



Thomas Carlyle 1795 – 1881

[Prepared for the Calgary Burns Club Carnie Group in 2012 by George Muir]

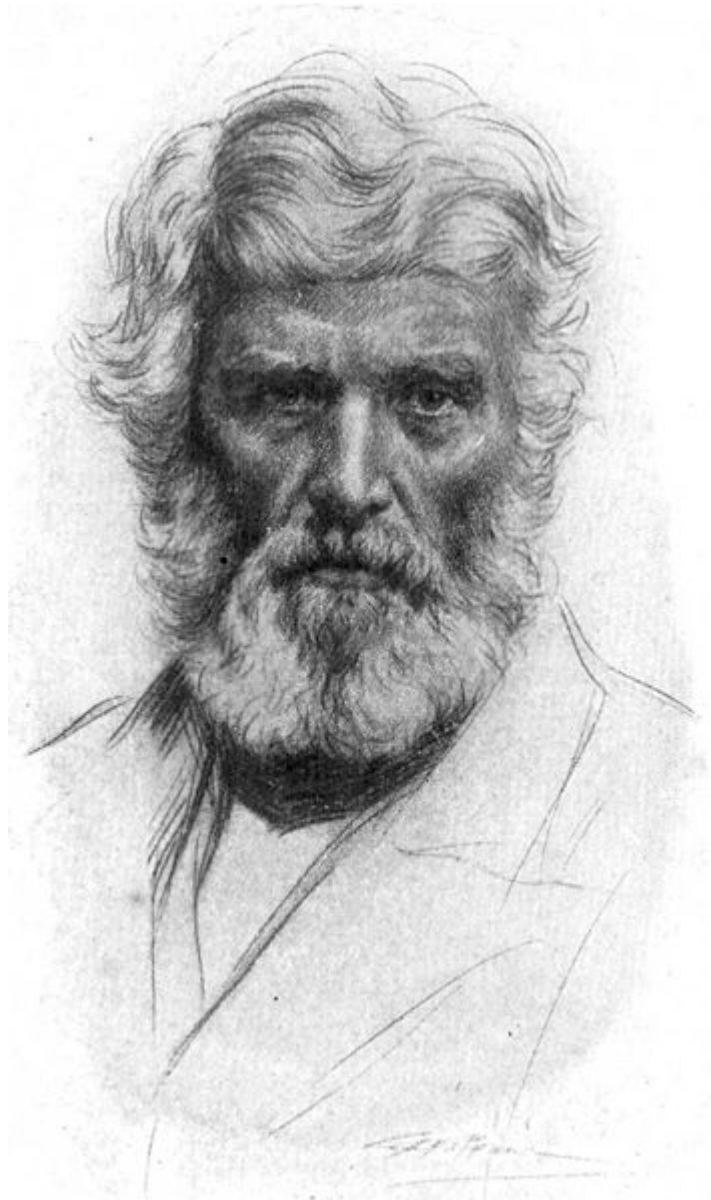


Table of Contents

Chronology of the life of Thomas Carlyle

Preface

Early Years until 1826

1826 – 1834

London

1866 onward

Major Works of Thomas Carlyle

Reference Material

- **Froude's *Life of Carlyle***(Abridged and Edited by John Clubbe (1979)
- **Nichol's *Thomas Carlyle***(1904)
- **Leslie Stephen's *Carlyle, Thomas*** (1886)
- **Wikipedia**
- **www.historyhome.co.uk/people/carlyle.htm**
- **Project Gutenberg**

