establish book release dates months in advance. When exactly we consider the Philadelphia *Emma* to have been “published,” however, depends on what we take that term to mean: available

for sale? advertised? actually bought? December 26, 1816, the date when bound copies were ready to be sold at Carey's shop, seems a reasonable choice.

HOW DID THE PHILADELPHIA *EMMA* COMPARE TO THE LONDON EDITION, AND
WHY HAVE SO FEW COPIES OF THE AMERICAN EDITION SURVIVED?

I have referred to the 1816 Philadelphia *Emma* several times as an "American edition" of Austen. Yet this term is misleading if it suggests a republication for American readers with changed spellings and rewordings, such as is customary today when an English writer's work is issued in the United States. In early American printing, practices varied: some American reprints in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries boldly changed the text of the originals, while others aimed to be identical in content to the English editions (Gross 28–29).

Justice & Cox's effort to create as close a copy of Murray's *Emma* as possible is evident beginning on the title page. Although the type fonts were not exactly the same as those used by Murray's printers, Justice & Cox closely *imitated the formatting and text ornaments of the English title page*. Justice & Cox also replicated the identification of the novelist as "the author of 'Pride and Prejudice'"—which would have meant little to American readers, since *Pride and Prejudice* was available in the U.S. only as an imported book. But, in this case, to reprint meant, literally, to reprint.

Likewise, Justice & Cox made no concerted effort to "Americanize" Austen's text. In contrast, as Gilson has shown, the 1832–1833 first complete American edition of Austen's novels published by Carey & Lea bowdlerized her prose, including changes to all instances in which a character takes God's name in vain ("Jane Austen's 'Emma'" 520). As Gilson has documented, many typographical errors are present in Justice & Cox's printing of *Emma*, some very noticeable indeed, such as two chapters headed "CHAPTR" and consecutive pages numbered 202 and 103 (*Bibliography* 99; "Jane Austen's 'Emma'" 521–24). Some changes are unintentionally entertaining: to take an example not noted by Gilson, rather than exclaiming "Insufferable woman!" in reference to Mrs. Elton, Emma Woodhouse, in the Philadelphia edition, exclaims "Insufferable women!" (Imagine if there were more than one Mrs. Elton!) Such oversights are perhaps not surprising, given Horatio Cox's young age of fifteen, and given, too, the charmingly ungrammatical way in which Joseph Justice expressed himself in his letters. Carey did employ proofreaders for some of his titles, but evidently he did not consider *Emma* to be worth

EMMA.

CHAP. I.

EMMA Woodhouse, handsome, clever, and rich, with a comfortable home and happy disposition, seemed to unite some of the best blessings of existence; and had lived nearly twenty-one years in the world with very little to distress or vex her.

She was the youngest of the two daughters of a most affectionate, indulgent father, and had, in consequence of her sister's marriage, been mistress of his house from a very early period. Her mother had died too long ago for her to have more than an indistinct remembrance of her caresses, and her place had been supplied by an excellent woman as governess, who had

VOL. I

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fallen

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Sixteen years had Miss Taylor been in Mr. Woodhouse's family, less as a governess than a friend, very fond of both daughters, but particularly of Emma. Between them it was more the intimacy of sisters. Even before Miss Taylor had ceased to hold the nominal office of governess, the mildness of her temper had hardly allowed her to impose any restraint; and the shadow of authority being now long passed away, they had been living together as friend and friend very mutually attached, and Em-

A-2

First pages of Murray's Emma (left) and Carey's (right), showing the difference in formatting between the three-volume and two-volume editions. Courtesy of Goucher College Special Collections and Archives.

that effort and cost. I will highlight a few further delightful misprints in the final section.

The most significant difference between the 1816 London and Philadelphia *Emmas* lies in formatting. To use less paper and thus save a considerable amount of money, Carey compressed the text of the novel into two volumes,

from the three of Murray's English edition. The compression is evident on each of the pages of Carey's edition, which are more tightly printed, with narrower margins, than Murray's, making the Philadelphia edition less relaxing to read.

