

# GENTEEL WIDOWS OF BATH

## II – ‘A PERSECUTED RELATION’: MRS LILLINGSTON’S FUNERAL AND JANE AUSTEN’S LEGACY

Deirdre Le Faye

On 11 July 1804 Mrs Willielma Johanna Lillingston, widow, of No 10 Rivers Street, Walcot parish, Bath, made her Will.<sup>1</sup> She was aged sixty-three and living alone, save for her little dog Malore, in her small house in a quiet but highly respectable street on the northern edge of Bath. She was attended by her maid Molly Stowe, her faithful man-servant Francis Varley, and a succession of not-so-faithful cooks; and as her nearest relations had in recent years brought lawsuits against her, she now cut them completely out of her Will and instead divided her possessions in the minutest details amongst nephews, nieces, cousins and friends, not forgetting her household staff. Most of these legatees were elderly ladies of her own generation, but two were much younger – the Misses Cassandra and Jane Austen, daughters of the Revd George Austen, rector of Steventon in Hampshire but living in retirement with his family in Bath since 1801. Mrs Lillingston further appointed Mr Austen’s brother-in-law, her old friend Mr James Leigh-Perrot, to be her chief executor and residuary legatee; Mr Leigh-Perrot, an efficient and conscientious man, kept until his own death all the documents relating to the settlement of Mrs Lillingston’s estate.<sup>2</sup> From these and other sources, including Jane Austen’s own letters, the outline of Mrs Lillingston’s life, and the full details of her ceremonial departure from that life, can be ascertained, providing a complete picture of the social and economic requirements for the funeral of a Bath dowager of the Regency era.

Mrs Lillingston, born Wilhelmena Johanna Dottin in 1741,<sup>3</sup> came from West Indian planter family stock – the Dottins of Grenada Hall, Barbados, who had intermarried with the Alleynes of Barbados, who in turn were connected with the Walter family of South Baddesley, Hants. At some time probably in the late 1760s she had married Mr Luke Lillingston of Ferriby Grange, North Ferriby, Yorkshire, a man considerably older than herself. When he made his Will in November 1771 at the age of fifty-three, they had but the one child, Elizabeth Mary Agnes, and Mr

Lillingston specified that as she was his heiress, whoever married her should then assume her name.<sup>4</sup> Elizabeth inherited Ferriby Grange in her childhood, as her father died in 1778. The first of the surviving documents relating to Mrs Lillingston's probate affairs is a balance-sheet of the Ferriby estate presented to Miss Elizabeth by the bailiff or steward, Robert Dunn, and dated August 1794. The balance-sheet also shows that in 1793 and 1794 the Grange had been advertised for lease. Presumably as soon as a tenant had been found, Mrs Lillingston and her daughter moved south and met the Spooner family, *nouveaux riches* ironmasters from Birmingham, who had recently purchased Elmdon Hall near that mushrooming industrial town and also owned a house in Bath.<sup>5</sup> Elizabeth became engaged to the eldest son, Abraham, and they were married at St Mary's, Kensington, London, on 19 August 1797.<sup>6</sup> Mr Leigh-Perrot was one of the parties involved in the marriage settlement drawn up a few days beforehand, whereby the Ferriby Grange estate passed to the joint trusteeship of the bridegroom's uncle Lord Calthorpe and the bride's cousin Mr Abel Rous Dottin.<sup>7</sup> On 22 August 1797 Abraham Spooner, now signing himself Spooner-Lillingston in accordance with the terms of his late father-in-law's Will, acknowledged having received from his mother-in-law 'all the Plate belonging to the late Luke Lillingston Esq., & all his Writings – & Tittle [*sic*] Deeds'.

For the next three years no further documents survive, and no trace of any lawsuit involving Mrs Lillingston can now be found; but on 26 July 1800 her London lawyer Mr C. Coulthurst of Bedford Row informed her:

Your Cause was heard yesterday & I am happy to add that the Chancellor has dismissed so much of the Bill as seeks to set aside the Release saying there was not the least Pretence for it, and that the Bill was filed from Spleen and ill Humour, but he thought that as you had executed the Deed of August 1797 which from the Purport of it might be so construed as to induce a Belief in the Husband that no Debt was due from the Daughter to you, the Chancellor thought that you was not from the Words of that Deed intitled to call upon the Plaintiffs for any money due at the Time of the Marriage – the Chancellor and every one present were perfectly satisfied with the Purity of your Conduct & the general opinion was that the Bill was a most unjust and unnatural one.