Chronology

- 1795 Thomas Carlyle born December 4 at Ecclefechan, Annandale, Scotland
- 1801 Jane Baillie Welsh, born July 14 at Haddington, East Lothian, Scotland.
- 1806 – 1809 Carlyle attends Annan Academy.
- 1808 Carlyle first sees Edward Irving at Annan Academy.
- 1809 – 1814 Attends Edinburgh University.
- 1814 Returns to Annan Academy as mathematics tutor.
- 1816 – 1818 Begins teaching in Burgh school in Kirkcaldy. Meets Margaret Gordon. Friendship with Irving begins.
- 1819 Moves to Edinburgh. Begins study of German
- 1820 – 1823 Contributes articles to *Edinburgh Encyclopedia*.
- 1821 Meets Jane Baillie Welsh in Haddington.
- 1822 Tutors Charles ND Arthur Buller.
- 1823 “Life of Schiller” published in *London Magazine*.
- 1824 Translation of “Wilhelm Meister’s Apprenticeship” published. Travels to London and Paris
- 1825 “The Life of Schiller” published in book form.
- 1826 Marries Jane Baillie Welsh October 17; they move to Comely Bank, Edinburgh.
- 1827 “Jean Paul Friedrich Richter” published in June, Carlyle’s first contribution to *Edinburgh Review*. “German Romance” published, four volumes.
- 1828 Carlyles move to Craigenputtock. Burns published in *Edinburgh Review*. Articles on German literature published in *Foreign Review*.
- 1828 “Essay on Robert Burns”**
- 1829 “Signs of the Times” published in *Edinburgh Review*. Articles on German literature published in *Foreign Review*.
- 1830 “On History” published in *Fraser’s Magazine*. Begins “Sartor Resartus”. Articles on German literature published in *Foreign Review* and *Fraser’s Magazine*.
- 1831 “Sartor Resartus” completed. “Characteristics” published in *Edinburgh Review*. Travels to London. Meets John Stuart Mill
- 1832 Death of James Carlyle, Carlyle’s father, January 22.
- 1833 Emerson visits Craigenputtock. “Sartor Resartus” begins in *Fraser’s Magazine*.
- 1834 Carlyles move to London, 5 Cheyne Row (now #24), Chelsea. Death of Edward Irving
- 1835 First volume of “The French Revolution” destroyed by Mill’s servant. Meets John Sterling
- 1836 “Sartor Resartus” published in book form in Boston.
- 1837 “The French Revolution” completed and published.
- 1838 “Sartor Resartus” published in book form in England.
- 1839 “Critical and Miscellaneous” essays published, four volumes, “Chartism” published.
- 1840 Gives lecture series on “Heroes and Hero Worship”.
- 1841 “On Heroes and Hero Worship” published.
- 1842 Meets Mr. and Mrs. Baring (later Lord and Lady Ashburton).
- 1843 “Past and Present” published.

- 1844 Death of John Sterling.
- 1845 “Oliver Cromwell’s Letters and Speeches, with Elucidations” published, two volumes.
- 1846 Carlyle visits Ireland.
- 1847 Emerson visits Carlyle in London.
- 1850 “Latter Day Pamphlets” published.
- 1851 “The Life of John Sterling” published.
- 1852 Begins work on “Frederick the Great”; tours Germany.
- 1853 Death of Margaret Aitken Carlyle, Carlyle’s mother, December 25.
- 1856 – 1858 First collected edition of Carlyle’s works published.
- 1858 First two volumes of “History of Frederick the Great” published. Second visit to Germany
- 1859** **“Life of Burns”**
- 1863 Third volume of “History of Frederick the Great” published.
- 1864 Fourth volume of “History of Frederick the Great” published.
- 1865 Fifth and sixth volumes of “The History of Frederick the Great” published.
- 1866 Inaugural address as Rector of Edinburgh University, April 2. Death of Jane Baillie Welsh Carlyle, April 21. Begins writing “Reminiscences”
- 1867 “Shooting Niagara: and After?” published in *Macmillan’s*.
- 1869 Audience with Queen Victoria.
- 1874 Receives Prussian Order of Merit.
- 1875 “The Early Kings of Norway” and “The Portraits of John Knox” published.
- 1879 Death of John Carlyle, Carlyle’s brother.
- 1881 Death of Thomas Carlyle, February 4: burial in Ecclefechan churchyard. “Reminiscences” published.

Preface

Having been raised in a small Scottish town where it was the norm to find out about the ancestors of new people to the town, I felt it necessary to find out a little of the ancestry of both **Thomas Carlyle** and his wife, **Jane Baillie Welsh**, prior to putting pen to paper about the life of Thomas Carlyle, the Scottish satirical writer, essayist and historian who became a very controversial commentator of the Victorian era.

The Carlyles came with David II (mid 14th century AD) from an English town of the same name (but spelled slightly differently - *Carlisle*). They settled in the Annandale area and the cemetery of the Ecclefechan church contains many gravestones of the Carlyle family each bearing the Carlisle coat of arms – two griffins with adder stings. Ecclefechan first recorded as Eglesfeghan in 1303.

