



*George Douglas* by William Say © National Portrait Gallery

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PERSUASION

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## CONTENTS

General Editor's preface	<i>ix</i>
Acknowledgements	<i>xiii</i>
Chronology	<i>xiv</i>
Introduction	<i>xxi</i>
Note on the text	<i>lxxxiii</i>

### *Persuasion* 1

Corrections and emendations to 1818 text	276
Appendix 1: The cancelled chapters of <i>Persuasion</i>	278
Appendix 2: 'Biographical Notice of the Author' by Henry Austen	326
List of abbreviations	333
Explanatory notes	334

geographical term ‘East Indies’ was loosely applied at the time and could refer to India, mainland south-east Asia, Indonesia and the Philippines.

- 12 **as orange as the cuffs and capes of my livery:** the detail of grooms’ and coachmen’s liveries was strictly regulated, with their colour scheme governed by the colours of the family arms. A coachman would wear a five-tiered cape over his dark single-breasted coat; the cape was often made of a lighter shade or colour to make the wearer more visible in night rides.
- 13 **inquired about the manor . . . quite the gentleman:** the ‘manor’ included the domain which brought with it duties and rights to exact fees and fines. By law only the lord of the manor and those appointed by him could kill game. For Admiral Croft shooting seems to serve as an excuse to be outdoors rather than as a recreational activity. It did much the same for Walter Scott’s hero in *Waverley* (1814), who, whenever he wanted to indulge in solitary daydreaming, took on his walks ‘his gun and his spaniel, which served as an apology to others’ (ch. 4).
- 14 **curacy:** the office of a curate, a clerical rank in the Church of England. The task of a curate was to assist a rector or vicar in his duties – or indeed carry them out for him. Curates were notoriously poorly paid in comparison with the vicars and rectors who, like JA’s father, often possessed more than one living.
- 15 **the Strafford family:** the Wentworths were an ancient family whose most famous representative was Thomas, Earl of Strafford (1593–1641), an authoritarian statesman who became principal advisor to Charles I in the late 1630s. Despite a royal promise of safety, he was sacrificed by Charles to appease Parliament just before the outbreak of the Civil War; he was executed in 1641. With his emphasis on families connected with the Stuarts rather than the Hanoverians, Sir Walter was especially impressed with the name Wentworth.

## CHAPTER 4

- 1 **made commander . . . employed:** not an unusual occurrence since there was a surplus of commanders. A commander was in charge of a sloop (a small ship mainly employed for patrol and commerce protection) and many lieutenants, after promotion to rank

of commander, found themselves in a career dead end, surviving on half-pay (the reduced income the navy paid to those without an active appointment): in 1812 there were 586 commanders in the navy list but only 168 sloops. JA’s brother, like Wentworth, was lucky: ‘Frank is made,’ she wrote on 28 December 1798, ‘He was yesterday raised to the Rank of Commander, & appointed to the Petterel Sloop, now at Gibraltar’ (*L*, p. 32). A little more than seven years later, Francis had risen to the rank of captain and successfully fought against the French in the Battle of St Domingo in February 1806; the action gained him a prize in the form of a £100 memorial vase presented by the Patriotic Society of Lloyd’s.

- 2 **no connexions . . . profession:** to gain promotion to the rank of commander and then captain, lieutenants needed to attract the attention of the Admiralty. This could be achieved by political influence (mostly held by ministers, peers and great landowners with the patronage of pocket boroughs) or naval interest (relatives and acquaintances with naval connections who would support an applicant’s address to the First Lord of the Admiralty). Another way to secure promotion was courage in action, especially from 1801 under the rule of Lord St Vincent, who supported a policy of promotion for merit. Some like JA’s brother Francis accorded higher significance to influence than merit, and as late as 1844 he complained in a letter to William O’Byrne, the editor of the *Naval Biography Dictionary*, ‘That I have not served at Sea since 1814 is not from want of inclination or application, but have had no influence of a political or family description to back my pretensions’ (BL Add MS 38039 f. 184).
- 3 **a station:** this term denoting a harbour or safe anchoring place for ships seems to have been used in general in the Middle Ages and early modern period, but more specifically for the navy in the eighteenth century.
- 4 **No second attachment . . . society around them:** sentimental novels insisted on the absolute value of a woman’s first love. In *Masquerades; or, what you will* (1780), p. 133, a lady is told she did not love her first attachment enough to steel her heart against a second. Initially, passionate Marianne Dashwood’s ‘opinions are all romantic’ and she does ‘not approve of second attachments’.