

Thursday 14-Friday 15 January 1796
Steventon Thursday

I have just received yours & Mary's letter, & I thank you both, tho' their contents might have been more agreeable. I do not at all expect to see you on tuesday since matters have fallen out so unpleasantly, & if you are not able to return till after that day, it will hardly be possible for us to send for you before Saturday; tho' for my own part I care so little about the Ball that it would be no sacrifice to me to give it up for the sake of seeing you two days earlier. We are extremely sorry for poor Eliza's Illness—I trust however that she has continued to recover since you wrote, & that you will none of you be the worse for your attendance on her. What a good-for-nothing-fellow Charles is to bespeak the stockings—I hope he will be too hot all the rest of his life for it!—I sent you a letter yesterday to Ibthorp, which I suppose you will not receive at Kintbury. It was not very long or very witty, & therefore if you never receive it, it does not much signify. I wrote principally to tell you that the Coopers were arrived and in good health—the little boy is very like Dr. Cooper, & the little girl is to resemble Jane, they say. Our party to Ashe to-morrow night will consist of Edward Cooper, James (for a ball is nothing without him), Buller, who is now staying with us, & I—I look forward with great impatience to it, as I rather expect to receive an offer from my friend in the course of the evening. I shall refuse him, however, unless he promises to give away his white Coat.

I am very much flattered by your commendation of my last Letter, for I write only for Fame, and without any view to pecuniary Emolument.—Edward is gone to spend the day with his friend, John Lyford, & does not return till to-morrow. Anna is now here; she came up in her chaise to spend the day with her young Cousins, but she does not much take to them or to anything about them, except Caroline's Spinning-wheel. I am very glad to find from Mary that Mr. & Mrs. Fowle are pleased with you. I hope you will continue to give satisfaction.

How impertinent you are to write to me about Tom, as if I had not opportunities of hearing from him myself! The last letter that I received from him was dated on Friday the 8th, and he told me that if the wind should be favourable on Sunday, which it proved to be, they were to sail from Falmouth on that Day. By this time, therefore, they are at Barbadoes, I suppose. The Rivers are still at Manydown, and are to be at Ashe to-morrow. I intended to call on the Miss Biggs yesterday had the weather been tolerable. Caroline, Anna, & I have just been devouring some cold Souse, & it would be difficult to say which enjoyed it most—

Tell Mary that I make over Mr. Heartley and all his Estate to her for her sole use and Benefit in future, & not only him, but all my other Admirers into the bargain wherever she can find them, even the kiss which C. Powlett wanted to give me, as I mean to confine myself in future to Mr. Tom Lefroy, for whom I do not care sixpence. Assure her also, as a last & indubitable proof of Warren's indifference to me, that he actually drew that Gentleman's picture for me, & delivered it to me without a Sigh.

Friday.—At length the Day is come on which I am to flirt my last with Tom Lefroy, & when you receive this it will be over—My tears flow as I write, at the melancholy idea. Wm. Chute called here yesterday. I wonder what he means by being so civil. There is a report that Tom is going to be married to a Lichfield Lass. John Lyford & his Sister bring Edward home to day, dine with us, & we shall all go together to Ashe. I understand that we are to draw for Partners.—I shall be extremely impatient to hear from you again, that I may know how Eliza is, & when you are to return. With best Love, &c., I am
affec:^{tely} yours

J: Austen

Miss Austen,
The Rev. Mr. Fowle's,
Kintbury,
Newbury