

Mansfield Park

There are several chronologies (and many disagreements!) for Austen's writing of Mansfield Park and the internal dating of the events in the life of its protagonist Fanny Price. However, it seems to make sense to focus on the 1808-1814 range to set it in the time it was rewritten/published. (following <http://www.jimandellen.org/austen/mp.calendar.html>)

I've pulled bonnets from that timeframe and tried to find those that would be possible to make, but as usual have gotten carried away somewhat. But I hope you will enjoy!

With Inger's descriptions

1) Fanny Price:

Modest, pious, young, very domestic, and used to being ignored (she loves the navy and adores nature--evergreens, begonias, stars, hedges)



Ackermann, Sept. 1811:

"A round high robe, with large long sleeves, and deep falling collar, edged with lace or needle-work, composed of jaconet muslin. A small capuchin mantle of green shot sarsnet, lined with white, and trimmed with chinese silk fringe or corresponding shades; deep Spanish pointed cape, trimmed with the same. White satin hat, of the Spanish form, with rim the colour of the mantle, ornamented with a demi-wreath of corn-flowers. Roman show of green morocco. Gloves of lemon-coloured kid; and parasol corresponding with the cloak, with deep Chinese awning."

This may be too fine for Fanny but the simple shape of the hat and the idea that she, like Austen herself, prefers flowers to fruit "growing out of one's head" is what drew me to this bonnet.



I'm missing the date for this one but it would be 1813-1814. It is a simple, standard design, dressed up with a bit of ribbon and flowers, both of which can be changed, making it pretty but practical.

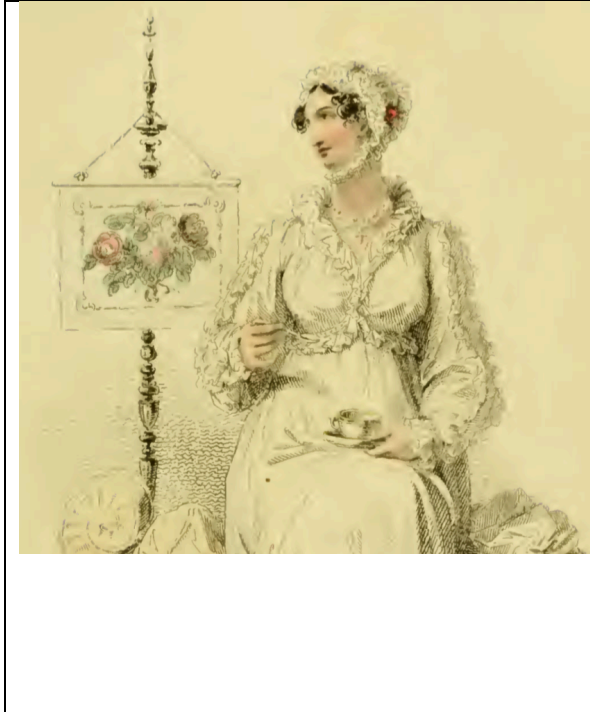
2) Lady Bertram

Phlegmatic, beautiful, apathetic, vague, and stationary: cares only for her pugs and roses



I always picture Lady Bertram in morning dress, ready to receive visitors if she must. In this case the lady's gloves and slippers indicate she may be the visitor.

Ackerman, April 1813: "Morning costume - A polonaise robe and petticoat, of fine cambric or jaconet muslin, ornamented at its several terminations with a border of network finished with an edging of muslin, gathered very full, and a vandyke cuff, *en suite*. A bonnet-cap, composed of jonquil satin, and treble borders of scalloped lace, confined on one side with ribband of the same colour. Gloves and slippers of yellow kid."



Or if she did bestir herself to go out, a bonnet like this would allow her to nap in the carriage:



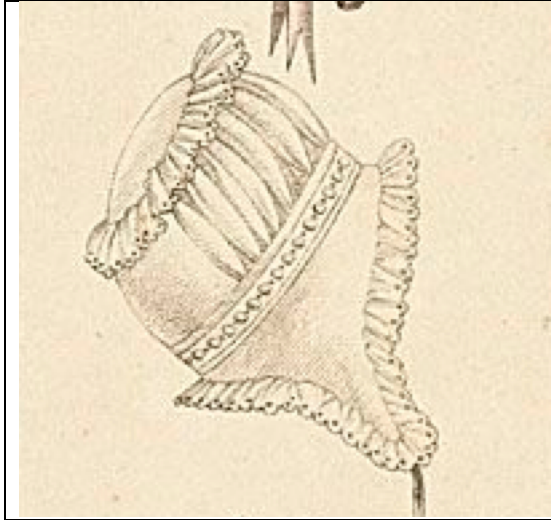
3) Mrs. Norris

Interfering, active, nosy, self-important, self-righteous

(And she has a fondness for green fabric--was it velvet or baize? She also loves showy apricots...)



