

Through these gates was **Overton Silk Mill**, a five storey mill built in 1769 by Thomas Stratwells and by 1790 run by Bryan Troughton.



Retrace your steps and continue up Court Drive. As the road bears right, turn left into Silk Mill Lane and follow the road to a pair of metal gates on your left.

Jane Austen's brother, James, became curate at **St Mary's Church** in 1790.

Turn right into Church Road to see St Mary's Church.

By Tony Morris, 2005



Ahead, on the hill, is **Court House**. James married Anne Mathew in Laverstoke in 1792 and moved here from the very small vicarage house.

Vicarage before moving to **Court House**.

On becoming curate at Overton in 1790, Jane Austen's brother, James, moved into **Overton Vicarage** in Jane Austen's time. At the corner on your left is the Old Rectory,

Continue to the end of Bridge Street crossing the river.

The thatched cottages on the left date from the 18th century with an older timber-framed core.

Turn right onto Bridge Street.

Jane later dedicated her novel, *Emma*, to the Prince of Wales, by then Prince Regent, at his invitation.

Jane Austen 1775 to 1817

Jane Austen, one of the world's most famous authors, was born in 1775 in Steventon, within walking distance of Overton.



© National Portrait Gallery, London



Jane's father, the Revd George Austen, was the rector at St Nicholas church in Steventon and Jane and her family lived in the Rectory until 1801.

During her 25 years living in this area, Jane wrote early versions of *Pride & Prejudice*, *Sense & Sensibility* and *Northanger Abbey*.

Jane's brother, James Austen, became curate at Overton in 1790 and lived in Overton Vicarage and then Court House, overlooking the village as it still does today.



St Mary's Church and Court Farmhouse by Inigo Millard, 1785

In Jane's time Overton was a busy place with its sheep market, merchants, traders, coaching inns and the local post office - all Jane's letters from Steventon are postmarked Overton.

According to Jane Austen expert, Deirdre Le Faye, in *Jane Austen's Country Life*, 'The Austens would obviously have visited James while he was living at Overton whether at Overton Vicarage or Court House.'

Enjoy walking in the footsteps of Jane Austen.

Overton in Jane Austen's Time

A 2.5 mile walking trail on country lanes, streets and pavements.

Allow 1 hour at a leisurely (2.5mph) pace.

For **Overton to Steventon** trails see www.overtonjaneaustentrails.org or scan QR code.

Getting here:

Start at the information board on the Community Centre forecourt OS Grid Ref: SU 51500 49676 qualify.revives.goofy.com/what3words

Train: Overton is on the London Waterloo to Exeter line, see www.nationalrail.co.uk

Car: Park at the car park on Overton Hill OS Grid Ref: SU 51749 49671 crusher.fabricate.huddle.com/what3words

Bus: 76 and 86, www.stagecoachbus.com

Thank you for respecting our neighbours' privacy while enjoying these trails.

Many locations on this trail are private homes.

For further information, route maps, detailed trail directions and Jane Austen references scan the QR code or visit the website: www.overtonjaneaustentrails.org



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On your right see the 18th century building, number 26 High Street, with the old beam on the left gable.

Continue to the junction with Bridge Street with the Red Lion opposite.

Jane wrote to her sister in that same year that 'The Overton Scotchman has been kind enough to rid me of some of my money, in exchange for six shifts and four pair of stockings.'

In 1798 Overton was described as 'a neat little town' with grocers, fishmongers, tailors and corset-makers listed amongst its merchants.

Across the road is a row of shops in buildings dating from the 16th century.

Cross at the traffic lights and turn left along the High St.

between London and Exeter. For the twice-daily mail coach time and a stopping off point coaching inn in Jane Austen's across the road was a busy



The **White Hart**



The building on the corner opposite would have been familiar to Jane as she travelled to and through Overton.



Move to the crossroads sign on the corner of Winchester Street and the High Street.