This would seem to imply that the young Spooner-Lillingstons were suing Mrs Lillingston over money matters dating back to the time of their marriage in 1797, an implication strengthened by the fact that in the interim Mrs Lillingston's nephew Abel Rous Dottin had relinquished his

position as trustee to the marriage settlement and had been replaced by William Spooner, younger brother of Abraham.<sup>8</sup> From this time evidently dated the breach between Mrs Lillingston and her daughter, a breach never to be repaired during the remainder of the older lady's life.

The next information regarding Mrs Lillingston is in 1801, when she is mentioned in Jane Austen's correspondence. The Revd George Austen had decided late in 1800 to retire from active parochial duties at Steventon, and the spring months of the next year were spent in packing up the Austen family home at the rectory there. At the beginning of May 1801 Mrs Austen and Jane arrived in Bath, and stayed with Mr and Mrs Leigh-Perrot in No 1 Paragon to do some house-hunting while Mr Austen made a trip to Kent. Mrs Lillingston immediately called on them, and the Austens returned her call a few days later. Jane wrote to her sister Cassandra, then staying at Up Hurstbourne, near Andover, giving her unenthusiastic comments on the placid trivia of Bath life: 'We met not a creature at Mrs. Lillingstone's [*sic*] & yet were not so very stupid as I expected, which I attribute to my wearing my new bonnet & being in good looks'. On 21 May Mrs Leigh-Perrot gave a 'tiny party' at the Paragon, the guests being Miss Edwards and her father, Mrs Busby and her nephew Mr Maitland, and Mrs Lillingston. On 25 May the Austens visited the Holders for tea, and met Mrs Lillingston



1. Silhouettes of James Leigh-Perrot (1735-1817) and his wife Jane (1744-1836), Jane Austen's uncle and aunt. They may have been cut in Bath by Mrs Harrington or her assistant Mrs Collins, perhaps c.1780. (*Reproduced by courtesy of The Jane Austen Memorial Trust, Chawton*)



2. (left) 'L'aimable Jane': silhouette believed to be of Jane Austen in her youth, as it was found this century pasted into a copy of the second (1816) edition of *Mansfield Park*. (Reproduced by courtesy of The National Portrait Gallery, London)  
 (right) Silhouette of Cassandra Austen in later life. (Reproduced by courtesy of The Jane Austen Memorial Trust, Chawton)

again there: 'My evening visit was by no means disagreeable. Mrs. Lillingston came to engage Mrs. Holder's conversation, & Miss Holder & I adjourned after tea into the inner Drawingroom to look over Prints & talk pathetically.'<sup>9</sup>

Jane provides no further information regarding Mrs Lillingston, but it is evident that the Austens must already have met her before 1801, as otherwise Jane would have mentioned her to Cassandra as a new acquaintance. The Leigh-Perrots had regularly stayed in Bath for the season for many years past, and the Austens had on occasion visited them there, so the contact with Mrs Lillingston probably arose in this way and may have dated back almost to Jane's childhood. How the Leigh-Perrots themselves came to know Mrs Lillingston is uncertain – it may have been their common West Indian background (Mrs Leigh-Perrot, née Jane Cholmeley, had been born in Barbados), or a friendship formed in earlier years by neighbourly contact in the Humberside area (Mrs Leigh-Perrot was sent home as a child from Barbados to be reared in England by the senior branch of the Cholmeleys in Lincolnshire, not far from North Ferriby), or it may have been a friendship formed only in later years in Bath society. Although the Austens continued to live in Bath until the spring of 1806, there is no further

mention of Mrs Lillingston in Jane's correspondence, either before or after that date. Though Jane and Cassandra may privately have found the old lady dull, she evidently viewed the sisters with affection, as is proven by the fact that she remembered them in her Will.

