

**THE  
CARLYLE SOCIETY**

**SESSION 2010-2011**

OCCASIONAL PAPERS 23



Edinburgh 2010



## President's Letter

Another successful year of meetings behind us, and we welcome members to the 2010-11 session. As this is written, vol. 39 of the *Carlyle Letters* will be going to the publisher, and the annual excitement of a parcel of finished volumes (vol. 38) will be coming any day from North Carolina. The *Letters* have survived the shock of their funding being cut, and we are extremely grateful to those in the Society who have voluntarily made gifts to help cover the shortfall. The search for future funding, even in these difficult times, continues and we are confident that we will go ahead.

With 40 volumes due to be out in 2012, we are beginning the process of planning an academic conference in July, and a public event in November to mark the occasion. Members will be kept very much informed. Interest in both Carlyles remains strong in North America and in continental Europe, and this session we welcome a scholar from the USA to give the Thomas Green lecture.

Thanks, as ever, to the University of Edinburgh as our hosts, and to the Centre for Lifelong Learning. Thanks, too, to the many members who in various ways keep things going, keep the publications heading worldwide, and sustain the ripples of interest which this year saw the conference in St Johnstown of Dalry, a bumper year in the Carlyle House in Chelsea, a revival of interest in Ecclefechan, a couple of reprints, and a couple of weighty critical volumes in the pipeline. These *Occasional Papers* add to the momentum of growing interest in two major figures.

Ian Campbell  
President

September, 2010



**Dr. Jonathan Wild**

University of Edinburgh

Jwild@ed.ac.uk

### ***John O'London's Weekly, the New Reading Public and Carlyle***

This paper examines Carlyle's reputation in the period following the Great War. My aim here is to examine the ways in which the legacy of Carlyle's work was perpetuated for and by the new reading public who emerged during this period. Over the last few years I have conducted research into this reading group through examination of *John O'London's Weekly*. This publication was a highly popular, large circulation cultural paper that first emerged in 1919. It was issued by George Newnes, publisher of other mass circulation titles such as *Tit-Bits*, and the *Strand Magazine*, and so it was readily available to a mass readership across Britain and the British empire. As I've argued elsewhere, this weekly paper was enormously important in helping to form the opinions of the new reading classes.<sup>1</sup> Taking into account this importance, I was particularly interested in the research that informs this article to see how Thomas Carlyle's work was incorporated in the pages of a popular literary weekly from this period. While I was aware of the putative conception that Carlyle's reputation plummeted after the Great War, I felt that an investigation into his profile in *JOLW* might revealingly test this accepted position.

Before I go on to discuss Carlyle and the new reading public in more detail, it is first necessary to establish what is meant here by the term 'new reading public'. It is of course true that the reading public in Britain had grown at a considerable rate since the passing of the Forster Education Act in 1870. Indeed, even before this date, Carlyle had famously passed the following comment on the growing market for print culture during his Edinburgh Rectorial address in 1866:

It would be much safer and better for many a reader, that he had no concern with books at all. There is a number, a frightfully increasing

<sup>1</sup>See Jonathan Wild, "Insects in Letters": *John O'London's Weekly* and the New Reading Public', *Literature and History*, Vol. 15.2, (Autumn 2006): 50-62.

number, of books that are decidedly, to the readers of them, not useful. Carlyle's comments refer to a cohort that would dramatically expand in the following years. An indication of the growth in this reading public is hinted by the fact that the number of new adult novels published annually in Britain more than tripled between 1873 and 1894, with similar levels of growth experienced in the newspaper and magazine markets over this period. By the Edwardian period, the market for print culture had diversified (in comparison with its Victorian counterpart) to a point at which it was now able to offer specialised publications for a remarkable variety and levels of cultural tastes.

By the end of the First World War in November 1918, however, we can recognise a further significant change in the types of readers emerging. While wartime restrictions had ensured that the production of new published material was scaled down, there was a notable growth in demand for reading matter<sup>2</sup>. The following eyewitness, writing in 1919, suggested reasons why this might be the case:

It was a noticeable fact that many men who were not at all literary in the ordinary sense, picked up the habit of reading, and almost everything was welcome, from the daily paper to the classic.<sup>3</sup>

Those individuals who had arguably lacked the time and the opportunity to pick up the 'habit of reading' before war service now experienced long periods of numbing inactivity which were mercifully ameliorated by books. Joseph McAleer convincingly argues that war workers, 'either in the Forces or on civilian duty', represented 'the principal growth area in the reading public' during this period.<sup>4</sup> It is clear at this time that there was a significant increase in readers of popular/light fiction, and it is equally evident that other more 'ambitious' readers emerged at this time. These autodidact readers, who typically lacked a formal education after the age of fourteen, would characteristically build up their own home library from money saved from pay.

<sup>2</sup> John Buchan wrote in 1927 that the war had increased reading among the English public by 40 per cent. Buchan offered a further gloss upon this idea by arguing that 'lots of the new reading class started the habits in hospital, others because they found books cheap and plentiful when other entertainments were dear and scarce'. Quoted in Joseph McAleer, *Popular Reading and Publishing in Britain 1914-1950*, Clarendon Press (Oxford), 1992, p 73.

<sup>3</sup> *John O'London's Weekly*, I. 310, 14 June 1919. Letter from Cyrmo, (Penally).

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid*, McAleer, p.72.

*John O'London's Weekly*, is by any standard of immense significance in our attempts to identify this post-war new reading public. When it was first published in April 1919, it was evidently designed for a group of readers who had emerged from the war hungry to broaden their understanding of a variety of cultural matters. The paper's first editor Wilfred Whitten (who used the pen name 'John O'London') was keenly aware that a significant market existed for an inexpensive weekly publication dedicated to the appreciation of literature and culture. Whitten also recognised that his paper had to be seen to be less consciously 'highbrow' than *The Times Literary Supplement* and *The Spectator*. His success in hitting the right note can be gauged by an early *JOLW* reader's letter that praised the paper for being 'satisfying but not stodgy'<sup>5</sup>. It was clearly imperative then that any instruction in the paper, rather than echoing dreaded school textbooks, should be interspersed with lighter material.<sup>6</sup> To a readership, many of whom had spend long periods of time in the armed forces, it was important to get this balance right. In the aftermath of the Great War, there was understandably little taste for being harangued by authority figures.

With the benefit of hindsight, one could argue that April 1919 was the perfect time to launch a popular literary publication such as *JOLW*, and Whitten recognised from the outset the wider social significance that a literary publication such as *JOLW* might represent. He understood that the social and cultural aspirations of many of those involved in the conflict had become transformed during their war service, and he similarly realised the importance of responding to these changes. In a statement imbedded in a book review in the first issue of the paper, for example, he wrote that:

Our young men can live a larger life than has ever been lived before.

Nearly five years ago they were mobilized to enforce order and decency in the human family; they have done their part in that great business; and now

<sup>5</sup> *JOLW*, I.109, 3 May 1919. Letter from E.W.E. London S.W.