Another cost-saving strategy of Carey's was to choose a less expensive grade of paper than Murray had used. This decision made good business sense for Carey, since, as I have noted, he could not be sure how well an anonymously authored English novel would sell in the American market. The number of ripped, damaged, and altogether missing pages in the surviving copies of the 1816 Philadelphia *Emma*, however, attest to the poor quality of much of the paper on which Carey's edition was printed.

The binding executed for Carey by Wakeling & Allen was likewise economical rather than durable. The hastiness of the binders' work at folding, cutting, and sewing is evident in the many askew pages that appear in surviving copies, as well as the bulging spines of some, a symptom that, to the specialist's eye, indicates overly tight binding.⁸ What's more, binding "in boards," as was done for 400 of the 500 copies of Carey's *Emma*, meant issuing the volumes in flimsy covers, with thin leather covering only the spines and corners. At significant additional cost, a purchaser could choose to have such a copy rebound with better-quality leather and more care in construction. Without such an investment, the volumes would remain fragile and vulnerable. Few first editions of any book survive in boards; those that do are prized by collectors and fetch high prices.

Of course, it made sense for Carey to cut costs wherever possible. He was a businessman trying to sell books to American purchasers for whom these items were expensive, though much less so than imported English volumes. A comprehensive catalogue of Carey's holdings dated 1818 makes the price differential apparent. His own Philadelphia edition of *Emma* is listed at two different price points, \$2 and \$2.50, with the cheaper version identified as "bds," i.e., in boards, while the London three-volume edition of *Emma* is listed at \$4 ("Catalogue of an Extensive Collection" 115).

The combination of shoddy paper and cheap binding is likely responsible for how few copies of the 1816 Philadelphia *Emma* survive, and for the damaged condition of several. Green offers a further explanation based on readers' esteem for Austen's writing: "the decision to bind so much of the edition in boards might help explain the rarity of the book today. Boarded books couldn't survive repeated readings and *Emma* was a novel that was reread" ("Emma PS").

Might additional copies have survived? It's certainly possible that out of

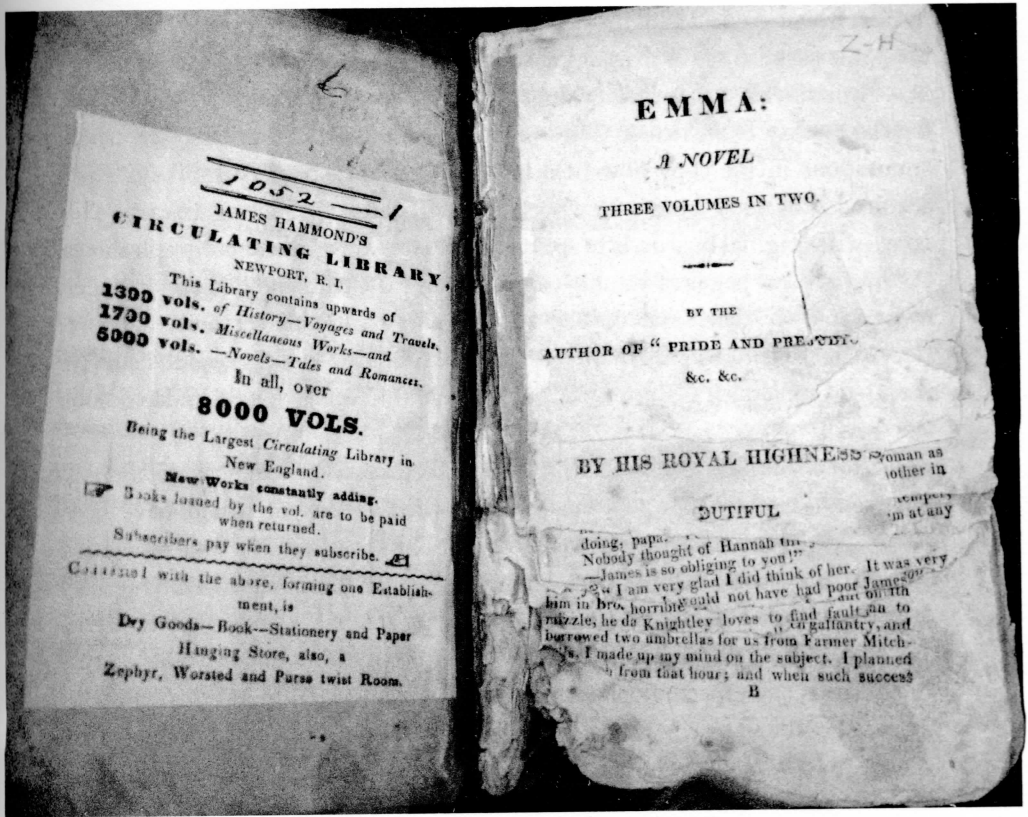
the 500 copies that Carey had printed, more than six copies remain. Most likely, a further copy would be found in a family collection or a small institutional library that lacks a full catalogue of its holdings. (Every time I visit a house museum that has early nineteenth-century books on display, I always take a good look and ask if the contents have been catalogued.) It's also possible, however, that the six copies that we know about are indeed the only survivors. Given the (understandably) low production values of Carey's reprinted *Emma*, volumes would likely have disintegrated unless an owner cared enough to invest in having them rebound well.