Thomas, the grandfather of our author, settled there as a carpenter. In 1745 he witnessed the rebel highlanders under Bonnie Prince Charlie march south. He was apparently "a fiery man, his stroke as ready as his word; of the toughness and springiness of steel; an honest but not an industrious man". He became a tenant of a small farm, which he did not manage well, and as a result the family was raised in very poor conditions. Into this home were born and raised five sons, known as the fighting masons, described by an old apprentice of one of them as "a curious sample of folks, pithy, bitter speaking bodies, and awfu' fighters". The second son, James, born in 1757, married – first a full cousin, Janet Carlyle who bore him a son John who lived at Cockermouth; second Margaret Aitken by whom he had four sons – **THOMAS**, Alexander; John (Dr. Carlyle, translator of Dante; and James. They also had five daughters, one of whom, Jane, married her cousin James Aitken of Dumfries, and was mother of Mary, the niece who faithfully tended her famous uncle **THOMAS** during the last years of this life.

JANE BAILLIE WELSH was a direct descendant of John Knox, the Scottish Reformer. He married a Margaret Stewart with whom he had three daughters – Martha, Margaret and Elizabeth.

Elizabeth married John Welsh, Minister of Ayr and they had one son, Josias who became minister at Templepatrick, County Antrim. His son John Michael Welsh of Irongray, born 17th century, was a leader of the Scottish Covenanters. Irongray is a parish in Dumfriesshire.

The ancestry continues through a number of John Welsh's to the son a Dumfriesshire farming family, another John, who became a doctor in Haddington. [It is interesting to note that John Knox was born near Haddington.] This Dr. John Welsh married a Grace Baillie Welsh (no relative, but who could trace her ancestry to William Wallace). They had one daughter, **Jane Baillie Welsh** who became the wife of **THOMAS CARLYLE**.

Early Years Until 1826



The Birthplace of Thomas Carlyle

Thomas Carlyle was born on December 4, 1795 in Ecclefechan, Dumfriesshire. He had three brothers, one stepbrother and five sisters. His parents, James and Margaret Carlyle raised their children in their strong Calvinist beliefs. They gave them a sound education and a loving home.

"It was not a joyful life," says Thomas--"what life is? - Yet a safe, quiet one; above most others, or any others I have witnessed, a wholesome one."

His mother taught him to read and write and his father taught him arithmetic. He was sent to the village school. There he was pronounced "complete in English" at age seven. At ten years of age he went off to Annan Academy where he learned Latin, some Greek, French, algebra and geometry. He had a violent temper and even his mother said that not only was he, "*gey ill to deal wi'*," but also "*gey ill to live wi'.*" As a result his mother made him promise never to return a blow in the event that his temper might get him into trouble. He kept his promise but to his detriment it was taken as cowardice by his fellow students who continuously picked on him until one day he retaliated to an attack by the class bully. Although he lost the fight he was never picked on again. At age fourteen he still sought to have further learning and was supported in this by his father who wanted him to have the most complete education that he could get and so he set off one November morning to walk some eighty miles to Edinburgh where he would enroll at the University.

His parents had wanted him to become a minister but he lost his faith at university, indeed he lost respect for the university and never completed his degree. He also considered taking up law but gave that up when he realized that he had no particular bent for the subject. He believed that books were the source of all learning and it was the knowledge of books and how to use them that he felt was what the university had really taught him. The only academic subject that appealed to him, at which he became extremely competent, was mathematics. His ability in mathematics even gained him praise from his professor.

He left university in 1814. To fill in time before his intended ordination he returned to Annan where he took a post as a mathematics tutor for a salary of £60 to £70 per annum. He was now somewhat independent and was able to save a little from his meager salary. He was now near his family who had moved to a farm at Mainhill, some two miles from Ecclefechan. He spent his holidays there. His life at Annan was very lonely and it was spent among his books.

