

## 86. *To Francis Austen*

*Saturday 3—Tuesday 6 July 1813*

Chawton July 3<sup>d</sup> 1813

My dearest Frank

Behold me going to write you as handsome a Letter as I can. Wish me good luck.—We have had the pleasure of hearing of you lately through Mary, who sent us some of the particulars of Yours of June 18<sup>th</sup> (I think) written off Rugen, & we enter into the delight of your having so good a Pilot.—Why are you like Queen Eliz<sup>th</sup>?—Because you know how to chuse wise Ministers.—Does not this prove You as great a Captain as she was a Queen?—This may serve as a riddle for you to put forth among your Officers, by way of increasing your proper consequence.—It must be real enjoyment to you, since you are obliged to leave England, to be where you are, seeing something of a new Country, & one that has been so distinguished as Sweden.—You must have great pleasure in it.—I hope you may have gone to Carlsroon.—Your Profession has its' douceurs to recompense for some of its' Privations;—to an enquiring & observing Mind like yours, such douceurs must be considerable.—Gustavus-Vasa, & Charles 12<sup>th</sup>, & Christiana, & Linneus<sup>1</sup>—do their Ghosts rise up before You?—I have a great respect for former

Sweden. So zealous as it was for Protestantism! [*sic*]—And I have always fancied it more like England than many Countries;—& according to the Map, many of the names have a strong resemblance<sup>2</sup> to the English. July begins unpleasantly with us, cold & showery, but it is often a baddish month. We had some fine dry weather preceding it, which was very acceptable to the Holders of Hay & the Masters of Meadows—In general it must have been a good Haymaking Season. Edward has got in all his, in excellent order; I speak only of Chawton; [*p.* 2] but here he has had better luck<sup>3</sup> than M<sup>r</sup> Middleton ever had in the 5 years that he was Tenant. Good encouragement for him to come again; & I really hope he will do so another Year.—The pleasure to us of having them here is so great, that if we were not the best Creatures in the World we should not deserve it.—We go on in the most comfortable way, very frequently dining together, & always meeting in some part of every day.—Edward is very well & enjoys himself as thoroughly as any Hampshire born Austen can desire. Chawton is not thrown away upon him.—He talks of making a new Garden;<sup>4</sup> the present is a bad one & ill situated, near M<sup>r</sup> Papillon's;—he means to have the new,<sup>5</sup> at the top of the Lawn behind his own house.—We like to have him proving & strengthening his attachment to the place by making it better.—He will soon have all his Children about him, Edward, George & Charles are collected already, & another week brings Henry & William.—It is the custom at Winchester for Georges to come away a fortnight before the Holidays, when they are not to return any more; for fear they should overstudy themselves just at last, I suppose.—Really it is a peice of dishonourable accomodation<sup>6</sup> to the Master.—We are in hopes of another visit from our own true, lawful Henry very soon, he is to be *our* Guest this time.—He is quite well I am happy to say, & does not leave it to *my* pen I am sure to communicate to you the joyful news of his being Deputy Receiver<sup>7</sup> no longer.—It is a promotion which he thoroughly enjoys;—as well he may;—the work of his own mind.—He sends you all his own plans of course.—The scheme for Scotland we think an excellent one both for himself & his nephew.<sup>8</sup>—Upon the whole his Spirits are very much recovered.—If I may so express myself, his Mind is not a Mind for affliction. He is too Busy, too active, too sanguine.—Sincerely as he was attached to poor Eliza moreover, & excellently as he behaved to her, he was always so used to be away from her at times, that her Loss is not felt as that of many a beloved Wife might be, especially when all the circumstances of her long [*p.* 3] & dreadful Illness are taken into the account.—He very long knew that