<sup>6</sup> In one of the final articles that Wilfred Whitten contributed to *JOLW* before his death in 1942, he reflected upon the paper's original aims: 'When this journal was planned ... it was not designed to resemble a schoolroom, a lecture hall, or a meeting place of a coterie; nor has it since been anything of the sort. It aspired simply to be a good companion to lovers of literature; it came to share, not to instruct. *JOLW*, XLVII.91, 5 June 1942.

they are called to the immense and perilous task of re-moulding our normal life.<sup>7</sup>

While this comment offers a sense of general support for a more democratic post-war society, elsewhere in *JOLW* Whitten and his staff offered more specific encouragement for its readers' post-war literary ambitions.

This form of encouragement can be identified in the first edition of the paper in a literary essay that appeared under what would become a weekly column entitled 'After Hours: Study and Recreation'. Although this series title suggests that the proposed material might take the form of a pompous lecture, Whitten's avuncular style immediately dispelled this misapprehension. The 'Book Shyness' article is instead intended as a timely letter of advice to those members of the new reading public who had developed 'a false awe of books'. Whitten, far from adopting a pedagogic attitude towards these individuals, argues instead that the putative concerns of the autodidact (such as the Leonard Bast-like 'ought I to read Ruskin?') were wholly misplaced. Under the sub-heading 'The Remedy', Whitten wrote:

I believe myself that a taste for good reading can be acquired by infection, that is by reading good criticism - by which term I do not mean, in this case, the criticism which seeks to correct and classify literary works, but the kind which seeks to communicate the writer's enjoyment of them. When you see a man smacking his lips over a good dish, or raising his glass of wine to revel in its colour, or to inhale its bouquet, you are apt to enjoy his enjoyment, and even by sympathy share it.<sup>8</sup>

Whitten concludes by offering a list of book 'epicures' together with information on cheap editions of their work: these include Charles Lamb, William Hazlitt, John Ruskin, Augustine Birrell, James Russell Lowell, and Frederick Harrison. It appears significant that Carlyle does not feature here, or anywhere else in the

<sup>7</sup> *JOLW*, I.17, 12 April 1919. A further illustration of this rationale is offered in an essay Whitten wrote under the title 'What Self-Reliance Will do for You': 'It is the day of opportunities. The gates of the new world have been thrown wide open to the young and ambitious. Our old-time class prejudice, hallowed privileges, and conceits of every kind have been swept away in the great upheaval. We have entered a new epoch' *JOLW*, 1.264, 7 June 1919. His concern here and elsewhere in *JOLW* was to capitalise on the post-war spirit of change that was evident in Britain in 1919, and to avoid a return to the class-bound society that had dictated the production of print culture during his youth.

<sup>8</sup> *JOLW*, I.21, 21 April 1919.



wide-ranging first edition of the paper. One of the reasons why Carlyle's presence is not felt here is probably because the essay writing style employed by Whitten during his years on *JOLW* was modelled upon the writers listed in the above quotation and more particularly upon the work of Charles-Augustin Sainte-Beuve: 'to read [him] ... a man who was utterly at home with books ... is to be cured of book-shyness'.<sup>9</sup> Whitten's inflection of Sainte-Beuve's causerie style in order to address an audience drawn from amongst the new reading public was to become a distinctive element of inter-war writing: others who helped to popularise this style of writing included E.V. Lucas, Robert Lynd, J.C. Squire and J.B. Priestley. The accessibility and inclusivity of this literary form, embedded here in the style and subject matter of Whitten's 'Book Shyness' article, economically conveys the paper's wider rationale.

We can immediately recognise that Carlyle's more marked style might be considered incompatible with the sort of literary method adopted as the house-style of *JOLW*. Indeed, we might consider that Carlyle's stylistic approach to writing was the antithesis of the sort of even-tempered, good natured, and informal manner of writing that was promoted here. But although Carlyle's style was arguably out of step with that presented as a model for the readers of *JOLW*, to what extent were the ideas that informed his writing also unfashionable at this time? When I began investigating Carlyle's place in *JOLW* I had a strong sense that I knew in advance the answer to this question. I was aware of the popular association after the Great War of Carlyle with abhorred 'Prussian militarism', and I was equally aware of the effect that this association must have had on Carlyle's posthumous reputation. This general post-war position in relation to Carlyle was concretised in Norwood Young's 1927 study, *Carlyle: His Rise and Fall* and its general tenor can be recognised in the following lines from Young's text:

There would have been no eagerness for war in Germany but for the military prestige of Prussia; which was based principally on the Frederick legend which Carlyle helped to disseminate ... It was the fable of Frederick, surrounded by enemies, beating off their huge forces, defying

<sup>9</sup> *JOLW*, I.21, 12 April 1919.

the world that gave Prussianized Germany the conviction that its army was unconquerable, that victory was certain.<sup>10</sup>

Although Young's attempt to blame the whole war on Carlyle's Frederick volumes now appears, to say the least, extreme, other twentieth century critics shared the general thrust of this familiar argument: among these writers were H.J.C. Grierson, Pieter Geyl, J Salwyn Schapiro.

My general point here is one so familiar as to almost need no repeating: in 1919 when *JOLW* emerged, Carlyle was not only an unfashionable Victorian sage, he was also caught out on the wrong side during the foregoing cataclysmic war. Given this context, it seemed unlikely that the new reading public in the post-war era would be well disposed to his ideas. So taking into account my own preconceptions, I was intrigued to see what sort of image of Carlyle and his work actually emerged in *JOLW*. I think that what I found here both confirmed my predictions and, in interesting ways, confounded them. This is evident, for example, in an article which appeared in November 1919. Under the heading, 'The Complete Liar, Carlyle's Most Unpleasant Hero', Sidney Dark profiled Frederick the Great as follows:

Despite the friendship of Voltaire and the swollen eulogies of Carlyle, few kings to whom the epithet 'great' is attached in history-books deserve it less than Frederick the First, King of Prussia.<sup>11</sup>

This article (inspired by a recently published biography by Norwood Young) offers a distinctive flavour of the mood of its time:

In treachery and falsehood it would be hard to find his equal save perhaps in the other Hohenzollern of whom Prussia is so proud, the Great Elector; in hypocrisy Frederick outdid his ancestor. Beside his falsehoods, treacheries, and hypocrisies, which were notorious, he was accused also of barbarism and cruelty.<sup>12</sup>

Then, immediately following this extract, under a section of *JOLW* text subtitled 'Carlyle's Praise', we read: 'And accused too, be it added on ample grounds!

<sup>10</sup> Norwood Young, *The Life of Frederick the Great*, Holt, 1919, p. 331.

<sup>11</sup> *JOLW*, II. 168, 22 November 1919.

<sup>12</sup> Young, *Op Cit*, p. 348.

And this is the man whom Carlyle acclaimed a hero!<sup>13</sup> Dark's article, therefore, with its comprehensive assault on Frederick provides a window through which *JOLW* readers were encouraged to see Carlyle as a fatally misguided individual. If Carlyle can be so misguided here, the article seems to imply, can we really trust his ideas elsewhere?