Two more lawyers' letters are preserved amongst Mrs Lillingston's papers, dating to the summer of 1803, which seem to imply that either the earlier lawsuit was still dragging on, or that the Spooner-Lillingstons had made a second attempt to sue her. Mr Coulthurst acknowledged his £10 fee: 'I am truly glad that my Exertions in your Cause have given you satisfaction & I assure you that having Justice on our side was alone the Cause of our success – I hope the Time has arrived or will soon arrive when the Persons alluded to will be convinced (as every other impartial Person has been) of the Purity & Rectitude of your Conduct' – and a local Yorkshire lawyer, Mr William Iveson, also sent his congratulations: 'I am very happy to find the troublesome contentions you have so long been engaged in, are at length terminated to your satisfaction ... proceedings which I considered so very unjust ... I truly sympathise in the satisfaction you must feel in having at last overcome difficulties & trials that must have required the exercise of all your fortitude & patience.'

A year later Mrs Lillingston made her last Will and Testament, and although by now she had two grandsons (Isaac-William, born 6 June 1802 and Charles, born 25 April 1804), not even their existence could heal the breach between herself and their parents, and they also were omitted from her choice of legatees. She made a point of leaving token gifts to those who presumably had sympathised most strongly with her during her legal battles – her cousins Mrs Charlotte Senior and Mrs Lucy Hannah Rugge were each to have twenty guineas 'as a triffling [*sic*] Remembrance of a persecuted Relation'; her niece by marriage Mrs Dorothy Dottin, her younger cousins Mr John and Miss Ann Walter, and her friend Mrs Leigh-Perrot, were each to have five guineas to buy mourning rings as 'a remembrance of a persecuted Relation & Friend'. Miss Sarah Rous, maternal aunt of Abel Rous Dottin, was to have Mrs Lillingston's 'Red Cornelian Seal set in Gold, device a Dove and Serpent motto Innocence Surmounts'. Other relations and friends were to have varying sums of money, and it is here that the names of Jane and Cassandra Austen appear, to receive £50 apiece – unfortunately in their case no comment is made or reason given for the bequest. Other valuable effects were also distributed – her friend Mrs Caroline Habersham, who kept a School for Young Ladies across the road at No 1 Catherine Place, was to have a plated tea-urn and a silver cream jug and £200 as well; her very young cousin Miss Charlotte Fuller, grand-

daughter of Mrs Senior, was to have all the silver spoons; and her old Yorkshire friends the Misses Constance and Evereld Hustler, of Acklam Hall in the North Riding, were to have her two old-fashioned formal dress suits of point lace and Devonshire Brussels lace.<sup>10</sup> Her library was likewise a treasured possession, to be individually bequeathed: 'I also request that my Books and other things which may have a label of my own hand writing in them may be given to the different persons as thereby described'.

Her three servants, provided they were still in her employment at the time of her death, were each to have a suit of 'decent mourning' in which to attend her funeral, plus other suitably graded bequests. The maid Molly Stowe was to have £90, a wide selection of the lesser household effects, and was requested to take care of 'my Favourite Little Dog Malore ... Faithful Companion through all my sufferings'. Francis Varley, 'for his long & faithful service', was to have £220, all his bedroom furnishings (comprising bedstead, white cloth hangings, bed, bolster, two pillows, blankets, rug, two chairs and a table), and Mrs Lillingston's old black mare Sissy, 'requesting she shall never be Road worked or Shod but enjoy the same Indulgences she has done the last eight years of her life'. The current cook, whoever she might be, was to have a bonus of one year's wages. Her servants were to live on at No 10 Rivers Street for a month after her decease, with their expenses paid from the estate.

The executors were to be Mr Leigh-Perrot and her nephew Abel Rous Dottin, each of whom was to have £100 for his pains; the Rivers Street house and all other effects were to be sold to provide the money for the bequests and necessary expenses; and she was to be buried at Charlcombe (a pretty little village some two miles north of Bath, much favoured for smart funerals) in the 'plainest manner', the cortège to consist of nothing more than the hearse with one pair of horses, followed by only one mourning coach and pair, no other carriage or horsemen to attend. She evidently suffered from the fear, fairly common at that period, of being buried alive, and so specified that her coffin was not to be closed until a week after her death was presumed to have occurred.