she must die, & it was indeed a release at last.—Our mourning for her is not over, or we should now be putting it on again for M<sup>r</sup> Tho<sup>s</sup> Leigh—the respectable, worthy, clever, agreeable M<sup>r</sup> Tho. Leigh, who has just closed a good life at the age of 79, & must have died the possessor of one of the finest Estates in England & of more worthless Nephews & Neices<sup>9</sup> than any other private Man in the united Kingdoms.—We are very anxious to know who will have the Living of Adlestrop, & where his excellent Sister will find a home for the remainder of her days. As yet she bears his Loss with fortitude, but she has always seemed so wrapt up in him, that I fear she must feel it very dreadfully when the fever of Business is over.—There is another female sufferer on the occasion to be pitied. Poor M<sup>rs</sup> L. P.<sup>10</sup>—who would now have been Mistress of Stonleigh [*sic*] had there been none of that vile compromise,<sup>11</sup> which in good truth has never been allowed to be of much use to them.—It will be a hard trial.—Charles's little girls were with us about a month, & had so endeared themselves that we were quite sorry to have them go. We have the pleasure however of hearing that they are thought very much improved at home—Harriet in health, Cassy in manners.—The latter *ought* to be a very nice Child—Nature has done enough for her—but Method has been wanting;—we thought her very much improved ourselves, but to have Papa & Mama think her so too, was very essential to our contentment.—She will really be a very pleasing Child, if they will only exert themselves a little.—Harriet is a truly sweet-tempered little Darling.—They are now all at Southend together.—Why do I mention *that*?—As if Charles did not write himself.—I hate to be spending my time so needlessly, encroaching too upon the rights of others.—I wonder whether you happened to see M<sup>r</sup> Blackall's marriage<sup>12</sup> in the Papers last Jan<sup>ry</sup>. *We* did. He was married at Clifton to a Miss Lewis, whose Father had been late of Antigua. I should very much like to know what sort of a Woman she is. He was a peice of Perfection, noisy Perfection himself which I always recollect with regard.—We had noticed a few months before his succeeding to a College Living, the very Living which we remembered his talking of & wishing for; an exceeding good one, Great Cadbury in Somersetshire.—I would wish Miss Lewis to be of a silent turn & rather ignorant, but naturally intelligent & wishing to learn;—fond of cold veal pies, green tea in the afternoon, & a green window blind at night.

[p. 4] July 6.—

Now my dearest Frank I will finish my Letter. I have kept it open on the chance of what a Tuesday's post might furnish in addition, & it

furnishes the likelihood of our keeping our neighbours at the G<sup>t</sup> House some weeks longer than we had expected.—M<sup>r</sup> Scudamore, to whom my Brother referred, is very decided as to G<sup>m</sup> not being fit to be inhabited at present;—he talks even of two months more being necessary to sweeten it,<sup>13</sup> but if we have warm weather I dare say less will do.—My Brother will probably go down & sniff at it himself & receive his Rents.—The Rent-day has been postponed already.—*We* shall be gainers by their stay, but the young people in general are disappointed, & therefore we c<sup>d</sup> wish it otherwise.—

Our Cousins Colonel Tho<sup>s</sup> Austen & Margaretta are going Aid-de-camps to Ireland & Lord Whitworth goes in their Train as Lord Lieutenant;—good appointments for each.—God bless you.—I hope you continue beautiful & brush your hair, but not all off.<sup>14</sup>—We join in an infinity of Love.—Y<sup>rs</sup> very affect<sup>ly</sup>

Jane Austen

[*Postscript upside down at top of p. 1*]

You will be glad to hear that every Copy of S.&S. is sold & that it has brought me £140—besides the Copyright, if that sh<sup>d</sup> ever be of any value.—I have now therefore written myself into £250.—which only makes me long for more.—I have something in hand—which I hope on the credit of P. & P. will sell well, tho' not half so entertaining.<sup>15</sup> And by the bye—shall you object to my mentioning the Elephant in it, & two or three other of your old Ships?<sup>16</sup>—I *have* done it, but it shall not stay, to make you angry.—They are only just mentioned.

Capt<sup>n</sup> Austen  
HMS Elephant  
*Baltic.*