But one of the most revealing things about Carlyle's work and ideas in *JOLW* are just how infrequently they actually appear. Whereas one would imagine that Carlyle, amongst the most influential writers and thinkers of the nineteenth century, would be regularly referenced in a popular cultural paper like *JOLW*, his philosophical ideas are only seldomly invoked here. Carlyle, for example, fails to feature in a 1921 series entitled, 'The Great Philosophers', even though other Victorian thinkers such as Ruskin are included and this absence appears eloquent. Where references to Carlyle do appear more regularly in *JOLW* they appear in articles which list the sorts of significant books that autodidact readers might want to own. He appears, for example, in a series entitled 'Books that form mind and character'. In this series, notable figures of the day discussed texts that had influenced them. But the ways in which these cultural celebrities refer to Carlyle's work is enlightening. Sir Robertson Nicholl picks *Sartor*, which he notes is 'very difficult', and he adds 'some of Carlyle's early essays should also be read.': the implication here is that readers should steer clear of the later politically 'unsound' Carlyle. In a similar vein, the Rt. Hon J.M. Robertson refers to 'some famous didactic books – for instance, Carlyle's *Heroes*', which he argues becomes 'visibly vitiated by the unsound elements in them.' There is also a sense of the putative obsolescence of Carlyle's thoughts in another article which appeared in 1921 entitled 'Books that have helped me by a working miner'. Here, the miner looking back over his reading career remembers *Heroes* and *Past and Present*, but whereas these books were 'big favourites' of his youth, he implicitly suggests their lack of relevance in the modern age.

These examples all tend to suggest that Carlyle by the early 1920s was, at best, simply unfashionable, and at worst, actually responsible for the war. But *JOLW*

<sup>13</sup> *JOLW, Op Cit*, 22 November 1919.

does manage to introduce another aspect of Carlyle's character into its pages. We note this other and, more benign Carlyle, in an article which re-examines the famous incident of the burning of the French Revolution manuscript. Under the heading, 'Episodes in Literary History, Thomas Carlyle and his burnt ms.', an article published in 1921 presents Carlyle as a stoic figure who triumphed over great adversity. A flavour of the style of this article can be gauged from the lines in which Mill reveals his sin to Carlyle: 'The blow was crushing, heart-breaking; but Carlyle 'didn't show it'. Carlyle's return to his task to rewrite the missing manuscript is figured as the epitome of British stoicism and industry. And the nature of his task here would have special resonance for those *JOLW* reader who were themselves writing manuscripts under difficult circumstances.

Aside from his role in this sort of instructive literary storytelling, Carlyle also features in *JOLW* articles about writing and literary style. It is clear that there was a great demand for tips about writing and style during this period as more and more people were trying their hand at writing for profit. The pages of *JOLW* are full, not only of articles offering advice to would-be writers, but also advertisements for correspondence colleges, bureaus of advice, and writers' circles. As you would imagine, Carlyle's distinctive style provides a somewhat problematic model for prospective writers to follow. With this issue in mind, Michael Joseph's *Short Story Writing for Profit* (1923), sensibly suggests that 'The young writer who slavishly models his style on such an accomplished stylist as Carlyle... is going to make no headway with magazine editors.'<sup>14</sup> Even if this was true at this time, however, Carlyle's name still appears at this time a byword for distinctive and energetic style. In *Twelve Masters of English Prose* (1927), (one of *JOLW*'s 'Little Books' series), Sidney Dark introduces Carlyle to a generation who have been conditioned to treat his work with suspicion. The old prejudices are clearly recognised in Dark's introduction, Carlyle we read 'was the high priest of the cult of the great man' who 'worshipped the scoundrelly Frederick the Great'. We are also informed that Carlyle 'had a dislike of the little people who can only do little things'. And we can imagine that this apparent dislike

<sup>14</sup> Michael Joseph, *Short Story Writing for Profit*, Hutchinson, 1923, p 139.

of ‘little people’ would not go down well with the readers of *JOLW* who might consider themselves to epitomise the ‘little man’ of conventional report. But aside from these problematic issues, readers were directed to admire Carlyle’s style independently of the problematic ideas that it couched. This style, we are informed, is ‘intensely graphic’, his pen provides ‘thrilling and moving music’ and, in an evocative post-war image, Dark suggests that:

[Carlyle’s] sentences ... [follow] one another like bullets from a machine gun producing an immense dramatic effect. In nothing, perhaps, is Carlyle’s genius more apparent than in his creation of wonderful descriptive phrases.

So we can recognise here that Carlyle’s genius as a writer of prose was still recognised even at a time in which his reputation had slumped. He may have been caught out on the wrong side during the war, and his style may not have provided a model for students (‘Any attempt by lesser men to write Carlylese would be intolerably ridiculous’), but his stylistic ‘genius’ apparently remains undiminished.

Another way in which the Carlyle flame was kept alight in *JOLW* during this difficult post-war period was via Jane Welsh Carlyle. When the *Cornhill Magazine* published selections from her letters in January/February 1924, *JOLW* was quick to recognise the potential attractions of Jane’s ‘lively letters’ for its readers. Noting that ‘the fame of JWC has been somewhat eclipsed by that of her husband’, T. Michael Pope argued that JWC has ‘rightly been described as one of the best letter-writers in the history of English literature’. While claiming that Jane’s letters ‘sparkle with her wit and satire’, the article goes on to suggest that ‘Posterity has hitherto failed to accord this extraordinary woman with the recognition to which she is undoubtedly entitled.’

And the interest piqued by these extracts, the article prudently suggests, will be further stimulated by the forthcoming volume of letters: which would emerge as *Jane Welsh Carlyle: letters to her family, 1839-1863*, edited by Leonard Huxley and published by John Murray in 1924. The publication of this volume proved to be a significant event in the raising of Jane’s profile, and the publication in *JOLW* of two articles on the letters played their part in piquing interest in the female half

<sup>15</sup> Sidney Dark, ed., *Twelve Masters of English Prose*, John O’London’s Little Books, No. 10, George Newnes, [1927], p. 19.

of the Carlyle partnership. Jane's vivid and witty letters, untainted by accusations of Teutonic propaganda, were evidently much better suited to the tastes of the post-war public than were her husband's works.

But the promotion at this time of Jane as an important literary figure in her own right did not mean that the unfashionable Thomas's reputation was entirely eclipsed by that of his wife. In an article entitled 'Carlyle and the Modern World: The English Prophet who Loved Prussian Discipline', *JOLW* readers were offered a long view of his legacy. 'No Englishman', the article claims, 'not Ruskin or John Stuart Mill – affected the mind of the C19 so profoundly'. This sense of gravity is encoded in the use of Carlyle's image in the paper, and it is worthwhile here to examine a couple of examples of how this image is used in the paper. Firstly, the decision to use the Whistler portrait opposite the title page of *Twelve Masters of English Prose* seems highly significant. The image was chosen, we assume, because it was felt that it would be immediately recognisable to autodidact readers, even to those who had not already read Carlyle's work. This illustration evidently provides an unambiguous image: it conveys exactly what a 'master of prose' should look like. What is perhaps most significant here is that the use of the image at this time and place suggests that Carlyle's physical image was not necessarily freighted with the Teutonic baggage of his ideas. Divorced from his text, Carlyle's image seems to provide an archetype of industry, gravity and perhaps also hope for ambitious individuals from humble backgrounds. This might appear to be reading too much into the appearance of the Carlyle image in a primer such as this but another appearance in a different context in *JOLW* seems to back up my argument. On this occasion the image is used as part of an advertisement for one of the numerous Colleges that catered for the home learning market. The Metropolitan College, based in St Albans, promises that its 132 page 'Guide to Careers' will provide readers with 'an invaluable aid to shaping your ambitions and a clear pointer to their full realisation'. This volume, which is claimed as 'a very passport' to success', was probably not the sort of text that Carlyle had in mind when he himself claimed (as the advertisement declares) that 'Books still accomplish miracles' but this detail does not stop the college from co-opting Carlyle into their marketing campaign, drawing him in the process into the cash nexus. Once again, this affirmative image appears curiously divorced

from the negative ideological baggage which, as we have seen, was indissoluble from his written works at this time. Carlyle's image is instead employed here to epitomise industry, hard work, and triumph over adversity.

