

# A Timeline Comparison

Jane West	Jane Austen
<b>April 30, 1758</b> born Jane Iliffe (only child) in London	
	<b>Dec. 16, 1775</b> Born the seventh of eight children (and second daughter), in Steventon, Hampshire
<b>c. 1780</b> (age 22) marries yeoman farmer Thomas West, in Little Bowden, Leicestershire	
<b>1783</b> (age 25) her first son is born, Thomas	
<b>1786</b> (age 28) publishes first book, <i>Miscellaneous Poetry, Written at an Early Period of Life</i> , as "Mrs. West"	
<b>1787</b> (age 29) second son born	<b>1787</b> (age 11) Begins writing juvenilia
<b>1788</b> (age 30) publishes <i>The Humours of Brighthelmstone: A Poem</i> , as "J. West"	
	<b>1790</b> (age 14) Writes <i>Love and Freindship</i>
<b>1791</b> (age 33) Publishes <i>Miscellaneous Poems and a Tragedy</i> , as "Mrs. West"	
<b>1793</b> (age 35) publishes first novel, <i>The Advantages of Education</i> , by "Prudentia Homespun"	
<b>1794</b> (age 36) third son is born	<b>1794</b> (age 18) Possibly begins writing <i>Lady Susan</i>
	<b>1795</b> (age 19) Possibly begins writing <i>Elinor and Marianne</i> (which becomes <i>Sense and Sensibility</i> )
<b>1796</b> (age 38) publishes <i>A Gossip's Story and a Legendary Tale</i> , most successful novel	<b>1796-97</b> (ages 20-21) Begins writing <i>First Impressions</i> (which becomes <i>Pride and Prejudice</i> )

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<p><b>1797</b> (age 39) Publishes <i>An Elegy on the Death of the Right Honourable Edmund Burke</i>, byline as “Mrs. West, author of <i>The Gossip’s Story</i>, <i>Miscellaneous Poems, a Tragedy, &amp;c.</i>”</p>	<p><b>1797</b> (age 21) Begins revising <i>Elinor and Marianne</i> (which becomes <i>Sense and Sensibility</i>)</p>
	<p><b>1798</b> (age 22) Possibly begins writing <i>Susan</i> (which becomes <i>Northanger Abbey</i>)</p>
<p><b>1799</b> (age 41) Her busiest year as a writer! Publishes her third novel, first two volumes of <i>Poems and Plays</i>, and another poem in five books; general custom hereafter publishing as “Mrs. West”</p>	
<p><b>1801</b> (age 43) Publishes highly successful conduct book, <i>Letters Addressed to a Young Man on his first Entrance into Life</i></p>	<p><b>1801</b> (age 25) Moves to Bath</p>
<p><b>1802</b> (age 44) Publishes novel, <i>The Infidel Father</i>, as “Mrs. West” and a short children’s book <i>The Sorrows of Selfishness; or, The History of Miss Richmore</i> by “Prudentia Homespun”</p>	<p><b>Dec. 2, 1802</b> (age 26, almost 27) Accepts Harris Bigg-Wither’s marriage proposal</p> <p><b>Dec. 3, 1802</b> (age 26, almost 27) Rejects Harris Bigg-Wither’s marriage proposal</p>
	<p><b>1803</b> (age 27) Sells <i>Susan</i> (later <i>Northanger Abbey</i>) to a publisher, but it remains unpublished.</p>
	<p><b>1804</b> (age 28) Most likely begins writing <i>The Watsons</i></p>
<p><b>1805</b> (age 47) Publishes <i>Poems and Plays</i>, volumes three and four</p>	<p><b>1805</b> (age 29) Jane Austen’s father dies</p> <p>Finishes writing <i>Lady Susan</i></p>
<p><b>1806</b> (age 48) Publishes another conduct book, <i>Letters to a Young Lady, in which the Duties and Character of Women are Considered, Chiefly with a Reference to Prevailing Opinions</i> (dedicated to Queen Charlotte)</p>	