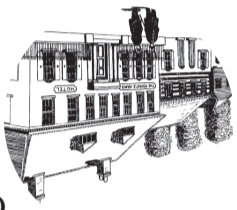
On the wall outside the library is the **Trafalgar Way plaque**: on 5th November 1805 Lieutenant Lapnotiere stopped at Overton to change horses on his journey to London bringing news of victory at Trafalgar and the death of Lord Nelson.

Overton postmark from Jane Austen letter, © Jane Austen House



Inn by Donald Moss, from Overton and its National School by Alison M. Devson

Overton Community Centre is built on the site of the **New Inn**, opened in 1776 to capitalise on traffic on the newly opened turnpike road.



Start at the information board on the Community Centre forecourt.



Overton in Jane Austen's Time

A two and a half mile walking trail



Funded by UK Government



Overton Jane Austen Trails

Explore Overton as it would have been in Jane Austen's time



A two and a half mile circular walking trail

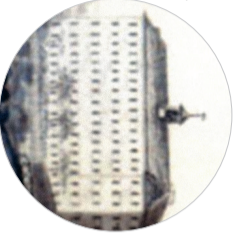




© Jo South www.josouth.co.uk - a percentage of each map sold by the artist will be donated to a legacy fund to maintain the trails

OVERTON IN JANE AUSTEN'S TIME

In 1786 the Revd James Fordyce visited the mill and saw 190 girls employed, calling them 'happy children...in knowledge, virtue and piety'. The pompous Mr Collins reads Fordyce's Sermons to the Bennet sisters in *Pride & Prejudice*.



Mr Troughon's Silk Mill, 1826, Hampshire Records Office TOP245/2/4

In 1801 Jane Austen's beloved friend, Mrs Letroy, describes a visit to the **Silk Mill**.

Continue down Silk Mill Lane and at the junction continue ahead to Southington Mill on your left.

Originally known as Lynch Mill, in 1761 the mill was leased to the Portal family (who owned the paper mill at Laverstoke and are mentioned frequently in Jane's letters).



Retrace your steps and turn right into Southington Lane to cross two bridges and continue to the main road. Turn right to glimpse a view of Parsonage Farmhouse.

Parsonage Farmhouse was the official residence of the rector when he visited Overton. In Jane Austen's time the rector was the Revd William Buller whose son, Richard, was a pupil of Jane's father at Steventon Rectory and remained friends with Jane throughout his life.

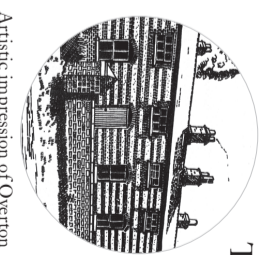
Retrace your steps back along the main road passing Southington Lane on your left and then Tibe Cottage, a 17th century Grade II building, on your right.



Southington Cottage

Pass **Southington Cottage** on your left and **Butcher's Cottage** on your right, two Grade II listed houses with parts from the 17th to 19th centuries.

Turn right and climb Dellands Lane. Turn left at the top.



Artistic impression of Overton Workhouse by Donald Moss from *Overton and its National School* by Alison M. Deverson

This corner was the site of **Overton Workhouse**. Built around 1800 as a response to concerns by local landowners about the 'exorbitant poor rate', but also out of concern for the condition of the poor.

During 1802 to 1803, 38 people were admitted to the workhouse (those who were able would be found work - many at the **Silk Mill**) with a further 154 receiving 'outdoor relief' in the form of payments to help support them.

Continue along Dellands and down Greyhound Lane to Winchester Street.

Note the 18th century thatched cottages on the other side of Winchester Street.



Turn left on to Winchester Street.

On the right is Sprents Lane, the site of **Sprents Academy**. From about 1786, William Sprent ran a fee-paying school here for 'Young Gentlemen'.

On your left is the **Greyhound**. In Jane Austen's time, John Bartelotte was the innkeeper. Look back at the old timbering in the northern wall.

As you walk down Winchester Street, on your right, look out for **Rowan House**, home of the apothecary, Robert Brookman in Jane's time and **Yield House**, an 18th century house. Continue with **Finders Keep**, another 18th century house on the left.

Continue down Winchester Street until you reach the crossroads and the end of the trail.