WHO WERE THE FIRST AMERICAN READERS OF EMMA,
AND WHAT DID THEY THINK OF IT?

Book historian David Pearson has noted that "[a] book can be written in, defaced, altered, beautified, or cherished, to produce a preservable object with an individual history" (22). Indeed, the six surviving copies of the 1816 Philadelphia *Emma* all reveal, in their physical form and condition, choices made by their owners and readers. (For a summary of pertinent information about the six copies—including the web address for the only full digital facsimile, on Goucher College's open-access "*Emma* in America" site—see the Appendix.⁹) In what Pearson terms a "customisation cycle" (23), some owners selected, and paid extra for, special styles of binding. Some owners added their signatures or bookplates, thus helping to establish the volumes' history of ownership, or, to use the book-historical term, their provenance. Some readers wrote in—annotated—the volumes. As a result of all these actions, each of the six copies is now a unique artifact in terms of its material properties.

Of the six copies, only two contain annotations that shed light on the question that most fascinates today's lovers of Austen and is also of greatest interest to scholars of Austen's reception. How did the earliest American readers of *Emma* respond to this novel? The first such copy was owned by Jeremiah Smith (1759–1842), whose substantial collection of books and pamphlets, 601 in all, were kept together and donated to Dartmouth in 1972. As the size of his personal library indicates, Smith was an educated, cultivated man. (As a point of comparison, Jane Austen's father owned 500 books, a considerable number for a country parson in the late eighteenth century [Halsey 17].) A Harvard graduate, Smith served as chief justice of New Hampshire and, briefly, as the ninth governor of that state.

Smith was an attentive reader, as his markings inside *Emma* attest. As befits a judge, he read with pen in hand, correcting all the printer's errors that



Courtesy of the Hammond Collection, New York Society Library.

he noticed. His emendations range from the obvious—striking out the extra “o” from “looked”—to the more thoughtful, as when he rightly discerned that the word “plot” was a misprint for “blot.” Austen did stump Smith on one occasion, however, with her coinage of the word “imaginist” to describe *Emma*. He gamely, and equally inventively, corrected the spelling to “imaginast.”

In the absence of firm evidence, we can only speculate what drew a reader to a particular novel or author. Smith’s friend and biographer John H. Morison described him as having been morally serious, yet possessing a notable sense of humor: a combination, we can surely agree, shared by Austen herself and by the majority of her admirable characters. Wrote Morison of Smith, “It is impossible for those who did not know him in his own house, to have any idea how much amusement he could extract from the most trifling events. . . . If there was anything in which he showed himself a man of genius, it was in the

humor which flashed out through every feature of his mind and face" (168, 170). It is certainly easy to imagine such a person appreciating Austen's novels.

In contrast to Smith's evident appreciation for Austen's writing (if not for the quality of Justice & Cox's printing) stand the marvelously crotchety annotations in the copy now held by the New York Society Library, which acquired it in 1868 from a Newport, Rhode Island, circulating library. This copy, in its original boards, is in spectacular disrepair, as the photograph shows: the first several pages of volume one, including the title and dedication pages, are extensively deteriorated. The state of these volumes certainly supports Green's judgment, which I quoted earlier, that "boarded books couldn't survive repeated rereadings" ("Emma PS"). It is a marvel that such a dilapidated book survives.