A fellow named Edward Irving, whom Carlyle had met at Annan Academy in 1808, had become a schoolmaster in Kirkcaldy. However a number of the parents were a little dissatisfied with his teaching and decided to hire a second teacher. Based on references from his professors at Edinburgh University Carlyle was awarded the position in 1816 and became a rival of Irving. Irving showed him no animosity and the two formed a very close friendship. Carlyle made very good use of Irving's personal library. He found his duties as a teacher extremely distasteful and his reserved nature, his irritability and his sarcastic manner were unsuited to the position. Carlyle was not a very sociable individual and mixed little within the community. He was however attracted to a Miss Margaret Gordon, an ex-pupil of Irving's. Miss Gordon's aunt, with whom she lived, put a stop to any possibility of an engagement. Miss Gordon herself severed the relationship and very soon after married a member of parliament who became governor of Nova Scotia. About this time Carlyle found being a teacher intolerable and in 1818 he told his father that with his savings and by tutoring a few pupils mathematics he could survive. Accordingly in 1819 he went off to Edinburgh with Irving who had given up his school with the view of taking up the ministry. It was at this time that Carlyle began to suffer from dyspepsia which was to cause him great discomfort for the rest of his life. The discomfort of the dyspepsia made him even more irritable. The following three years were the 'most miserable' of his life. The misery of the lower classes at the time made a deep impression on him and he sympathized with the discontent. In 1821 he went through a 'spiritual rebirth' though for four more years he had many mental struggles. During this time of mental struggle he was greatly supported by his entire family and was always affectionately welcomed on his occasional visits to Mainhill.

Carlyle had taken great interest in German studies, particularly Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, whose more gentle personality was in great contrast to his own. He had decided by this time that he wanted to be a writer and had applied without success to London booksellers. His friend Edward Irving had moved to London and was always on the lookout for employment for his young friend. Irving had made acquaintance with two sisters, Mrs. Strachey and Mrs. Buller. Mrs. Buller consulted Edward Irving regarding the education of her two sons, Charles and Arthur (later become Sir Arthur Buller, Liberal MP and member of the commission of inquiry into education in Lower Canada - now Quebec). Irving recommended the boys be sent to Edinburgh with Carlyle as tutor. This was acceptable to the Bullers and Carlyle; in the autumn of 1822 began an association between the Bullers and Carlyle which was to last for some time. The Bullers moved to Dunkeld in 1823 and Carlyle joined them there. At the end of January the Bullers returned to London but Carlyle stayed at Mainhill to finish a translation of Goethe's *Apprenticeship of Wilhelm Meister*. He followed the Bullers to London in June but soon gave up his position as tutor to young Charles who was now heading to Cambridge. Carlyle was still restless and had no definite plans. He had been actively writing and with his income from this and from the Bullers he was able to help his family financially. He supported his brother John as a medical student in Edinburgh and helped his brother Alexander by stocking up a farm for him.

His friend Irving, who had finally settled in London in 1822 mentioned Carlyle's name to Taylor, owner of the *London Magazine*. Taylor offered him sixteen guineas a sheet for a series of portraits of "Men of Genius and Character. The first was the "Life of Schiller" in 1823 – 24. An Edinburgh publisher, Boyd, accepted his "Wilhelm Meister" for publication in 1824. Since leaving the Bullers he was on his own and so the monies for these publications really established him in his own right. Given his frugal upbringing he was able to live comfortably on his earnings. Around this time he visited Paris and his experience there was to be of great value for his future work on the French Revolution. On his return from Paris he took lodgings in Islington near his friend Irving and occupied himself in negotiations for a book form of "The Life of Schiller". Shortly after its publication in March 1825 he returned to Scotland.

Carlyle's views of the London society were not entirely favourable. It is best described by Leslie Stephen as "*The rugged independence of the Scotch peasant, resenting even well-meant patronage, colours his judgments of the fashionable world, while an additional severity is due to his habitual dyspepsia*". His contemporaries of the time were Coleridge, Hazlitt, Campbell, Lamb, Southey and Wordsworth. The last two mentioned had moved far from the city, which Carlyle thought was a good decision. It reinforced his resolution to present his views on the society of the time irrespective of the comments on his work that they might bring. He could not stand flattery and found London society a bit false.

At this point it is necessary to back track a few years to cover his meeting with Jane Baillie Welsh and their "courtship" which ran in conjunction with the events just previously described. Miss Welsh, born on July 14 1801, was a pupil of Carlyle's friend Edward Irving and had developed a crush on him. He had moved to Kirkcaldy where he became engaged to a Miss Martin (Miss Welsh being still a child at the time). He continued to visit Haddington and had come to a "mutual understanding" with Miss Welsh. They both hoped that the Martins would release him from the obligation of the engagement but since this was not forthcoming he and Miss Welsh agreed that he must honour the engagement. Irving was married in the autumn of 1823. While all this was going on Irving had taken Carlyle to Haddington in 1821 and introduced him to Miss Jane Welsh with a view to providing her some tuition. Carlyle obtained her permission to send her books and opened up a correspondence with her. During her occasional visits to Edinburgh they would meet. In 1800 Gilbert Burns, Robert's brother, and his large family had moved to East Lothian and then in 1804 had moved nearer Haddington. During a visit to Haddington Carlyle was to visit the home of Gilbert Burns whose daughters were school friends of Miss Welsh.