To conclude, it appears that the Carlyle who emerges from the pages of *JOLW* at this time is a complex mixture of seemingly antagonistic qualities. He is on the one hand a misguided genius (a sort of mad professor) who encouraged the previous generation to follow him in his belief in 'scoundrally' Prussianized gospels. On the other hand, however, his presence is iconic and possesses a potency that allows Carlyle the man to still command a deep level of respect. The ways in which the two opposing elements of Carlyle's reputation apparently co-exist in a paper such as *JOLW* provide us with a fascinating comment on his posthumous legacy at this time. This becomes all the more fascinating when we consider the level of influence that a mass circulation paper like *JOLW* exerted over its readers. There can be little doubt that *JOLW* helped to form the opinion of the 'new reading public' in the inter-war era and in the process it arguably played a major role in establishing Carlyle's posthumous legacy in the early twentieth century.





## **‘Gang warily’: Thomas Carlyle and Henry Drummond**

Maurice Milne

In June 1829, Carlyle was visited, at Craigenputtock, by Edward Irving, the dearest friend of his youth. He recalled the visit in his *Reminiscences*:

He was again on some kind of Church business, but it seemed to be of cheerfuller and wider scope than that of Scriptural Prophecy...It was beautiful summer weather; pleasant to saunter in, with old friends, in the safe green solitudes, no sound audible but that of our own voices and of the birds and woods. He talked to me of Henry Drummond, as of a fine, a great, evangelical, yet courtly and indeed universal gentleman, whom Prophetic Studies had brought to him; - whom I was to *know* on my next coming to London, more joy to me! We had been discoursing of Religion, with mildly-worded but entire frankness on my part as usual; and something I said had struck Irving as unexpectedly orthodox; who thereupon ejaculated, ‘Well, I am right glad to hear that; - and will not forget it, where it may do you good with one whom I know of,’ - with Henry Drummond - which had led him into that topic, perhaps not quite for the first time. (*Rems*, 290)

We cannot know whether Carlyle’s lapse into orthodoxy led him to quote from Matthew 16, verse 3, but it would have been appropriate: ‘Can ye not *discern* the signs of the times?’ Carlyle’s great essay on that theme had been accepted for the *Edinburgh Review* for June, although the number was not actually printed until August (*CL*:5, TC to John A. C., 11 Aug. 1829). What is less well-known is that both Irving and Drummond also published discourses entitled ‘Signs of the Times’ before the end of that same year. The first part of Irving’s article appeared in the *Morning Watch* for December 1829, concluding in the next number, March 1830. Henry Drummond used the same title for the final dialogue in his three-volume *Dialogues on Prophecy*, published at the end of 1829.

Carlyle and Irving need no introduction here, but a brief outline of Drummond’s background might be helpful, before returning to the themes of the three essays. The story can then be developed of how Irving brought Carlyle and Drummond together, and what became of their acquaintanceship during the years after Irving’s sad and premature demise.

Henry Drummond belonged to a wealthy banking and landed family. Drummond's Bank, in Charing Cross, had been founded by his grandfather's uncle, Andrew Drummond, in 1717. Andrew was rumoured to be banker to the Jacobites, but was careful to avoid any treasonable associations, attracting clients from the great and the good of Hanoverian England. Andrew's brother, however, Henry Drummond's great-grandfather, Viscount Strathallan, was an active Jacobite, who perished at Culloden.

The Drummonds were of ancient lineage, with roots in Stirlingshire and Perthshire. At the battle of Bannockburn, Malcolm Drummond is reputed to have scattered caltraps on the battlefield in front of the English heavy cavalry. These then became heraldic devices, along with the family motto: GANG WARILY. Another Drummond emblem was the golden eagle, used by Andrew Drummond as his sign at the bank. Shortly after his death, a 'Constitution' was drawn up, amplified by a Deed of Partnership in 1780. This established that one-third of the profits of the bank should go to each of Andrew's son John, and his nephews, Robert and Henry, and thereafter to their eldest sons. (Bolitho and Peel, 54). The first Henry Drummond's son, also Henry, married Anne, daughter of Henry Dundas, Viscount Melville, the most powerful figure in Scotland at the time of the Younger Pitt. Their eldest son, Henry, was born on 5 December 1786 at his father's country seat, The Grange, near Alresford in Hampshire. (Those with an eye for coincidences might note that Thomas Carlyle's birthday fell on the day before Henry Drummond's, and that Carlyle visited The Grange when it became the property of the Ashburtons.)

Henry Drummond was thus born to wealth, privilege and high connexion. Even the premature death of his father, before Henry's eighth birthday, brought a kind of compensation. His mother, after remarrying, and about to depart for India with her new husband in 1802, left Henry's upbringing to be completed by her father, Viscount Melville. Henry was thus present at conversations between his grandfather and the Younger Pitt, respectively the most powerful politicians in Scotland and England, and with Pitt reportedly taking a liking to the young man. If there was a suggestion of high demeanour about Henry Drummond in later years, one need not look far to find an explanation.

After Harrow and Oxford, which he left without taking a degree, Drummond entered parliament in 1810, aged only 23, as member for Plympton Erle. One good thing came of this first brief spell in the House of Commons. In 1813 he carried an Act designed to prevent greedy and irresponsible bankers from embezzling securities deposited with them. Then he resigned his seat on grounds of ill-health; and, in 1817, sold The Grange, declaring himself ‘satiated with the frivolities of the fashionable world.’ An intended pilgrimage to the Holy Land, with his wife, was diverted instead to Geneva, where he took up Robert Haldane’s struggle against the Socinian tendencies of the Council of State. Here we have a foretaste of the theological engagement that was increasingly to dominate Drummond’s life. Returning to England, he bought the estate of Albury Park in Surrey, soon gaining the reputation of being an authoritarian but benevolent landlord. A favourable account of his stewardship at this time came from an unlikely source, the radical campaigner, William Cobbett, who passed through Albury on one of his ‘Rural Rides,’ on 30 November 1822. Curious to see the park and its celebrated gardens, Cobbett tried the ruse of going in from one direction, and then asking Drummond’s permission to leave by the other side. Drummond good-naturedly agreed, prompting Cobbett to reflect:

I know there are some ill-natured persons who will say that I want a revolution that would turn Mr Drummond out of this place and put me into it. Such persons will hardly believe me, but upon my word I do not. From everything that I hear, Mr Drummond is very worthy of possessing it himself, seeing that he is famed for his justice and his kindness *towards the labouring classes*, who, God knows, have very few friends amongst the rich...If this be true, and I am credibly informed that it is, I know of no man in England so worthy of his estate...I had indeed heard of this at Alresford in Hampshire; and, to say the truth, it was this circumstance ...which induced me to ask the favour of Mr Drummond to go through his park. But, besides that Mr Drummond is very worthy of his estate, what chance should I have of getting it if it came to a *scramble*? There are others who like pretty gardens, as well as I; and if the question were to be decided according to the law of the strongest...my chance would be but a very poor one.