Mrs Lillingston lived for another eighteen months, but not even the birth of a third grandson, Alfred, in November 1805, produced any reconciliation with her daughter or any codicil to her Will. The *Bath Journal* for Monday 3 February 1806 reported: 'On Thursday night [30 January] died, at her house in Rivers-street, Mrs. Lillingston; a lady of exemplary benevolence'; and Mr Leigh-Perrot moved promptly to fulfil his duties as executor. James Howe, the parish clerk of Walcot, had been instructed to toll the passing bell and ring the knell, for which he later received a fee of 17/6d. The servants were equipped with their 'decent mourning' – Francis Varley had a hat from Messrs

Harding & Frankham of Borough Walls, a suit and two under-waistcoats from the tailor Samuel Sims, and other smaller items from Messrs Ballans & Bradley, linen-draper and undertakers, of 14 Bond Street. Molly Stowe and the cook, Mary Howse, had their complete mourning attire supplied by Ballans & Bradley. The interment took place at Charlcombe a week later, as Mrs Lillingston had wished, on 8 February, with the cortège provided by Eleazar Pickwick, Coach-Master, of 17 Westgate Buildings. Ballans & Bradley then presented Mr Leigh-Perrot with their detailed four-page account of expenses for this 'plainest manner' funeral (see pp.98-101).

N<sup>o</sup> 14 Bond St. Bath Feby 8<sup>th</sup> 1806

The Exec<sup>rs</sup>.

To Ballans & Bradley  
for the Funeral expenses of the late M<sup>rs</sup> Lillingston

To a fine Calico Winding Sheet		1	10	-
To a fine Calico Pillow	3/-	-	3	-
To 2 yds White Ribbon for the Cap of the Corpse	9d	-	1	6
To a Quilted Mattress of fine W <sup>t</sup> Calico		1	1	-
To a Stout inside Coffin lined with fine Calico		1	11	6
To a Stout Outside D <sup>o</sup> Cover'd with fine Black Cloth 2000 Brass nails & 4 Pair best gilt Handles		7	7	-
To a Brass breast Plate engraved		1	5	-
To 5 Hatbands & Scarves for Rev <sup>d</sup> Mr Morgan Rev <sup>d</sup> Mr Sibley Mr Tickell Mr Kay & Undertaker 5 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> each is 28 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> yds Rich Black Satin	12/-	17	5	-
To 10 yds Satin Ribbon for D <sup>o</sup>	10d	-	8	4
To 5 Pair Black Shamay Gloves for D <sup>o</sup>	3/6	-	17	6
To 2 Hoods & Scarves Maid Scrots 5 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> ea is 11 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> yds Black Mode	6/-	3	9	-
To 4 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> yds Ribbon for D <sup>o</sup>	8d	-	3	-
To 18 Hatbands for 2 Mutes 2 Coachmen 4 Pages & Bearers Clerk at Charlcombe & Featherman 2 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> each is 40 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> yds Blk Mode)	4/6	9	2	3
To Ribbon for D <sup>o</sup>	each 6d	-	9	-
Carr <sup>d</sup> forward		£44	13	1

Apart from Ballans & Bradley's own employee, the other four gentlemen being provided with mourning hatbands, scarves, ribbons and gloves were the incumbents of the two parishes involved, the Revd Mr Morgan of Charlcombe and the Revd Mr Sibley of Walcot, and Mrs Lillingston's apothecaries, Mr Tickell of Queen Square and Mr Hay of Bladud's Buildings. Mrs Shipton the nurse was not one of Mrs Lillingston's servants, and had presumably been called in by the apothecaries to attend at the last, and so received the standard token acknowledgement of mourning.<sup>11</sup> The black fabrics worn by attendants or used as drapes all had matt finishes, in order to give