Carlyle, who was quite unaware of the "Irving affair", was becoming much more attracted to Miss Welsh and she in turn was becoming more attracted to him with deeper feelings than she had ever had for Irving. And so the romance developed, albeit with some difficulties, until in the spring of 1824 she promised, in repentance after a quarrel, that she would marry him if he could achieve some independence. They corresponded regularly during his time in England and in his letters proposed that upon their marriage they should live at her farm (soon to become vacant) of Craigenputtock in Dumfriesshire where he could devote himself to his writing. She on the other hand was not keen on this idea as it meant her giving up the comforts and social life of the city. This led to a cooling off in the relationship but the interference of a Mrs. Montagu (a friend of both Carlyle

and Irving) sought to bring them back together again. The two settled their differences and in 1825 Miss Welsh came to visit him at Mainhill where she was introduced to his family as his promised bride. She was politely received by them and thereafter remained on affectionate terms with them. Carlyle on the other hand was not liked by Mrs. Welsh who thought that he was socially beneath the Welsh family. Carlyle had saved £200 to start off his married life and had thoughts of a small cottage somewhere near Edinburgh. Mrs. Welsh ultimately relented to the engagement and suggested that the couple move in with her. Carlyle declined on the grounds that he had to be master in his own home. Several options for the couple were considered, including moving into the new Carlyle farm at Scotsbrig in Dumfriesshire. This was thought to be too rough a life for Miss Welsh by the Carlyle family, and so a house was taken at Comely Bank in Edinburgh. The wedding took place there on October 17, 1826.

1826 - 1834

And so began the marriage of two of the most remarkable people of their time. The marriage was based more on affection than that of lovers. In fact Froude in his biography of Carlyle indicates that the marriage was never consummated. Although it started off happily it deteriorated with time due to Carlyle's passion for his work and his moodiness exacerbated by his constant dyspepsia. This accompanied by Jane's dislike of illusions and forthright approach to uttering unpleasant truths resulted in many unpleasant situations. A contemporary of Carlyle's said –

It was very good of God to let Carlyle and Mrs. Carlyle marry one another, and so make only two people miserable and not four.

Mrs. Carlyle, however, was a charming hostess and the Edinburgh literati came to see her and listen to her husband's monologues. Money was becoming tight and with sales of his works Meister and Schiller declining they began to think of moving to Craigenputtock, the Welsh family home in Dumfriesshire. Carlyle tried writing a novel. It was a disaster so he burnt it. (He never again tried fiction as his talent lay in the factual – history, biographies). It was agreed that Carlyle's brother, Alexander, would move into the farmhouse and run the farm whilst the Carlyles would move into the main house of Craigenputtock. In the interim Carlyle had formed an acquaintanceship with Francis Jeffrey (Lord Jeffrey), an Edinburgh lawyer and editor of the *Edinburgh Review*. Jeffrey had taken a liking (professional) to Mrs. Carlyle and resolved to help Carlyle in his efforts to have his essays published in the *Review*. Two appeared in 1827 and the slight improvement in the finances as a result allowed Carlyle to send his brother John to Germany to study medicine. Jeffrey also tried to get Carlyle an appointment of a professorship at the newly opened London University, but to no avail. He then supported Carlyle as a candidate for the post of professor of moral philosophy at St. Andrew's University. This failed due to the opposition of the then principal, Dr. Nicol. At this point the move to Craigenputtock became a necessity as the landlord at Comely Bank had accepted another tenant. They moved to Craigenputtock at the end of May 1828.