Cobbett and Drummond shared a healthy disrespect for political economists. Yet, and it is one of the many paradoxes associated with Drummond, he founded a Chair of Political Economy at the University of Oxford, in 1825, which continues to this day. The first incumbent, Nassau W. Senior, espoused a brand of mechanistic, market-driven economics that cannot have appealed to Drummond

personally. (Hilton, 45). Even so, a friendly note from Senior survives in the Drummond archive, inviting his patron along to a dinner of the Political Economy Club at the Freemasons' Tavern. Numerous acquaintances of Drummond over the years bear testimony to his capacity for not letting differences of opinion obstruct personal sociability.

Boyd Hilton dates the decision to endow the Chair to 'before February 1825 at the latest,' (Hilton, 42), after which Drummond became shocked by an outbreak of frenzied speculation in Latin American mining shares. This caused him, in his own words, 'to direct attention to the events connected with the close of the Christian dispensation.' It was at precisely the same time that Drummond became acquainted with Edward Irving. Drummond was a patron of the Continental Society, dedicated to the work of Protestant evangelising in Catholic Europe. Irving was invited to preach in 1825, when at the height of his fame in his London ministry. Both men were increasingly drawn to interpret troubling tendencies of their own day, in the aftermath of the French Revolution, through prophetic books of the Bible. Initially, Irving was not entirely convinced of Drummond's seriousness. On 21 November 1825, he wrote to his wife:

Henry Drummond was in the chair; he is in all chairs –I fear for him. His words are more witty than spiritual; his manner is *spirituel*, not grave... (Oliphant, *Irving*, 176)

By the following summer, however, Irving was sufficiently reassured to join with Drummond in planning the first of a series of annual conferences, to be held in Albury Park, involving clergy (Anglican and Presbyterian) and sympathetic laymen like Drummond himself. Indeed, Mrs Oliphant claims in her biography of Irving that from this time Drummond's influence over her hero's career tended to increase. They were also brought together through a quarterly journal, the *Morning Watch*, founded in 1829 with Drummond's financial backing. Their articles, along with Irving's sermons, published and unpublished, and Drummond's pamphlets, were all part of a premillennial propaganda campaign, culminating in Drummond's three-volume *Dialogues on Prophecy*, recording the first four Albury Conferences. These were not mere reportage. Drummond, assisted by Irving, re-worked the discussions into the classical dialogue format, conflating various points made and giving the speakers names such as 'Theophilus', 'Crito', and 'Philaethes', who served as the 'everyman'

questioner. Some keys to the names have survived, filed with the volumes of the *Dialogues* held in the rare books department of the British Library (BL 764.h.24). Unsurprisingly, the two most voluble conferees, ‘Anastasius’ and ‘Aristo’, turn out to be Drummond and Irving, respectively.

We have now returned to the point at which this paper began – the threefold publication of ‘Signs of the Times’ – and can now move forward, beginning with a discussion of what ‘signs’ Carlyle, Irving and Drummond discerned. To cite only the similarities would distort the essential difference between Carlyle and the other two. They were displaying the working-out of biblical prophecy in the ‘later days,’ whereas Carlyle began by distancing himself from the current propensity for prophesying.

It is no very good symptom either of nations or individuals, that they deal much in vaticination. Happy men are full of the present, for its bounty suffices them; and wise men also, for its duties engage them. Our grand business undoubtedly is, not to *see* what lies dimly at a distance, but to *do* what lies clearly at hand.

Carlyle noted that the recent enactment of Roman Catholic Emancipation, the most divisive political question of the decade, had animated the prophets of doom:

Accordingly the Millenarians have come forth on the right hand, and the Millites on the left. The Fifth-monarchy men prophesy from the Bible, and the Utilitarians from Bentham. The one announces that the last of the seals is to be opened, positively, in the year 1860; and the other assures us that ‘the greatest happiness principle’ is to make a heaven of earth, in a still shorter time.

Even so, Carlyle was ready to offer his own thoughtful assessment of the ‘distinctive characters and deeper tendencies’ of his own time. Two oft-quoted passages must suffice to encompass his general theme:

We were required to characterise this age of ours by any single epithet, we should be tempted to call it, not an Heroical, Devotional, Philosophical, or Moral Age, but, above all others, the Mechanical Age.

Men are grown mechanical in head and in heart, as well as in hand. They have lost faith in individual endeavour, and in natural force of any kind. Not for internal perfection, but for external combinations and arrangements, for institutions, constitutions, -- for Mechanism of one sort or other, do they hope and struggle.

Carlyle gave examples of mechanism in education, with the Lancastrian system, and in religious conversion, with the Bible Society, preoccupied as it was with fund-raising and tract-distribution: ‘a machine for converting the Heathen.’ This brought him onto common ground with Irving, who branded this wing of the

Evangelicals ‘Pharisees,’ reliant upon ‘inventions...such as the multiplication of tracts.’ (*M. Watch*, 650). Irving lamented how the office-bearers of charitable and religious societies now took salaries for their trouble, and how they manipulated the times of their services to suit attendance by the better-off. (*M. Watch*, 648,656). Similar points are made in the *Dialogues* by ‘Anastasius,’ who is usually identified with Drummond himself, but sounds here more like Irving.

Drummond’s voice comes over more identifiably in a survey, by ‘Anastasius,’ of the discussions in the leading reviews, the *Edinburgh*, the *Quarterly*, and the *Westminster*, all preoccupied with the ominous state of the times. He quotes, approvingly, an observation in the *Westminster Review* that, ‘It is not the poor but the rich that have a propensity to take the property of other people.’ Compare this with Carlyle’s perception of ‘how wealth has more and more increased, and at the same time gathered itself more and more into masses...increasing the distance between the rich and the poor.’ Again, here is Irving, lamenting how the manufacturing population is ‘every now and then brought into actual starvation: while the wealth of the superior order hath increased and is increasing...’(665)

As to where all this was tending, Irving looked for guidance in Ezekiel, Isaiah, Joel, and Revelations. Drummond recommended prayer, seven times a day. Carlyle, altogether more pragmatic, urged self-reformation; but his final paragraph, which gives this advice, contains words to which both Irving and Drummond would have said a loud ‘Amen!’

On the whole, as this wondrous planet, Earth, is journeying with its fellows through infinite Space, so are the wondrous destinies embarked on it journeying through infinite Time, under a higher guidance than ours.