	<i>Am<sup>l</sup>. Bro<sup>l</sup>. forward</i>		44 13 1
To 18 Pair Black Gloves	18d		1 7 -
To 11 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> yds Black Mude for 2 Mutes Lotes & Feathermans Scarf	4/6		2 11 9
To 16 yds Ribbon for D <sup>o</sup>	8d		- 10 8
To 1 Grape Hatband Man Servant			- 5 -
To the Use of the best Velvet Pall			1 1 -
" of 2 Mutes Dresses	2/6		- 5 -
" of 1 Cloak Mourner			- 2 6
" of 2 Box Coats Coachmen	2/6		- 5 -
" of 17 Black Coats	18d		1 5 6
" of 4 Caps & Truncheons & 4 Page Rods	6d		- 8 -
" of a Rich Sett of Feathers & Velvets for a Hearse & four			2 15 -
" of a Rich Sett of Feathers & Velvets for a Coach & four			1 5 -
" of the Plume			1 1 -
" of 2 Velvet Hammer Cloths	5/-		- 10 -
			<u>£58 5 6</u>
To Cash Paid for a Hearse & four & Coach & four to Charlcombe			4 7 -
To Cash Paid for 2 Mutes Horses	4/6		- 9 -
To D <sup>o</sup> Paid the Featherman	4/-		- 4 -
To D <sup>o</sup> Paid 8 Bearers & 4 Pages each	2/6		1 10 -
To D <sup>o</sup> Paid Coachmen for Driving	4/-		- 8 -
To D <sup>o</sup> Paid the Fees at Charlcombe			4 4 -
To D <sup>o</sup> Paid the Fees for the Monuments			3 3 -
To D <sup>o</sup> Paid the Mortuary Fees at Walcot			- 17 6
<i>Carr<sup>d</sup>. forward</i>			<u>£15 2 6</u>

a lustreless, dead-black, sooty appearance. Crape was a crimped silk gauze, alamode or mode a lightweight silk, and lovehood or love-ribbon was a transparent silk ribbon for bonnet-trimmings and favours. Bombazine was a mixture of silk and wool, and bombazet was a cheaper mixture of wool and cotton – hence Molly Stowe, the lady's maid, has her mourning dress of the former, and Mary Howse, the cook, of the latter. The marble monumental tablet was made by William Reeves & Son and the cost of ten guineas included its carriage to Charlcombe and erection there. It still exists (though possibly not in its original location) on the south wall of the church (see opposite).<sup>12</sup>

	<i>Am<sup>l</sup>. Bro<sup>l</sup>. forward</i>	15 2 6
<i>To Cash Paid for Bran</i>		- 2 6
<i>To D<sup>o</sup> Paid the Fine for Burying in Linen</i>		2 10 -
<i>To D<sup>o</sup> Paid the Carpenters Bill for Removing Seats</i>		1 0 6
<i>To D<sup>o</sup> Paid Lansdown Turnpike</i>		- 3 6
<i>To D<sup>o</sup> Paid for a Marble Monument</i>		10 10 -
		<u>£29 9 0</u>
	<i>Mourning for Man Serv<sup>t</sup>.</i>	
<i>To Cash Paid M<sup>r</sup> Sims for a Suit of Mourning as pr Bill</i>		6 - -
<i>2 Squares Muslin for Cravats</i>	4/3	- 8 6
<i>2 Pair Worsted Hose</i>	6/-	- 12 -
<i>2 Mourning Handkerchiefs</i>	3/3	- 6 6
<i>1 Pair Gloves</i>		- 2 6
<i>To Cash Paid M<sup>r</sup> Frankham for a Fine Hat &amp; Stamp</i>		1 6 -
		<u>£8 15 6</u>
	<i>for Mrs Stow</i>	
<i>20 1/2 ys fine Bombazine</i>	4/6	4 10 -
<i>1 - Fine Brown Lawn</i>	2/3	- 2 3
<i>1 Pair Blk Silk Gloves</i>	7/-	- 7 -
<i>1 yd Jaconet Muslin</i>	6/6	- 6 6
<i>3 - 1/4 Black Crape</i>	5/6	- 16 6
<i>1 Barcelona Handkerchief</i>	6/-	- 6 -
<i>2 1/2 ys Black Jaconet</i>	4/6	- 11 3
<i>2 Mourning Handkerchiefs</i>	3/6	- 7 -
<i>2 Pair Worsted Hose</i>	4/3	- 8 6
<i>4 1/4 ys Black Mode</i>	7/-	1 9 9
<i>3 1/4 - Lining D<sup>o</sup></i>	3/-	- 9 9
<i>2 1/2 - Ribbon</i>	6d	- 1 3
		<u>£9 15 9</u>

Sacred to the Memory of  
 WILHELMENA JOHANNA LILLINGSTON  
 Relict of the late LUKE LILLINGSTON Esq<sup>r</sup>  
 of Ferriby Grange near Hull Yorkshire  
 she died at Bath January 30<sup>th</sup> 1806  
 in her 66<sup>th</sup> Year.