Craigenputtock

Carlyle had hopes that in the remoteness and seclusion of Craigenputtock, which he called his “Whinstane Castle”, his writings would increase and that he would be able to make a comfortable living. He struggled for the next six years with varied success. He wrote many articles for the *Edinburgh Review*, the *Foreign Review* and *Fraser’s Magazine*. He wrote only articles which were worthy of future collection and some of these are among his finest works. It was here in 1828 he wrote his essay on “Robert Burns”. The majority of his work was focused on German literature. However the interest in German literature was not a marketable topic. Finances were at a low ebb; in February of 1831 he only had £5. The farm at Craigenputtock was a failure, his brother John returned from Germany as a doctor but was unable to start a practice. His friend Jeffrey transferred his editorship of the *Edinburgh Review* to Macvey Napier and so that source of income dried up. Early in 1831 he worked hard on one of his major works “Sartor Resartus” (Translation being the *Tailor Retailored*) which is, in effect, an autobiography as seen through the eyes of a character who represented himself. In August 1831 he went off to London to try out the publishers there. No one was interested. His wife joined him in October of the same year. They found lodgings and Carlyle wrote a number of articles for different magazines which provided some income; his brother John secured a position as a travelling physician to the Countess of Clare thus relieving him of the need to support him. Carlyle had however not found a publisher for Sartor and so the Carlyles returned to Craigenputtock in April 1832. The loneliness, the absence of books and his wife’s deteriorating health caused them to return Edinburgh in 1833. He found the Advocates Library in Edinburgh a great source of study and he collected a great deal of information for his historical articles on “Count Cagliostro” (Note 1) and the “Diamond Necklace” (Note 2). After four months, having found the Edinburgh society quite uncongenial, they returned to Craigenputtock.

Editors were once more becoming less interested in his work but Sartor was finally accepted in serial format (November 1833 through August 1834). The American essayist Ralph Waldo Emerson was quite impressed with Carlyle and came to visit him in 1833. He had with him a letter from John Stuart Mill, British philosopher. Mill and Carlyle began a correspondence which started Carlyle’s thinking on the French Revolution. Life at Craigenputtock became monotonous over the winter of 1833 – 34. There was no money coming in and the Carlyles found themselves at their lowest level financially. Carlyle was becoming more and more discontented, Mrs. Carlyle hated Craigenputtock and they made the decision to move permanently to London.

London



24 Cheyne Row, Chelsea

On May 19, 1834 Carlyle settled into his old London lodgings and began looking for a house. Eventually he found a small old fashioned house at number 5 (now 24) Cheyne Row, Chelsea. Mrs. Carlyle soon followed and approved his choice. They moved in on June 10, 1834. His mood improved in London and they had a more reasonable social life. He had begun work right away on the "French Revolution" and completed the first volume in February 1835 and lent the manuscript to his friend John Stuart Mill. Mill came to his house on March 6 to confess that the manuscript had been accidentally destroyed by his maid who had mistaken it for some old papers and burnt it. Carlyle was devastated; he accepted £100 from Mill for potential financial loss but his enthusiasm had gone. Ever so slowly his spirit returned and he rewrote his manuscript. This took him the rest of 1835 and all of 1836. He eventually completed it on January 12, 1837 but a further six months passed before its publication. The next three years were spent giving lectures. The first a series of six in May 1837 on German literature, twelve in May 1838 on the Spiritual History of Man from earliest time until now, the French Revolution in May 1839 and Hero Worship in May 1840. These were very successful financially but he felt the work, in his words, "unwholesome" and very trying. He never spoke again in public except for his address at Edinburgh University in 1866. In the winter of 1839 he began to push for the formation of the London library which grew out of his need for books during his work on the "French Revolution". The library was successfully started in 1840 and Carlyle was president from 1870 until his death. Editors were now becoming more interested in his work; the *Fraser Review* proposed an edition of Sartor Resartus and an edition of his collected essays. Emerson (in the USA) secured for him the publication of the "French Revolution" and "Miscellanies". His work was popular in the United States

but later books were appropriated by American publishers who never recompensed Carlyle.

With the monies from Emerson his financial wellbeing was pretty much secure. The Carlyles had made some valuable friendships in their few years in London and his growing fame opened the houses of some very well-known people. The Carlyles were the guests of many dinner parties but these only produced indigestion and his resentment of patronage and flattery (equally shared by his wife) made him a rather dangerous guest as his forthright views and intolerance of interruption could make him quite rude.