While I doubt the engraver intended it, there is something waspish about the shape of this hat. In the description it is only noted that it is the same colour as the mantle, but in the "General Observations" article following the descriptions we learn that "Spanish hats, which have been worn all winter, with feathers for full dress, are now converted into walking hats, substituting flowers instead of feathers." So, Mrs. Norris could save her money by repurposing a hat and could, no doubt, be decisive in adorning it with apricots instead of flowers.



It is also possible to see her in this cap-like bonnet. I don't have a date for it but I'm guessing, based on the others with which it is pictured, to be from about 1812. It is not as ornate as similar bonnets but she could trim it with fine lace ("borrowed" from her sister) or even cheap lace to good effect.

4) Maria Bertram

Vain, self-centered, angry, competitive, in search of passion (the sister who gets all the attention as the most beautiful, but generally cares for no one)



The hat does not obscure the beauty of her face. Her air is not at all languid or retiring, and the fine blue embroidery on her gown and the silver tassels and trim can compete even with the London dress of Mary Crawford. Ackermann, June 1809: "Spotted muslin under-dress, over which a light coat, bordered with cerulean blue. Blue silk headdress bound with silver cords and tassels. Blue silk scarf, lined with white; silver border and tassels. White shoes edged with blue. York tan gloves."



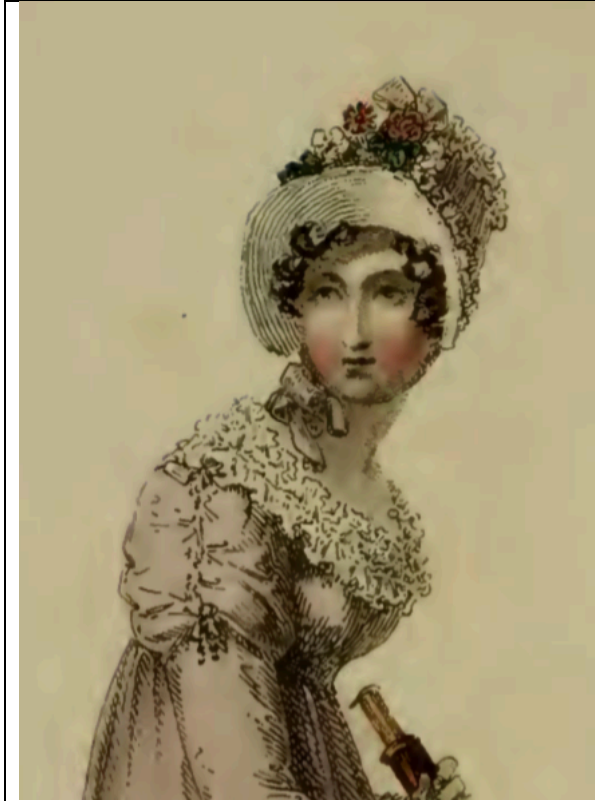
La Belle Assemblée, 1814: This bonnet from Paris should obviously belong to Maria. She is wearing the latest fashion – the high crown bonnet with feathers to her make her stand out even more.

5) Julia Bertram

Competitive, jealous, impulsive, foolish, self-centered, (the sister who always gets overlooked as second best)



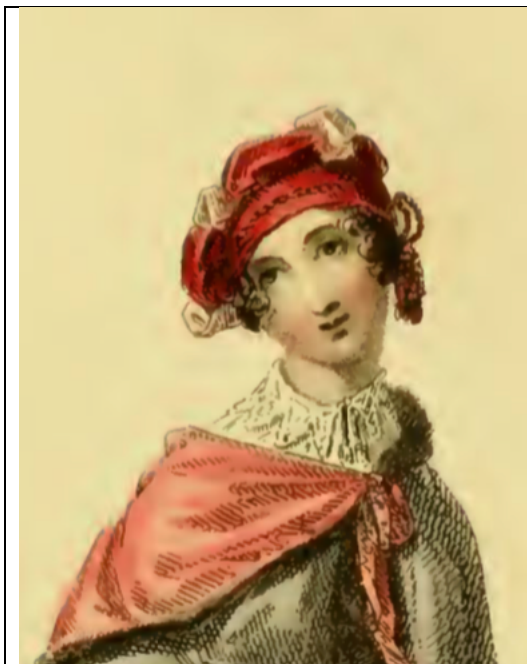
Typically, she has chosen a bonnet that is both overly decorated and intriguingly “close” (though she is decidedly “out”). Ackermann, June 1814: “...An Oldenburg bonnet, formed of white figured satin, inlet with blond lace, ornamented with a full trimming of the latter round the edge, and bows of white ribband round the crown with a cluster of roses on one side.”