Carlyle first met Drummond on 18 August 1831. Having finished *Sartor Resartus*, he had gone down to London to seek a publisher. Edward Irving was there to welcome him, but in the interval since their summer’s day walk at Craigenputtock in 1829, ominous changes had occurred in Irving’s conduct of his ministry. The same changes had come upon several of the other attenders at Albury, including Drummond himself. We are about to enter the world of ‘speaking with Tongues.’

The fifth and final Albury Conference (held after the publication of the *Dialogues*) was convened in July 1830, ahead of the customary scheduling for late November.

News had come of remarkable spiritual manifestations on the banks of the Clyde: miraculous healings and ecstatic utterances. Did these ‘gifts of the spirit’ presage the Second Coming of Christ? News of another French revolution in that same month heightened expectations that the ‘last days’ were coming. It was resolved that the reports from the west of Scotland should be investigated. An Anglican delegation travelled up from London, including a lawyer, John Bate Cardale, who was later to play a seminal part in the formation of the Catholic Apostolic Church. A parallel Presbyterian reconnaissance was undertaken by an associate of Edward Irving: the Rev. Alexander Scott, minister of the Scots church in Woolwich. Both groups of enquirers were profoundly moved by what they saw. Mary Campbell, the centre of much of the attention, had been miraculously cured when at death’s door, and had been moved to testify in tongues and to pour forth automatic writing. She married William R. Caird and moved to England, eventually settling in Albury, where Caird became tutor to Drummond’s children.

At prayer meetings in Albury, and in London, speaking in tongues broke out in 1831. Irving did not personally indulge, and did his best to keep these manifestations out of his regular church services, but he did see them as gifts of the Holy Spirit, and allowed them in house meetings or in the vestry of his church. In time, however, his reservations were overcome, and his services became notorious for the ecstatic utterances of the congregation. It was while things were mainly at the prayer meeting stage that Carlyle met up with Irving on 18 August, before accompanying him in the evening as fellow dinner guests at Henry Drummond’s town house in Belgrave Square. The wonderful account that Carlyle wrote for Jane on 22 August can only make us rejoice that she had not yet travelled south to join him, and so had to be told in a letter.

Friday I spent with Irving in the *animali-parlanti* region of the Supernatural. Understand, ladykin, that the “gift of tongues” is here also (chiefly among the women), and a positive belief that God is still working miracles in the Church – by hysterics. . . Irving hauled me off to Lincoln’s Inn Fields to hear my Double (Mr Scott); where I sat directly behind a Speaker with Tongues, who unhappily however did not perform till after I was gone. My Double is more like “Maitland” the Cotton-eared, I hope, than me; a thin black-complexioned, vehement man: earnest, clear, and narrow as a tailor’s listing. For a stricken hour did he sit expounding in the most superannuated dialect (of *Chroist* and so forth) yet with great heartiness the meaning of that one word *Entsagen*. The good Irving looked at me wistfully, for he knows I cannot take miracles in; yet he looks so piteously as if he implored me to believe. O dear O dear! was the Devil ever busier than now; when the Supernatural must either depart from the world, or

reappear there like a chapter of Hamilton's "diseases of Females"...

At night I fondly trusted we had done with the Miraculous: but no, Henry Drummond too is a believer in it. Taller and leaner than I, but erect as a plummet, with a high-carried quick penetrating head; some five-and-forty years of age: a singular mixture of all things; of the Saint, the Wit, the Philosopher, swimming if I mistake not in an element of Dandyism. His dinner was Dandiical in the extreme; a meagre series of pretentious kickshaws, on which no hungry jaw could satisfactorily bite, flunkies on all hands, yet I had to ask four times before I could get a morsel of bread to my cheese. His Wife has had "twenty miscarriages" and looks pitiful enough. Besides her we were five: Spencer Perceval Member of the House (of Stupids, called of Commons); Tudor a Welshman Editor of the Morning Watch; our Host, Irving and I. They were all prophetic, Toryish, ultra-religious. I emitted, notwithstanding, floods of Teufeldsreckish Radicalism, which seemed to fill them with *wonder* and amazement, but were not ill received, and indeed refused to be gainsayed. We parted with friendliest indifference, and shall all be happy to meet again, and to part again. The Drummond who is a great Pamphleteer has "quoted" me often, it seems &c &c. He is also a most munificent and beneficent man – as his friends say, Peace and Happiness be with him! (*CLO*, 22 Aug. 1831)

After Jane came south, she and Thomas heard the 'Tongues' on a visit to Irving's house, as recalled by Carlyle in the *Reminiscences*. Irving's wife had withdrawn to an adjacent room with some of the devotees, while he stayed to talk with the Carlyles. Then,

there burst forth a shrieky hysterical 'Lall-lall-lall' (little or nothing else but *l's* and *a's* continued for several minutes); to which Irving, with singular calmness, said only, 'There, hear you; there are the Tongues!' and we two, except by our looks which probably were eloquent, answered him nothing; but soon came away full of distress, provocation and a kind of shame. (*Rems*, 301) Jane was later to observe: 'There would have been no tongues had Irving married me.' (Hanson, 165)

To tell the story of Irving's tragic decline and premature death would take us too far from the present theme, which must now be confined to Carlyle and Drummond. The salient events have been covered to this point because one of the keys, perhaps *the* key, to explaining why Carlyle generally kept a cautious, but respectful, distance from Drummond was that he put some of the blame on Drummond himself. Yet it should be reasonably clear from the foregoing that neither Drummond nor Irving led the other into the spiritual realms they now entered. It was a mutual process, brought on by a shared enthusiasm, whether that word be construed in a psychological or a spiritual sense. The difference



was that the harder-headed Drummond could somehow combine this with the secular concerns that brought him onto common ground with Carlyle. As for Irving's expulsion from the Presbyterian ministry, in March 1833, at the Annan kirk where he had once been ordained, the charge was technically heresy, namely Irving's 'unsound' views on the humanity of Christ's body, which he had long held. In reality, of course, he might have been left to hold these views, had he not embarrassed the Church of Scotland by the extravagant scenes in the main London church, from which he had to be locked out.

Carlyle gives a touching account in the *Reminiscences* of Irving's last visit to him and Jane, in Chelsea, in October 1834, before he set out on his final journey to Glasgow. They could see the sad decline in their old friend, but what to do?

