

than England did. Lesger, by contrast, argues that features of an urban renaissance were visible in Amsterdam as early as the late sixteenth century. Armstrong examines plans for the purely notional Carolina colony of Azilia (it was never built) to reveal that while English entrepreneurs modified their urban ideals in response to the needs and conditions of colonial life (especially defense against native populations), they often had little practical experience of the challenges that colonial settlements faced.

If *The English Urban Renaissance Revisited* has a weakness, it is a lack of the topical and methodological coherence needed to make these individual studies truly comparative with one another. It is at times difficult to tell whether the differing impressions of urban change conveyed in each essay result from historical or material realities or from the individual terms and documentary sources a particular scholar chooses to use. But the editors' and contributors' commitment to expanding and updating the range of historiographic and methodological assumptions and influences that informed Borsay's concept of the urban renaissance nearly thirty years ago makes this diversity of approaches preferable to an enforced conformity. Each essay is methodologically consistent within itself, and many offer illuminating comparative work, as in Green's "The Big House in the English Provincial Town," where the political underpinnings and social motivations for "out-of-scale" (116) houses in Newcastle, Oundle, and Durham are carefully juxtaposed. Another strength of Green's essay, which is characteristic of the volume throughout, is a circumspect handling of the term "classicism," which, as Green notes, is anachronistic when applied to Georgian architecture. The seventeenth- and eighteenth-century term was "regular," and viewers were as likely to link the style to contemporary Italy as they were to ancient Greece or Rome.

Thus, if *The English Urban Renaissance Revisited* does not reassess the value of Borsay's thesis with a definitive conclusion, it does challenge and reapply the terms of that thesis in a collection that is engaging in its range and impressive in its scholarly discipline.

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SHEILA JOHNSON KINDRED. *Jane Austen's Transatlantic Sister: The Life and Letters of Fanny Palmer Austen*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2017. Pp. 312. \$34.95 (cloth). doi: 10.1017/jbr.2018.132

Sheila Johnson Kindred's *Jane Austen's Transatlantic Sister: The Life and Letters of Fanny Palmer Austen* reveals that being able to connect your work to Jane Austen is both a blessing and a curse. On the one hand, Fanny Palmer Austen's interesting story would probably never had been told if it was not for her connection to her famous sister-in-law. However, on the other hand, while her story should stimulate further scholarship on the role of naval wives, and while it does deepen our understanding of Jane Austen's sources, Kindred struggles to tell the whole story of either. This work is a lovely picture of a life and it struggles to make a larger scholarly intervention for just that reason.

Kindred brings to life the story of Francis Palmer Austen, a native of Bermuda who married Jane Austen's favorite brother, naval captain Charles Austen. Kindred traces Fanny Austen's life chronologically through eight chapters, from her birth in Bermuda through her death in 1814, with a final chapter covering her possible influence on Jane Austen. Kindred uses these chapters to flesh out the character of Fanny Austen and to give life to the world she inhabited. The reader feels Kindred's deep affection for Fanny and those connected to her, which animates the larger stories that roll along underneath: naval life and the world of the Austens.

Kindred uses many sources to reconstruct Fanny Austen's world. She uses baptismal records, newspapers, portraits, and naval records, but she holds a special place for Fanny Austen's letters, twelve of which survive and are reproduced within the book. I can understand the urge to include the whole text of the letters. They do help connect the reader to Fanny Austen herself and her voice is heard loud and clear. However, the approach does interfere with the analysis of the letters and the flow of the book. Kindred elaborates on issues spoken of in the letters and this can feel repetitive. Plucking out the key points and integrating quotes might have been more effective. However, the focus on letters is telling and insightful since these were the tools that Fanny Austen had to hold her world together and they provide a view into the mobile world of those tied to the sea, especially that of naval wives.

One of the great successes of this book is to remind us of the unique position of naval wives. As Kindred shows, Fanny Austen was more mobile, but also more isolated than many of her landlubber contemporaries. Kindred outlines the close ties between different naval officers and their families, links that would be stretched and strained as the Admiralty moved these men and often their families around the vast reaches of the empire. Unlike her family on shore, Fanny Austen would often be separated from her husband and lacked a geographically stable social network. People and homes shifted and the closest she had to a permanent home of her own was the captain's quarters of ship. This different reality isolated her from other women and challenged her ability to live up to the domestic expectations placed on women. However, as Kindred suggests, it might also have caused her to subtly challenge some of those expectations, an attitude that may have influenced the construction of some of Jane Austen's naval wives, such as Mrs. Croft, who argued that women were "rational creatures" rather than "fine ladies." This book challenges scholars to look more carefully at naval wives, a necessary and exciting intervention. However, the story of one life cannot thoroughly explore the lives of all naval wives. Not only might Fanny Austen be exceptional, but there is much we do not know of her life, and the book is understandable peppered with "might haves." Thus, while the work calls attention to the need for more scholarship on naval wives, it is not the definitive statement on it, nor is it meant to be.

Kindred also uses her study to examine how much of an influence Fanny Austen might have had on Jane Austen's fiction. After reading Kindred's work it is hard to deny this possibility. Fanny's story and her letters would make anyone who has read *Persuasion* sit up and listen. While Kindred cannot definitively connect Fanny Austen's conversations with Jane Austen to the latter's works, it is obvious that Jane Austen, with two naval brothers and two naval sisters-in-law, lived in a world familiar with the navy and its unusual lifestyle. Focusing on Fanny reminds readers that her female naval connections were as important as her male. Kindred adds a chapter at the end of the book exploring exactly how Fanny's traits and life might have influenced specific characters. The desire to do this is understandable, but attempting to directly attach specifics about Fanny's life to specific characteristics feels unnecessary and unfruitful. The preceding text does enough to convince readers of Fanny Austen's influence without trying to nail it down specifically, especially since rarely are characters direct replicas of known personages.

Kindred's book is a nice addition to scholarship on the lives of naval wives and will, one hopes, prompt further studies of the place and role of these women. It also adds another strand into the tapestry of influences upon Jane Austen. While the book may not transform the scholarship on either subject, it does help to augment our understanding of both, and for that Kindred should be commended.

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