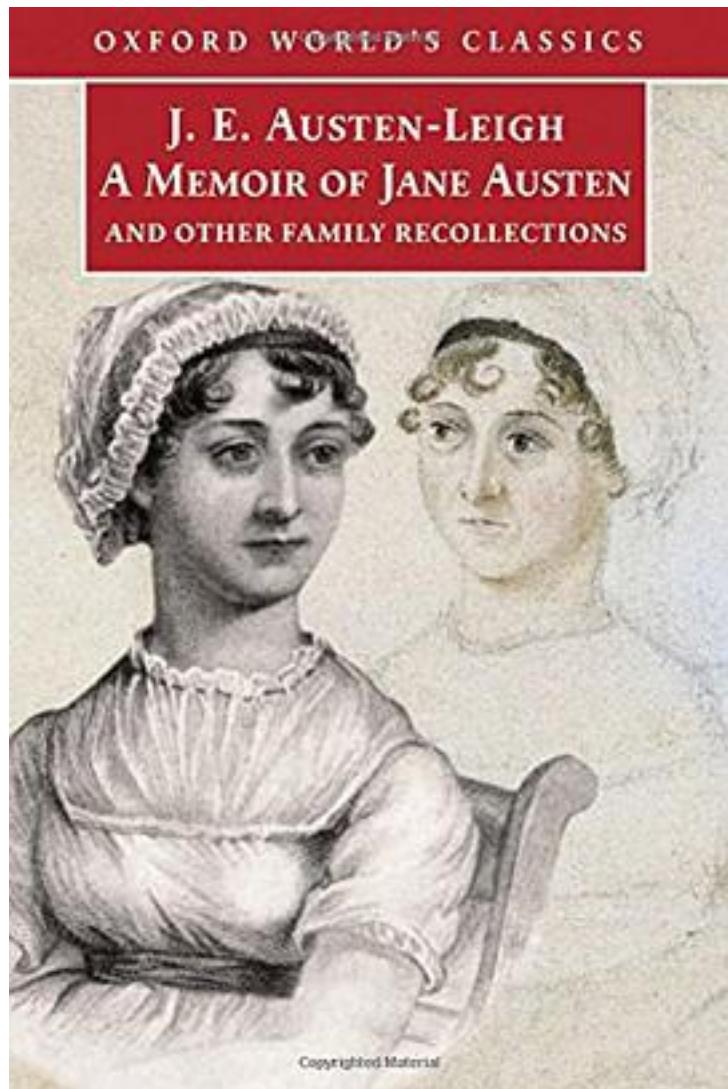


A Memoir of Jane Austen and Other Family Recollections



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'I doubt whether it would be possible to mention any author of note, whose personal obscurity was so complete.' James Edward Austen-Leigh's Memoir of his aunt Jane Austen was published in 1870, over fifty years after her death. Together with the shorter recollections of James Edward's two sisters, Anna Lefroy and Caroline Austen, the Memoir remains the prime authority for her life and continues to inform all subsequent accounts. These are family memories, the record of Jane Austen's life shaped and limited by the loyalties, reserve, and affection of nieces and nephews recovering in old age the outlines of the young aunt they had each known. They still remembered the shape of her bonnet and the tone of her voice, and their first-hand accounts bring her vividly before us. Their declared partiality also raises fascinating issues concerning biographical truth, and the terms in which all biography functions. This edition brings together for the first time these three memoirs, and also includes Jane's brother Henry Austen's 'Biographical Notice' of 1818 and his lesser known 'Memoir' of 1833, making a unique biographical record.

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