**Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley** (1797-1851): Originally Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin. Technically not Mary Shelley until her actual marriage in Dec. 1816. Wrote *Frankenstein* in late 1816 and 1817.

**Mary Wollstonecraft** (1759-1797): Mary’s mother. Feminist educator and political writer, most famous for *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* (1792). Died after giving birth to Mary.

**William Godwin** (1756-1836): Mary’s father. Political Activist and writer. Espoused Rationality as key to social progress. Most famous for writing *Political Justice* (1793) which attacked the institutions of organized religion, marriage, and centralized government. Seen as father of Anarchism. After wife’s death, continued as barely successful bookseller. Basically disowned Mary after her elopement until she was married (which occurred after she wrote *Frankenstein*).

**Percy Bysshe Shelley** (1792-1822): Became one of the most famous English Romantic Poets. Eloped with 16 year-old Mary in 1814. Believed in the ideals of free-love. Died in 1822 after drowning.


**Claire Clairmont** (1798-1879): Mary Shelley’s stepsister, daughter of Mary Jane Godwin. Accompanied Mary and Percy during elopement and lived with them for many years after. Had an affair with Lord Byron that led to her insisting that Mary and Percy follow him to Switzerland where they visited and Mary conceived of *Frankenstein*.

Important Dates surrounding *Frankenstein*:

- **Born:** 30 Aug 1797
- **1814**
  - July 28 - Percy and Mary eloped
- **1816**
  - 3 May - Mary Godwin, Percy Shelley, Claire Clairmont depart for Switzerland to visit Byron.
  - 16 June - Mary begins *Frankenstein*
  - 9 Oct - Fanny Imlay commits suicide
  - 10 Dec - Harriet Shelley commits suicide
  - 30 Dec - Mary Godwin and Percy Shelley marry
- **1817**
  - Apr-Dec Mary Shelley finishes *Frankenstein*

Sources:


*Mary Shelley* / Miranda Seymour. London : John Murray, 2000