Much consulting about him we had already had: a *Letter* to Henry Drummond (about *delivering* him from the fools and fanatics that were agitating him to *death*, as I clearly saw) lay on the mantelpiece here for some days, in *doubt*, and was then burnt. Brother, Father, rational Friend, I could not think of, except Henry; and him I had seen only once, not without a clear view of his un-soundness too. (*Rems*, 79)

During the remainder of the decade, Carlyle and Drummond went their separate ways. Carlyle devoted himself to writing *The French Revolution*, which was at last to bring him real fame. Drummond was instrumental in founding what became known as the Catholic Apostolic Church. Such was Irving's charisma, that the church was commonly called 'Irvingite.' A careful attention to chronology should suffice to produce a more accurate picture. On 7 November 1832, at a prayer meeting in Irving's house, Drummond asked J.B.Cardale to be an 'Apostle.' The scene then shifts to Albury, at Christmas, when Cardale, by virtue of being an apostle, ordained W.R.Caird, the husband of Mary Campbell, as an 'evangelist,' and Henry Drummond as an 'angel' of the Albury congregation. Significantly, Drummond had previously declined ordination by Irving because of doubts about the validity of the Presbyterian dispensation. (Flegg, 59 and 63). When Irving returned from Annan, Cardale ordained him as an 'angel,' in April 1833, but Irving never attained the rank of apostle. In the following September, Drummond was promoted to that rank, as the second apostle. Between 1833 and 1835 a further ten apostles were called, to produce a 'college' of twelve. Seven churches were established in London, and in July 1835 their leaders were

combined in the Council of the Seven Churches (c.f. *Revelation*, I, 4). Also in July, on the fourteenth, there occurred the key event of the ‘separation of the apostles’ (c.f. *Acts*, XIII, 2). That is, the twelve apostles separated themselves from the day-to-day running of particular churches to concentrate on general purposes. These events, which occurred seven months *after* Irving’s death, marked the real beginning of the ‘Catholic Apostolic Church.’ Even this label is not strictly correct. Adherents did not see themselves as a separate church, still less a sect, but as a community of believers within the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, ‘gathered under apostles.’ (Flegg, 196)

The movement spread rapidly. By the end of 1836, some thirty-six affiliated churches had been established throughout the British Isles. (Brown, 263). Generous financial support from Henry Drummond was vital at first, although the introduction of tithing brought a wider financial base. The twelve apostles, operating from their headquarters in Albury, were each assigned separate branches of Christendom, analogous to the twelve spiritual tribes of Israel. Thus Drummond, the spiritual ‘Benjamin,’ took responsibility for Scotland and Protestant Switzerland. Another apostle, Thomas Carlyle (a potentially confusing namesake) was allocated Prussia and north Germany, where he achieved a significant impact, even reaching King Frederick William IV. The spiritual journeys in the late 1830s were not so much to evangelise, as to study and report back to Albury. In 1840, at his own expense, Drummond opened a handsome new church, with adjacent chapter house, across the stream from Albury Park.

During all of this time, Henry Drummond was supposed to be the principal proprietor of Drummond’s bank, drawing a substantial annual income. His co-proprietors became somewhat restive about this, and eventually, following the death of his third and last son, and potential heir, Drummond agreed, in April 1844, to have his name withdrawn from the bank’s letterhead. In return, he was to receive an income of £10,000 per year for the rest of his life, and, at his death, the other two branches of the family were to pay £50,000 into his estate, in return for the cessation of the Albury interest. (Bolitho and Peel, 140)

Given Drummond’s spiritual preoccupations, what caused him to resume contact with Carlyle, and why, up to a point, was Carlyle ready to entertain his overtures?

The key is perhaps to be found in what W.H.Oliver has called Drummond's conception of the 'apostate nation.' (Oliver,108). This had its roots in theology, with Drummond believing that the British nation, chosen by God to be a witness against Popish apostasy, had itself turned apostate, notably by enacting Catholic Emancipation. For Drummond, however, this apostasy had also extended into the secular sphere. The political and social order had been disrupted. Where a reasonable measure of parliamentary reform might have been transacted from within, a misconceived version had been forced through under the threat of pressure from without. The newly-enfranchised ten-pound householders had then used their favoured position to bring forward measures such as the new Poor Law of 1834. This, as Drummond saw it, replaced the traditional, more personal dimensions of necessity and relief with a more impersonal, bureaucratic and unfeeling system. Add to this the wider social gulf between masters and men in the new industrial system, and you had a recipe for social breakdown.

As a premillennialist, Drummond could see this as evidence that the time of tribulation was indeed at hand. Even so, he sought to inquire more deeply into the causes, and to urge what he saw as the biblically-grounded prescription of hierarchy and authority. In his eyes, democracy, liberalism, and *laissez-faire* were not the solution: they were part of the problem. This brought him onto some common ground with Carlyle – the Carlyle, that is, who wrote of the 'condition of England' and the 'cash nexus', the author of *Chartism* and *Past and Present*. A prolific pamphleteer himself, Drummond both read Carlyle and sent him copies of some of his own writings. Between Carlyle's authoritarian, administrative brand of radicalism (Milne, 30), and Drummond's Tory paternalism, a bridge could be built. It rested on the firm conviction that those who enjoyed property, power and privilege must use them to the greater good.

Active contact resumed in the early 1840s. A copy of Drummond's pamphlet on *The Rights of Laymen* (1841) reached the Carlyle residence via Fraser (the publisher of *Fraser's Magazine*). Thomas was away in Annandale, so Jane received it. She was unimpressed, finding it, 'five pence three farthing too dear, I am afraid, at the sixpence I had to pay for it!' (CLO: 24 April 1841). Two, more substantial publications from the indefatigable Drummond in 1842 found more favour with Thomas himself. The first edition of his magnificent *Histories of*

*Noble British Families* (reprinted, with additional parts, in 1846) aroused Carlyle's interest, but there was weightier matter to be found in another work. Drummond edited a two-volume reprinting of a continental compilation *On the Condition of the Agricultural Classes of Great Britain and Ireland*, adding his own preface. This prompted Carlyle, then busy with writing *Past and Present*, to observe to Drummond in January 1843:

I find, what interests me not a little, that you and I, tho' starting as it were precisely from opposite poles arrive at pretty much the same centre; at this namely, That there must be an Aristocracy to govern, and even a *Land* Aristocracy, - tho' whether our present Land Aristocracy are adequate to do that, or only adequate to fail miserably of doing it, and have themselves and much else thrown into the ditch, we should probably dispute. (CLO: 20 January 1843)

Carlyle was responding, in this letter, to an invitation to visit Albury Park. He politely declined, being busy with his book, but assured Drummond that he would be pleased to see him at his own 'garret citadel', any day from 2PM. Carlyle then passed on Drummond's invitation to his mother, with a somewhat acerbic characterisation of the sender:

This Note which I enclose is from an old friend of Edward Irving's, whom I have not heard of for long before: he is very rich and vain, a good devout-hearted man, but full of continual half-mad sallies of one sort or another: he did Irving a great deal of harm; but shall not me, - I am too old now for that kind of thing. (CLO: 20 January 1843)

Carlyle's tone swiftly softened when, within a few days, he was caught up in two Drummond family tragedies. Henry Drummond's cousin was assassinated, in mistake for Sir Robert Peel. Carlyle happened to go to Drummond's Bank, at Charing Cross, to catch an omnibus, just after the fatal bullet had been fired. Then Drummond wrote to tell him that his only surviving son was dying, and wished to see Carlyle. There is no reason to doubt the sincerity of the heartfelt reply. Another invitation to visit Albury came in June, and another polite excuse. This time Carlyle was unwell, and about to recuperate on the coast of Glamorganshire. More trying to his patience was to be confused with Thomas Carlyle the apostle. A letter from a German correspondent, C.K.J. Bunsen, reached him while convalescing in South Wales. Bunsen had become aware of Carlyle's 'double', who had been memorialising the King of Prussia, and wanted to know more about him. Carlyle obliged, in delightfully caustic terms.