A disgruntled Julia, once more trying too hard in a bonnet that is rather too ornate. Ackermann, September 1814: "A round robe of lilac or evening primrose-coloured sarsnet, trimmed entirely round the bosom with quilling of blond lace, edged with chenille; sarsnet flounce, headed with tufts or quilling of blond corresponding with the top of the dress; long full sleeve, partially drawn up and fastened with bows of silk cord; a lace cuff. The French hat, composed of white and lilac satin; the crown trimmed with tufts and bows of ribbon, and ornamented with a large cluster of flowers."

6) Miss Mary Crawford

Witty, vivacious, flirtatious, darker complexioned, worldly, somewhat jaded. I see her wearing deep reds while playing her harp. She cares little for nature.

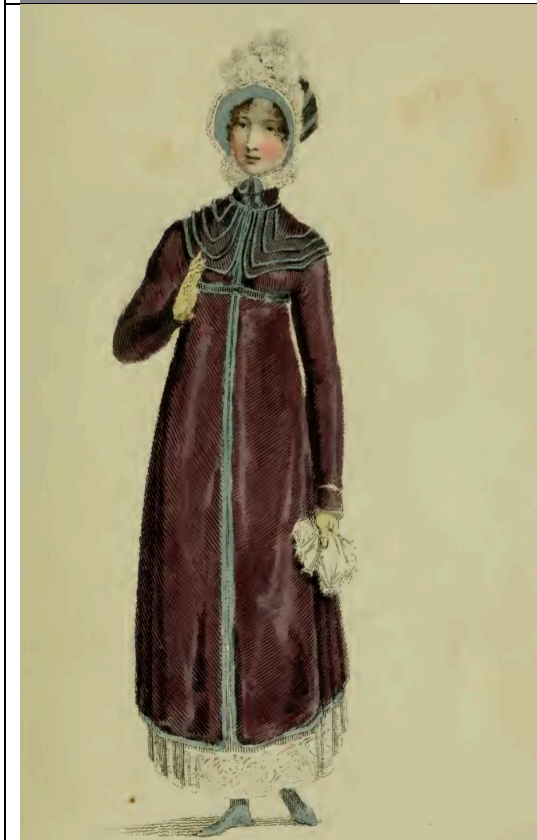


Following the dictates of fashion that recommends reds for brunettes, Mary wears a walking or carriage dress that includes an Austrian shawl cloak and a turban. Ackermann, March 1814: "...Circassian turban cap, composed of crimson velvet, ornamented with tufts of rose-coloured satin; a rich silk cord round the edge, terminated on one side with correspondent tassels."



Though I usually picture Mary in slightly later styles, who could deny that this is an outgoing and confident lady? Was she reading the description of this bonnet when considering a sojourn in the country?

Ackermann August 1809: "A petticoat of cambric bordered with needle-work at the bottom. An Egyptian vest of the same, with correspondent border, in a primrose straw color. Drawn tucker of French lace, finished at each edge with the same style of border. A *provincial boonet* of fine moss or satin straw, ornamented with a cluster of the double stock in front. Austrian scarf, of light blue sarsnet, tastefully disposed across the back and shoulders; the ends finished with gold or silver tassels. Shoes and parasol to correspond with the scarf. Gloves of York tan."



I can think of none better than Mary Crawford at decisively carrying off a velvet pelisse with four capes.

Ackermann December 1814: "A pelisse of short walking length, made either in erminette or silk velvet of puce colour, open down the front, and bound entirely round with celestial blue satin, terminating at the feet with a broad border of white lace; high plain collar, and treble copes bound to correspond; full lace ruff. The Spanish hat composed of erminette or velvet and blue satin, corresponding to the pelisse, trimmed round the edge with quilled lace, and ornamented in the front with a plume of ostrich feathers. Half boots, blue kid or erminette. Gloves, Limerick or York tan."

Two scenes where bonnets are central to the conversation:

[Page 41](#) Yes, that is very inconvenient, indeed," said Mr. Bertram. " It leads one astray; one does not know what to do. The close **bonnet** and demure air you describe ...

[Page 372](#) Sitting forwards, however, and screened by her **bonnet**, those smiles were unseen. The journey was likely to be a silent one. Edmund's deep sighs often ...