His radical views on society resulted in the end of his friendship with Mill although he still retained a high opinion of him. Mill had resigned his editorship of the *Westminster* to a young Scot named Robertson. He had earlier asked Carlyle to write on Cromwell which Robertson now announced that he meant to write the article himself. Carlyle was quite annoyed at this and began some research which ultimately led to the composition of his next great book. In the interim he had written an article for John Gilbert Lockhart (Sir Walter Scott's son in law) but, as it was considered unsuitable for the *Quarterly Review* Lockhart dare not take it. In the end it appeared as a separate book, "Chartism", at the end of 1839. Chartism was a Victorian era working class movement for political reform in Britain between 1838 and 1848. It was a good example of Carlyle's radical views. A thousand copies sold immediately and a second edition was published in 1840.

He struggled with his book on Cromwell which he seriously began in the fall of 1840. He studied the history around Cromwell in great depth but failed to put it all together and in the end burned what he had written. He began again but this time he made a collection of all of Cromwell's speeches and letters with explanatory comments. When he finished this he found that in fact he had produced the book. It appeared in the autumn of 1845 and was generally well received. His position as leader in literature was established.

The Carlyles were now very comfortable financially and were building up a wide circle of acquaintances; mostly it seems more due to his wife than himself. Visitors to their house included Lord Tennyson, Charles Dickens (Whose Tale of Two Cities was inspired by Carlyle's "French Revolution") and William Makepeace Thackeray. The death of Mrs. Carlyle's mother in 1844 dealt her a terrible blow. She was already in a delicate state of health and this incapacitated her significantly so much so that Carlyle had to return to Dumfriesshire for two months in order to complete all the business. Home life was not very happy for Mrs. Carlyle, he was affectionate in his own way but he was obsessed with his work and would only appear at meal times when the conversation was entirely about his work.

Following the publication of "Cromwell" Carlyle found himself with little to do other than work of the inclusion of a few more discovered letters into a second edition which was published in 1846. The next few years were taken up with writing articles decrying the lack of order in society and government. Many of these ideas were published in "Latter Day Pamphlets" which were not well received and were considered to be the ramblings of a bitter recluse. In 1851 he wrote "The Life of John Sterling", a Scottish author of the time, whose work received little success. In fact Carlyle did him more good than his own works. Later in 1851 Carlyle began looking into the life of Frederick the Great and for the next six months he secluded himself in his study and read as much as he could with regard to Frederick.

The Carlyles had begun significant renovations to the house in 1852 and this was becoming too much for him as he tried to work and so in August 1852 he travelled up to Leith and sailed to Rotterdam and from there went on a tour of Germany with a Mr. Neuberg, a German admirer and London resident. He amassed an enormous amount of material for his book. This book gave him a lot of trouble and he went into his various fits of despondency and irritability before he even got started. He stayed in London through 1853, engrossed in his work despite the renovation work on the house. Mrs. Carlyle meanwhile went to stay with Carlyle's brother John at Scotsbrig. In December of 1853 Carlyle's mother passed away. He had been with her at the end but returned to London and worked continuously through 1854 on Frederick, emerging from his new 'sound proof' study built on top of the house only at tea time for a short talk with his wife. For the next eighteen months he worked continuously and finally took a holiday in August of 1855. After his short holiday he was back at work again and in 1856 he and his wife went to Scotland for a holiday but he took his work with him. The monotony of his work was only relieved by riding his horse Fritz each afternoon. The first chapters of "Frederick" were getting into print in July 1857. A neighbour of his helped him with his maps and indices for his work and at last after six or seven years the first installment was finished. He visited Germany again in the fall of 1858 where he spent time fixing in his mind all the aspects of Frederick's battlefields. The first two volumes of his book (six volumes in total) were published soon after his return and by the end of the year some four thousand copies had been sold. Another thousand were printed. The later volumes appeared in 1862, 1864 and 1865. It is interesting to note that military students in Germany (following the publication of the book) studied Frederick's battles as described by Carlyle. In 1859 Carlyle wrote and had published his second work on Burns titled simply "Life of Robert Burns". He was a great admirer of Burns and included him as one of the 'Heroes' in "Heroes and Hero Worship" which had been published in 1841.

Carlyle was elected to the rectorship of Edinburgh University at the end of 1865 and delivered his inaugural address there on April 2, 1866. Mrs. Carlyle had not gone to Edinburgh with him due to her poor health so he went to Scotsbrig to visit his family following the inauguration and whilst there he suffered a sprain which caused him to delay his return to London. On Saturday April 21 Mrs. Carlyle had gone for a drive in her carriage (which Carlyle had bought her a few years earlier in her declining health). She had taken her dog with her and had let it out for a run. It was struck by a carriage; Mrs. Carlyle got out of her carriage and lifted it in. The driver went on but after a while having had no instruction from Mrs. Carlyle as to where to go he stopped to check on her. She was found sitting upright, dead. The news reached Carlyle at Dumfries and he immediately returned to London. Jane Baillie Welsh Carlyle was buried beside her father in Haddington.

