

HALSGROVE DISCOVER SERIES

JANE AUSTEN AND BATH

Terry Townsend

Bath is unique. There is no other town in England where one can get closer to the eighteenth-century experience. The streets of tall, pale, identical houses, ranged in terraces or curving crescents, create a rhythmic harmony which never ceases to delight the eye. What's more, to stroll around these graceful streets and squares is to walk in the steps of Jane Austen.

Jane Austen holidayed in Bath in 1797 and in 1798. For five years, from 1801, she became a resident which enriched her experience of contemporary society. Her observations of life in the city provide the background for two of the six exquisite novels; *Northanger Abbey* and *Persuasion*.

In this fascinating and beautifully illustrated book, Terry Townsend takes us on a journey of discovery to the houses, public buildings, parks and walks that were significant in the life and work of one of English literature's most beloved figures. Bath is the only destination in the UK to have the whole of the city designated as a World Heritage site. The fact that this location is deemed to be of outstanding universal value and cultural significance is due in large part to the continued fascination for all things Austen.

Using quotes from the novels and letters to her sister the Georgian city is revealed at the height of its popularity. At almost every corner or flight of steps, at every narrow court or wide promenade, and even in outlying villages there are associations to be found. Although more than two centuries have passed, Jane Austen's writing remains so fresh and immediate it allows us to feel a direct connection with her world.



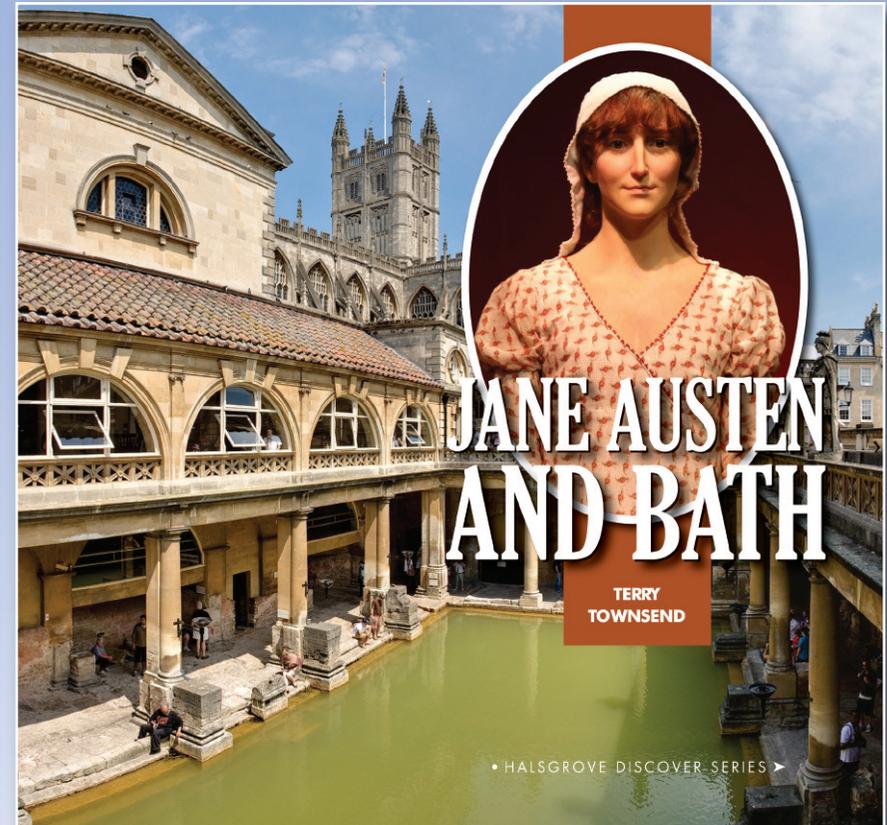
ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Retired graphic designer Terry Townsend has had a lifelong interest in English literary landscapes. This latest book is an unashamed celebration of his favourite novelist and his favourite city. Terry's previous books for Halsgrove are *Once Upon a Pint, a guide to the Literary Pubs & Inns of Dorset and Somerset*, *Kent Smugglers' Pubs*, and *Jane Austen's Hampshire*. Now living in Dorset with his wife Carol and their cat Smudge, Terry is currently working on a new title exploring Jane Austen's connections with Kent.

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Left: The waxwork of Jane can be seen in the Jane Austen Centre at 40 Gay Street, Bath. The creation of the figure was a culmination of three year's work by a specialist team using forensic techniques and drawing on contemporary eye-witness accounts.

Right: In *Northanger Abbey*, John Thorpe tricked Catherine Morland with a promise to ride out with him up Lansdown Hill.

Example of a double-page spread.



The Roman Baths which were discovered a century after Jane was born.



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Jane frequently uses the Pump Room as the social meeting point to bring the characters in *Northanger Abbey* together: "The following conversation, which took place between the two friends Catherine Morland and Isabella Thorpe in the Pump Room one morning, after an acquaintance of eight or nine days, is given as a specimen of their very warm attachment, and of the delicacy, discretion, originality of thought, and literary taste which marked the reasonableness of that attachment."

The morning after meeting Henry Tilney, Catherine hurries to the Pump Room in the hopes of seeing him again but to no avail. Then Mrs Allen sees Mrs Thorpe and recognises her as an old school friend. They are engaged in conversation when Mrs Thorpe cries: "Here come my dear girls." Pointing at three smart-looking females who, arm in arm, were then moving towards her. "My dear Mrs Allen, I long to introduce them; they will be so

*Below left: The entrance to the Pump Room where the *Subscription Book* was kept for new arrivals in town to enter their names.*

Below right: You can still sample the water which was described by Dickens as having a 'very strong flavour of warm Bath water'.



Below: Number 1 Royal Crescent is a restored Georgian town house, open to the public.
Left: One of the rooms on show at 1 Royal Crescent.



Right: Robert Adam's design for Pulteney Bridge was inspired by Palladio's unrealised design for the Rialto in Venice. The cost of construction was funded by a loan drawn on William Pulteney's Grenadan sugar plantation.