But thankfully it does, or the unvarnished reactions of these anonymous nineteenth-century Newport readers, recorded in pencil, would have been lost.¹⁰ "I expect Emma is going to marry Mr. Knightly," reads a sage prediction noted at the end of volume two, chapter 11, when Emma and Mr. Knightley decide to dance together because they are, in Emma's words, "not really so much brother and sister as to make it at all improper." "I wonder who likes this book," reads one especially plaintive note. "I am delighted to get through with Emma Woodhouse or Mrs. Knightly" is recorded at the end of volume two, evidently by a reader who persevered in spite of strongly disliking Austen's main character!

Most delightfully—and, in terms of reception history, significantly—one reader laid out a chart on the last page identifying major characters with particular adjectives:

Mr. Knightley — tolerable

Emma — intolerable

Harriet — very pleasant

Frank — delightful

Jane — enchanting

Woodhouse — grouty

Miss Bates — Full of Gab

El[ton] — d___d sneak

[Mrs. Elton?] — vulgar woman

This list offers a thought-provoking companion, from an American perspective, to the list of "Opinions of *Emma*" that Austen herself solicited from her friends and family, comments that have long been valued for the insight they give into

the reactions of everyday English readers. For all of us, teachers and Austen enthusiasts alike, who work to connect twenty-first-century American readers with *Emma*, it is wonderful to have such physical evidence of efforts—some of them unsuccessful—by nineteenth-century American readers to comprehend and enjoy this same novel.

CONCLUSION: AN EDITION UNREMARKABLE IN ITS DAY

The 1816 Philadelphia *Emma* affords a new and peerless view of the earliest publication and reception of Austen in America, about which very little has hitherto been known. The great interest this edition possesses today, however, could not be more different from the lack of importance it held for all those, from businessmen to artisans, involved in its production. (As was the case for any American reprint at the time, the author was entirely out of the equation.) Far from an intentional rarity or collectible, Carey's 1816 Philadelphia *Emma* was an inexpensively produced book offered at a relatively affordable price, in an era when everyday Americans were just beginning to indulge in buying novels to read for pleasure. As was true for Austen's writings more generally, the full significance of this first American edition would become apparent only over time.

Appendix: Census of Surviving Copies of the 1816 Philadelphia *Emma*¹¹

GILSON CATALOG NUMBER	CURRENT LOCATION AND ACCESSION DATE (<i>if known</i>)	OWNER'S / OWNERS' NAMES AND LIFE DATES (* <i>marks original owner, if known</i>)	DISTINCTIVE ATTRIBUTES OF COPY AND OWNERSHIP	AVAILABILITY OF FAMILY PAPERS FOR CONTEXTUAL STUDY	AVAILABILITY OF DIGITAL IMAGE OF THE COPY
B1.1	Goucher College, Baltimore, Maryland, USA; 1975	* Christian Broun Ramsay, Countess of Dalhousie (1786– 1839); Siegfried Sassoon (1886–1967); Frank J. Hogan (1877– 1944); Alberta H. Burke (1906–1975) ¹²	Bears the bookplate and signature of Lady Dalhousie; the bookplate of Frank Hogan; the bookplate of Alberta Burke; and pencil notes about Lady Dalhousie in Sassoon's handwriting	Lady Dalhousie's papers are currently held privately in Scotland by her descendants, with plans to deposit them eventually in a local archive	Full digital facsimile available at < www. emmainamerica.org >
B1.2	Beinecke Library, Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut, USA; 1998	Charles Beecher Hogan (1906–1983)	Bears the signature of M. J. Eaton		