12 ys Black Bombazett	2/4	1 8 -
1 - Jaconet Muslin	5/6	- 5 6
1 Barcelona Handkerchief	5/-	- 5 -
3 ys <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> Black Grape	5/6	- 16 6
4 - <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> Ell M <sup>o</sup> de	6/-	1 4 -
3 - Lining - D <sup>o</sup>	3/-	- 9 -
1 Pair Woms. Black Gloves	3/3	- 3 3
1 Pair Woms. Worsted Hose	3/3	- 3 3
1 yd Brown Irish	18d	- 1 6
2 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> Ribbon	6	- 1 3
2 Squares Muslin	2/6	- 5 -
		<u>£ 5 2 3</u>
1 Pair Black Kid Gloves for	3/3	- 3 3
2 ys Love Ribbon M <sup>rs</sup> Shipton	6d	- 1 -
		<u>£ - 4 3</u>
To Amount of Funeral as stated to M <sup>r</sup> . Dottin		58 5 6
To amount of Cash Paid by B & B		29 9 -
To am <sup>t</sup> . of Man Serv <sup>ts</sup> . Mourning		8 15 6
To D <sup>o</sup> of M <sup>rs</sup> . Stows D <sup>o</sup>		9 15 9
To D <sup>o</sup> of Maid Servants D <sup>o</sup>		5 2 3
To D <sup>o</sup> of Nurse		- 4 3
		<u><u>£ 111 12 3</u></u>

3. Transcript of Messrs Ballans & Bradley's account to Mr Leigh-Perrot. Hampshire Record Office, 23M93/51/1-18.



Mrs Lillingston's investments were sold by agents in London, and the house was sold privately to a Mr Russell. Mr Leigh-Perrot's lawyers, Messrs Watts & Griffith, presented him on 4 March with a bill totalling £23.5s.2d. for their attendance, correspondence and legal documentation in these matters.

Following this liquidation of Mrs Lillingston's assets, Mr Leigh-Perrot settled all other outstanding bills and distributed their bequests to the legatees. He drew up a neat list and balance-sheet for himself, transcribed below. For all his trouble his own residuary legacy only amounted to £235.16s.4d.

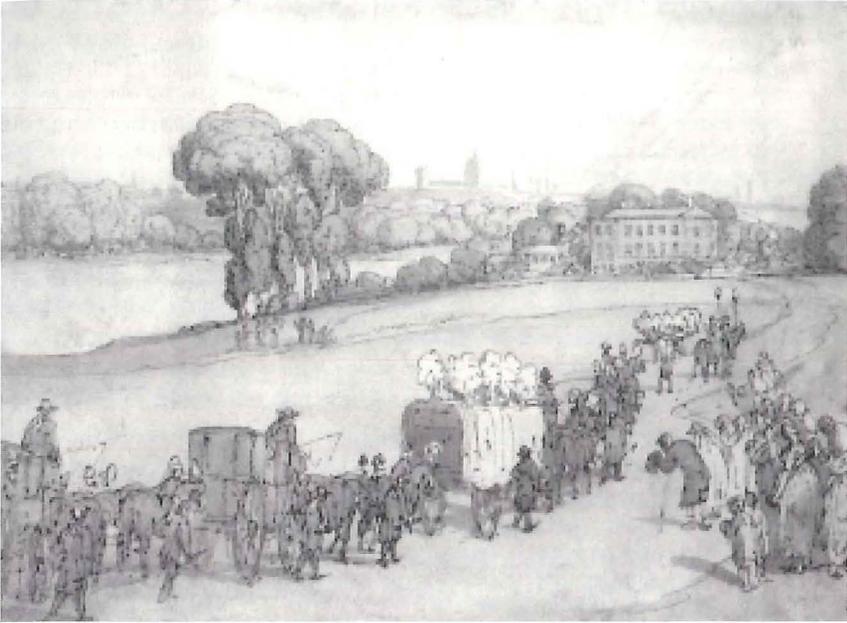
Paid	£	S	D		£	S	D
Proving the Will &c	44	3	6	Brought forward	1434	7	1
Funeral Expenses &c	115	12	0	Servants Wages	16	8	6
Legacy to Francis Varley	220	0	0	Taxes &c	32	15	6
Mrs Hendy	200	0	0	Mr Tickell	10	0	0
Mrs Habersham	200	0	0	Mr Hay, Apothecary	10	0	0
Mrs Maycock	100	0	0	House Bills	23	18	0
Mr Dottin	100	0	0	Daniel, Wine Merchant	4	12	0
Mr Leigh Perrot	100	0	0	Christinaz, Brewer	2	11	6
Molly Stowe	90	0	0	Skrine, Grocer	2	13	3
Miss Austen	50	0	0	Garthwayte, Chymist	5	7	4
Miss Jane Austen	50	0	0	Taylor, for keeping a Horse	7	9	6
Mrs Senior	21	0	0	Barratt, Bookseller	1	10	0
Mrs Ruge	21	0	0	Bishop, Ironmonger	2	2	10
Mary Howse	8	8	0	Sheppard, Painter	23	12	0
Mr Walter	5	5	0	Shipway, Carpenter	3	5	7
Mrs Ann Walter	5	5	0	Lanham, Milliner	2	8	6
Mrs Dottin	5	5	0	Carpenter, Schoolmaster	1	8	0
Mrs Leigh Perrot	5	5	0	Sundry small articles	2	16	6
Duty on Legacies	93	3	7	Letters, Stamps &c	2	3	6
Carried forward	1434	7	1		1589	9	7
				Received	£	S	D
				Money in the House	154	16	0
				Dividend on 600£ Consols	9	0	0
				Sold 600£ Consols	361	10	0
1814	7	6		House sold for 1300£			
1589	9	7		Conveyance	14	6	
					1285	14	
224	17	11			1285	14	0
10	18	5	Final Dividend from	Paid by Miss Coulthurst	3	7	6
235	16	4	Sherlock & C <sup>o</sup>		1814	7	6