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	<b>1809</b> (age 33) Moves to Chawton Cottage, in Hampshire  Further revision of <i>Sense and Sensibility</i>
<b>1810</b> (age 52) Publishes another novel, <i>The Refusal</i> , “posthumously” by Prudentia Homespun	
	<b>Oct. 1811</b> (age 35) <i>Sense and Sensibility</i> published anonymously “By a Lady”
<b>1812</b> (age 54) Publishes an historical novel, <i>The Loyalists</i>	<b>1811-13</b> (age 35-37) Writing <i>Mansfield Park</i> , revising <i>Pride and Prejudice</i>
	<b>Jan. 1813</b> (age 37) <i>Pride and Prejudice</i> published anonymously as “By the Author of <i>Sense and Sensibility</i> ”  <b>Oct. 1813</b> (age 37) Second editions of <i>Pride and Prejudice</i> and <i>Sense and Sensibility</i> published
<b>1814</b> (age 56) Publishes an historical romance, <i>Alicia de Lacy</i>	<b>May 1814</b> (age 38) <i>Mansfield Park</i> published anonymously (“by the author of... “)  <b>Sept. 28, 1814</b> (age 38) Writes letter to niece Anna Lefroy: <i>“I am quite determined however not to be pleased with Ms West’s Alicia de Lacy, should I ever meet with it, which I hope I may not. — I think I can be stout against any thing written by Mrs West.— I have made up my mind to like novels really, but Miss Edgeworth’s, Yours &amp; my own.”</i>
	<b>1814-15</b> (age 38-39) Writing <i>Emma</i>
	<b>1815-16</b> (age 39-40) Writing <i>The Elliots</i> (which becomes <i>Persuasion</i> )
<b>1815</b> (age 57) Publishes anonymously <i>Vicissitudes of Life; Exemplified in the Interesting Memoirs of a Young Lady, in a Series of Letters</i>	<b>Dec. 1815</b> (age 40) <i>Emma</i> published anonymously (“by the author of...”), dedicated to the Prince Regent

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	<p><b>1816</b> (age 40) Second edition of <i>Mansfield Park</i> published</p> <p><b>Sept. 1816</b> (age 40) Writes letter to Cassandra: <i>"I often wonder how you can find time for what you do, in addition to the care of the house; and how good Mrs. West could have written such books and collected so many hard works, with all her family cares, is still more a matter of astonishment!"</i></p>
<p><b>1817</b> (age 59) Publishes <i>Scriptural Essays Adapted to the Holy Days of the Church of England</i></p>	<p><b>Jan.-March 1817</b> (age 41) Works on <i>The Brothers</i> (which becomes <i>Sanditon</i>)</p> <p><b>July 18, 1817</b> (age 41) Dies in Winchester</p> <p><b>Dec. 1817</b> <i>Northanger Abbey</i> and <i>Persuasion</i> published together, posthumously, with a biographical note by her brother Henry naming Austen for the first time as the author of these novels</p>
<p><b>1823</b> (age 65) Husband Thomas West dies</p>	
<p><b>1827</b> (age 69) Publishes her final novel, <i>Ringrove, or, Old Fashioned Notions</i></p>	
	<p><b>1833</b> Richard Bentley publishes Austen's collected works; her work will never go out of print again.</p>
<p><b>1843</b> (age 85) Eldest son dies</p>	
<p><b>1852</b> (age 94) Dies in her home in Little Bowden, outliving all three sons, leaving 6 grandchildren</p>	

#### References:

- "Jane West: Chronology" in *A Gossip's Story, and A Legendary Tale* (1796), edited by Devony Looser, Melinda O'Connell, and Caitlin Kelly. Valancourt, 2016.
- "[A Jane Austen Chronology](#)," *The Victorian Web*, July 2000.
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