



Julia and the Master of Morancourt

By Janet Aylmer
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Questions for Discussion

1. Julia Maitland is described in the novel as having a calm, sympathetic and practical personality, with a quieter version of her mother's determination. How much control do you think that Julia really has over the events in the novel as the story unfolds?
2. Would the outcome of the story in "Julia and the Master of Morancourt" have been very different if Aunt Lucy had been told straight away that Mr. Hatton and Kit Douglas were in fact the same person?
3. Which character in the story do you personally identify with most, and why?
4. Many regency romances are written with a handsome hero and attractive heroine moving through the story to their destiny unaffected by the realities of everyday life. Do you prefer that, or do you like having a more realistic context for the story? What are the reasons for your preference?
5. What aspects of life in Georgian times would you have most enjoyed, and most disliked?
6. Many parents in wealthy families in Georgian times were beginning to let their children have some say in who they should marry. Do you see this as a significant development, bearing in mind that the young people's lives were still likely to be constrained by formalities and financial considerations?
7. Some aristocratic titles are still used in the United Kingdom today. In North America, some boys are given the same Christian names as their father and/or grandfather with a Roman numeral (for instance, II or III) added. What is your view about these practices?
8. Social life for the aristocracy and gentry in the Georgian period was mostly centred on London and the fashionable spa towns. Would this have helped or hindered a young lady seeking an eligible marriage partner of her own choice?
9. One of the major differences between the early 19th and early 21st centuries was how long it took to travel any distance. Two hundred years ago, poor people walked or rode on a cart, people with more money could hire a horse or pay for a seat on a stagecoach, and the most wealthy could travel in their own carriage. Everyone had to share uneven and badly maintained roads. What would have been the major effects of these slow and uncomfortable journeys on life in Georgian times?
10. What inventions that you know of during the Industrial Revolution had the most influence on life in the 19th century?
11. Was Olivia Maitland mainly driven by her social ambitions in wanting Julia to marry into a titled family? Or was her concern really about what the alternatives might be for her eldest daughter's future, because of the Maitlands' reduced financial circumstances, and the prospect of the estate passing to a distant relative when her father dies?
12. Which person in the book would you most like to read more about in a future novel? Give your reasons.