1866 onward

From this time on Carlyle led a very secluded life. Serious work became impossible. He spent time staying with friends and did some travelling under the guardianship of Professor Tyndall, the nineteenth century physicist, returning to Cheyne Row in March 1867. During this time during which he suffered from melancholy he wrote most of his "Reminiscences". An article "Shooting Niagara" which gave his views on contemporary politics was published in *Macmillan's Magazine* in 1867 and in 1870 he wrote *Defence of the German Case in the War with France*. This article was warmly acknowledged

through Count Bernstorff the German ambassador. In 1872 his right hand which had long shaken became almost unable to write, however in 1877 he did manage to write a remarkable letter which stated that he had absolute knowledge that a plan had been formulated by Disraeli's government which would result in war with Russia. His information source is still unknown as is the effect of the letter's influence in averting the war. Between April 1877 and February 1878, Queen Victoria threatened five times to abdicate while pressuring Disraeli to act against Russia during the Russo-Turkish War, but her threats had no impact on the events or their conclusion with the Congress of Berlin. Did Carlyle have an impact? Who knows? Froude is of the opinion that his letter was perhaps "the most useful act in his whole life".

He had become the acknowledged head of English literature amongst the literati of the time. In February 1874 he received the Prussian Order of Merit for his work as the historian of Frederick the Great. In December of the same year Disraeli offered him in very flattering terms the grand cross of Bath and a pension. Carlyle graciously declined both offers from the man of whom he had, in his own words "never spoken except with contempt". On his eightieth birthday he received a congratulatory letter and medal from Prince Bismarck. His melancholy worsened, his brother Alexander died in Canada in 1876. His brother John died in 1879. He walked daily as long as he was able but was severely bent with age. His health slowly deteriorated and he died on February 4 1881. A burial in Westminster Abbey was offered but refused in accordance with his wish, as he disapproved of certain passages in the Anglican service. He was buried beside his parents in the old churchyard at Ecclefechan.

Note 1 *Count Alessandro di Cagliostro (June 1743 – 26 August 1795) was the alias of the occultist Giuseppe Balsamo; also called Joseph Balsamo, an Italian adventurer. The history of Cagliostro is shrouded in rumour, propaganda, and mysticism. Some effort was expended to ascertain his true identity when he was arrested because of possible participation in the Affair of the Diamond Necklace.*

Note 2 *The Affair of the Diamond Necklace was a mysterious incident in the 1780s at the court of Louis XVI of France involving his wife, Queen Marie Antoinette. The reputation of the Queen, which was already tarnished by gossip, was ruined by the implication that she had participated in a crime to defraud the crown jewelers of the cost of a very expensive diamond necklace. The Affair was historically significant as one of the events that led to the French populace's disillusionment with the monarchy, which, among other causes, eventually culminated in the French Revolution.*

Major Works of Thomas Carlyle

- (1825) The Life of Schiller (Supplement 1872)
- **(1828) Essay on Robert Burns**
- (1829) Signs of the Times
- (1831) Sartor Resartus
- (1837) The French Revolution: A History
- Critical and Miscellaneous Essays
- (1840) Chartism
- (1841) On Heroes and Hero Worship and the Heroic in History
- (1843) Past and Present
- (1845) Oliver Cromwell's letters and speeches, with elucidations
- (1850) Latter-Day Pamphlets
 - Characteristics
 - Downing Street
 - Model Prisons
 - New Downing Street, The
 - Present Time, The
 - Stump-Orator
- (1851) The Life Of John Sterling (Scottish author)
- (1853) Occasional Discourse on the Negro Question
- (1858 – 65) History of Friedrich II of Prussia (6 Volumes)
- **(1859) Life of Burns**
- (1866) Inaugural Address at Edinburgh University
- (1867) Shooting Niagara:
- (1875) The Early Kings of Norway
- (1881) Reminiscences
- (1882) Reminiscences of my Irish Journey in 1849
- Last Words of Thomas Carlyle