In the spring of 1806 Mrs Austen and her daughters (Mr Austen had died early in 1805) were on the verge of leaving Bath for good; they spent most of the summer visiting friends and relations, and did not settle again until they found lodgings in Southampton in October 1806. No letters of Jane's survive from this unsettled period of her life, so there is no information as to whether Mrs Lillingston's legacy came as a surprise to her or not, or what her feelings were when she learnt of it. This lump sum of £50 was sufficient to cover her whole year's expenditure in 1807, and perhaps allowed for some small luxuries as well.<sup>13</sup> The Austen sisters had evidently not found Mrs Lillingston's company enthralling, but on the latter's side it may perhaps have been the grief of the total rift between herself and her daughter which led her to transfer affection towards two young women very much of her daughter's age.

When Jane started writing *Persuasion* on 8 August 1815, and set the scenes so firmly and factually in the Bath she remembered from nine years before, she cannot have failed to remember also Mrs Lillingston – perhaps with a touch of remorse that she had not been more interested in returning the affection of this kind-hearted, rather dull old lady, living alone with her dog and her books in Rivers Street. She must have recalled too how her uncle Mr Leigh-Perrot had sold the Rivers Street house to a Mr Russell; it is therefore probably no coincidence that Anne Elliot's mother-substitute is Lady Russell who lives in Rivers Street. Jane sketched in Lady Russell as being '... a woman rather of sound than of quick abilities ... of strict integrity herself, with a delicate sense of honour ... a benevolent, charitable, good woman, and capable of strong attachments; most correct in her conduct, strict in her notions of decorum, and with manners that were held a standard of good-breeding. She had a cultivated mind, and was, generally speaking, rational and consistent ...' even though she 'seemed to love [Elizabeth Elliot] rather because she would love her, than because Elizabeth deserved it'. Later on, the ungrateful Elizabeth Elliot tells her sister Anne to '... take back that tiresome book she would lend me, and pretend I have read it through ... Lady Russell quite bores one with her new publications ... I thought her dress hideous the other night ... Something so formal and *arrangé* in her air! and she sits so upright!'

Does Lady Russell owe more to Mrs Lillingston than just her address? In this character, does Jane pay a belated tribute to the benefactress unappreciated in past years?

## Appendix: A Funeral Procession



5. *A Funeral Procession* by Thomas Rowlandson, c.1805-10. Pen and watercolour over pencil. For details see the exhibition catalogue by John Riely, *Rowlandson Drawings from the Paul Mellon Collection* (1978).