B1.3	New York Society Library, New York City, New York, USA; 1868	* James Hammond's Circulating Library, Newport, Rhode Island, USA	Bears a pastedown stating the circulating library's policies Annotated in pencil by pre-1868 readers, with a combination of doodled marginalia and comments on the novel		See McMahon
n. cat.; described in Gilson, "Jane Austen's 'Emma' in America"	King's College Library, University of Cambridge, England	David Gilson (1935–2014)	Bears the signatures of Virginia Arnold and Louisa Bruorton		
n. cat.	Winterthur Library, Winterthur, Delaware, USA	* E. I. (Éleuthère Irénée) du Pont (1771–1834)	Bound at the back of volume two is a 24–page catalogue of Carey's publications, dated October 1816	Extensive du Pont family papers held at the Hagley Museum and Library in Delaware	
n. cat.	Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College, Hanover, New Hampshire, USA; 1972	* Jeremiah Smith (1759–1842)	Purchase price and bookseller's name noted; printer's errors corrected in ink; annotations about Austen's life	Part of Smith's intact 601-item collection of books and pamphlets, which includes several other novels by Austen	See Wells, "A Rare Edition"

NOTES

1. See Schultheis for a full account of the 1832–1833 Philadelphia edition printed by Carey & Lea and the relation of those volumes to the 1816 Philadelphia *Emma*. 2016 also marks the bicentennial of the first publication of *Emma* in French translation: see Dow.
2. My warm thanks to Debra Roush and Linda Slothouber for the invitation to present this research at the 2016 AGM. Thanks too to the members of the JASNA Eastern Pennsylvania Region—especially Paul Savidge—and the JASNA New York Metropolitan Region who heard earlier versions of this presentation and asked thought-provoking questions. I am very grateful for research support from the Provost's Office of Goucher College and from Mr. Alexander McCall Smith and the Isabel Dalhousie Fellowship at the Institute for Advanced Study in the Humanities, University of Edinburgh. I express my gratitude to Rare Book School, based at the University of Virginia, through which I took James N. Green's course on publishing in early America. Jim's expertise on American book history in general and Mathew Carey in particular has been invaluable, as has his mentorship.
3. On Austen's publication and reception in England, see Gilson, Fergus, Sutherland, and Halsey. On American readers' attitudes towards Austen in the nineteenth century, see Southam and Favret.
4. On the significance of Austen's involvement with the London publication of *Emma* and her correspondence with Stanier Clarke, see Wells, "Introduction," where I suggest that the guinea price of Murray's edition could be roughly converted to \$100 today.
5. All transcriptions from manuscript reproduce the spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and formatting of the originals as exactly as possible.
6. My thanks to James N. Green for decoding the record in Carey's account book.
7. Just how well Carey's edition of *Emma* did sell is a question that requires further research.
8. I am grateful to Morgan Swan, Special Collections Education and Outreach Librarian at Rauner Library at Dartmouth, and to Green for sharing their judgment about the tight binding of these volumes.
9. Goucher College Library's "*Emma* in America" website was created by the team of Randalynn Kennedy, Nancy Magnuson, Tara Olivero, Melissa Straw, Kristen Welzenbach, and me. I am very grateful to my Goucher colleagues, and I join them in thanking, most warmly, those JASNA members who financially supported the launching of the site.
10. For more annotations, see McMahon. McMahon has speculated that the handwriting of the annotations indicates a single reader, most likely female. My admittedly nonspecialist's eye discerns two distinct styles of handwriting; I cannot hazard an informed guess about the gender of the writers. My transcriptions also differ from McMahon's in some particulars.
11. See Gilson's *Bibliography* (1997 ed.) and "Jane Austen's 'Emma' in America" (2002) for complete descriptions of the first four copies, including style of binding and pages damaged or missing. The name "Louisa Bruorton," in the King's College copy, represents my own effort at deciphering. *Reading Austen in America* will include further details about the two copies of the 1816 Philadelphia *Emma* that I rediscovered, as well as new findings about the provenance of Lady Dalhousie's copy; contextual accounts of the reading practices of Lady Dalhousie, Jeremiah Smith, and the du Pont family; and a fuller consideration of the annotations in the New York Society Library and Dartmouth copies. A later chapter will feature excerpts from the lively, multi-decade correspondence about the 1816 Philadelphia *Emma*, and other Austen matters, that took place between the English bibliographer David Gilson and the American collector Alberta H. Burke.
12. For an introduction to Alberta Burke, see Wells, *Everybody's Jane*, chapter 2.

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