Funerals of the nobility had in the past been organised by the College of Heralds, but by the eighteenth century undertakers had come into being as a profession and had become responsible for arranging funerals for the gentry and middle classes. The mutes with their black-swathed wands or staves, and the featherman carrying a tray of black plumes upon his head, had replaced the line of heralds carrying emblems of nobility. The truncheons and rods carried by the bearers and pages were token defences against bodysnatchers who might attempt to waylay the cortège.

It seems to have been quite usual for people to be interred outside their parish of residence; in some cases this may have been due to some earlier family connection which meant a vault was already constructed there, but in others it may merely have been an excuse for displaying the grandeur of the funeral procession. In Mrs Lillingston's case, it will be noted that although she had asked for only two horses each for the hearse and mourning coach, Eleazar Pickwick had insisted upon four for each vehicle.

## Notes

- 1 Public Record Office, London: PROB.11.1440.
- 2 Eighteen in all; now owned by his collateral descendants and deposited in the Hampshire Record Office, Winchester: reference 23M93/51/1-18. Unless otherwise specified, all documents mentioned in this article are in this group.
- 3 Her name is spelt thus in the burial register of Charlcombe church and on her memorial tablet there, but she signs herself 'Willielma' and this spelling appears in Burke's *Landed Gentry* and in other documents.
- 4 For Mrs Lillingston and her descendants see Burke's *Landed Gentry*, Foster's *Alumni Oxonienses* and Venn's *Alumni Cantabrigienses*; further information on earlier Lillingstons has kindly been provided by the Humberside County Archivist, March 1986. The Walters are mentioned in G.F. Russell Barker & Alan H. Stenning, *The Record of Old Westminster*, Vol.II (1928).
- 5 John Pollock, *Wilberforce* (1977), pp.156-57.
- 6 *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1797.
- 7 Humberside County Record Office: East Riding Deeds Register, No. 443, ff. 282-286, 14 and 15 August 1797.
- 8 Humberside CRO: East Riding Deeds Register, No. 200, ff. 134-136, 31 July 1800.
- 9 Deirdre Le Faye, ed., *Jane Austen's Letters*, (Oxford, 3rd (new) ed., 1995), pp.83, 84, 88, 90.
- 10 For information on such lace suits, unfashionable by this date but still valuable, see Anne Buck, *Dress in Eighteenth Century England* (1979), pp.19, 65, 157, 163 & 191.
- 11 For details of burial practices, mourning etiquette and the duties of funeral attendants, see Council for British Archaeology Report No.85 (1993), Vol.1, J. Reeve & M. Adams, *Across the Styx*, and Vol.2, T. Molleson & M. Cox, *The Middling Sort*; M. Cox & G. Stock, 'Nineteenth Century Bath-stone Walled Graves at St. Nicholas's Church, Bathampton' in *Somerset Archaeology and Natural History*, Vol.138 (Taunton Castle, 1995), pp.131-50; Nicholas Penny, *Mourning* (1981); John Morley, *Death, Heaven and the Victorians* (1971), pp.19-31, 63-71; P. Cunnington & C. Lucas, *Costume for Births, Marriages & Deaths* (1972), pp.148-51, 159-63 & 193-97; Lou Taylor, *Mourning Dress* (1983), pp.28-34, 108-19, 126-30, 226-32 & 288-304.
- 12 The writer's thanks are due to the Revd A. Francis Bell, rector of Charlcombe, for providing this information in 1985.
- 13 Patrick Piggott, 'Jane Austen's Southampton Piano', in *Jane Austen Society Report* for 1980 (Alton, 1981), pp.6-9. When Jane Austen left Steventon in 1801 her pianoforte was sold for eight guineas, and it seems that she did not buy another until she settled in Chawton in 1809. However, in 1807 her expenses for the year amounted to £42.4s.8d., and of this total, amongst other items, she spent £13.19s.3d. on 'Cloathes [*sic*] and Pocket [money]', £6.4s.4d. on 'Presents', £3.10s.3½d. on 'Charity', and £2.13s.6d. on 'Hire Piano Forte'. Something of this expenditure may have been thanks to Mrs Lillingston's legacy.

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