There is or lately was a Thomas Carlyle, once an Advocate in Edinburgh, but who quitted that profession for some form of religious Fanaticism ( "Irvingism" is the name of it); who preaches accordingly, as an "Angel" so-called, at Albury in Surrey, under the wing of Henry Drummond the rich Banker, a Patron of that sect, and perhaps an "Archangel" in it. This Thomas Carlyle, besides his Angel-work at Albury, goes now and then to Germany...for the purpose of converting your benighted people to his Doctrine; with what success I cannot conjecture...T. Carlyle the Angel has more than once got me into scrapes of a similar kind. He is, I believe, a zealous, very well-intentioned man: but narrow, headlong, dim...he is an "Angel" at Albury, in short; and I am no Angel anywhere! There is in fact nothing common to us but the Name, and general descent from Adam. Me, I have heard, he considers to be a man of some ability, but "possessed with a *Devil*": I shall very specially request of you to assure all persons high and low who may inquire of you, that we have "no concern with the other house." (CLO: 7 July 1843)

In 1847 Henry Drummond returned to the House of Commons, after a gap of over thirty years. He became member for West Surrey, holding the seat until his death. He no longer had even a nominal responsibility at the family bank. As for the church, he remained active, but the evolution of a distinctive liturgy and ecclesiology was primarily the work of J.B. Cardale. (Flegg, *passim*). Bereft of a son and heir, Drummond had at least the consolation that his elder daughter, Louisa, had made a brilliant marriage. In 1845 she married Lord Lovaine, of the great ducal house of Percy. In due course they were to become Duke and Duchess of Northumberland. After his father-in-law's death, Lovaine brought out two handsome volumes with selections from Drummond's pamphlets and parliamentary speeches: the most accessible resource for his thinking on political, economic, and religious questions.

Drummond persisted with his efforts to lure Carlyle to Albury. Another invitation produced another lamentation, in June 1848.

Certainly I should like well to see Albury, which must be a doubly pleasant place in this bright leafy season: but, alas, there is no such thinskinmed miserable traveller as I am; shattered to pieces by any tumult, or length of locomotion; unable to sleep in foreign beds &c &c; and the thought strikes me that it is chiefly, after all, the living Master of Albury that it *w'd* do me good to see, and to exchange thoughts with, in these sad bodeful times! Which latter benefit, I always think, (even tho' I can eat no dinners) might be attainable some time in London itself. (CLO: 9 June 1848)

Two additional exercises in the fine art of making excuses have now come to light in the Drummond Papers in Alnwick Castle. Both pleaded pressure of work. In the first, responding to an invitation in 1850, Carlyle pictured himself as being ‘whirled about here like a squirrel in his cage, or a thief on his treadwheel.’ (DFP: C/1/84. TC to HD, 2 April 1850). In the second, in 1857, when the invitation was extended to Jane as well, the pressures of meeting copy-deadlines for an early volume of *Frederick the Great* produced another simile from the natural world:

For above 12 months I have been flying for life before a pack of Printers, - like any deer of the forest before hounds; - engaged, night and day, literally not an hour on my own, in such a coil of tragic despicabilities as I never was in before... (DFP: C/1/85. 2 November 1857)

In between these dates Thomas did meet Drummond at dinner with the Ashburtons, in 1851, and Jane enjoyed a conversation with him in 1856, again with the Ashburtons, but this time at The Grange (where Drummond had been born): ‘Henry Drummond I was also glad to meet because I could talk with *him* about Edward Irving.’ (CLO: JWC to Margaret Welsh, 10 January 1856). Intellectual contact also continued, notably regarding Drummond’s pamphlet, *The Fate of Christendom* (1854). Carlyle wrote to Lady Ashburton with his impressions.

I read Drummond since you went: really a most notable piece; very *serious* withal, much more than the *talk* of Henry almost ever is, and abounding in utterances and calculations that are enough to make the ears tingle, - if anybody *heard*, or listened, which the Bookseller tells me nobody does...For the rest, I in *substance* greatly agree with Henry in this Pamphlet; deducting “Christ” &c, I find he has seen into many things in a really true and remarkable way. (CLO: 4 March 1854)

Carlyle’s anti-democratic tendencies were now more marked, in the period after the *Latter-Day Pamphlets*. So a passage in Drummond’s pamphlet that might have won his approval was where the shift from hierarchical government to mob rule was deplored. Drummond blamed both the Whigs and the Tories for caving in to external agitation. His way of putting it, however, was quintessentially his own, and not Carlyle’s.

The lawless mass is that beast from the bottomless pit, whom everyone in Church and State equally worships, save those who are registered in the registry of the kingdom of the Lamb. (Drummond, *Fate*, 60)

Carlyle did conclude his November 1857 letter to Drummond with a promise to visit Albury in the following summer, and he was true to his word. He wrote to John Forster with news of his intentions:

We are (on old promise, and after about 20 refusals) bound for the country from Saturday till Monday: country air is good; but the truth is, I am perfectly ruined by the heat and *etceteras* now summing themselves up;... (CLO: 17 June 1858)

Ironically, as Carlyle recalled in the *Reminiscences*, Drummond had mistaken the day, and was not there when he arrived. Mercifully Jane had decided not to accompany him, 'so that the ugly confusion fell all on me: - and in a few months more, Henry was himself dead; and no Mistake possible again.' (*Rems*, 298). Drummond died on 20 February 1860 and was buried in the mortuary chapel specially designed for him by Pugin, in the old parish church. The *Collected Letters* do not record any reflections from Carlyle at the time, but a passage in the *Reminiscences*, written at the end of 1866, might serve as an obituary, recalling as it does some phrases in the letter he wrote to his mother in 1843:

Poor Henry, he shot fiery arrows about, too; but they told nowhere. I was never tempted to become more intimate with him; though he now and then seemed willing enough. *Ex nihilo nihil fit*. He, without unkindness of intention, did my poor Irving a great deal of ill; me never any, such my better luck. (*Rems*, 298)

On the richly ornate walls of the mortuary chapel, and on the oak screen enclosing it, there appears the Drummond family motto: GANG WARILY. It could stand as an epitaph to Carlyle's relations with Drummond across the thirty years since Edward Irving first brought them together.

## WORKS CITED

### Carlyle

*CL: The Collected Letters of Thomas and Jane Welsh Carlyle*. Senior eds Ian Campbell, Aileen Christianson, and David R. Sorensen. Durham NC: Duke UP: ongoing.

*CLO: The Carlyle Letters Online*. <http://carlyleletters.org> (Consulted during 2009)

*Rems: Reminiscences*. Ed. Ian Campbell and K.J. Fielding . Kennedy and Boyd, 2009

## **Drummond**

DFP: Papers of Henry Drummond of Albury, held in the archives of Alnwick Castle, Northumberland. Quoted here by kind permission of the Duke of Northumberland.

*Dialogues on Prophecy* (3 vols) London: James Nisbet, 1828 (vols I and II), 1829 (III)

*Fate: The Fate of Christendom.* London: Thomas Bosworth, 1854

*Histories of Noble British Families.* London: William Pickering, 1842, repr.1846 (2v)

*On the Condition of the Agricultural Classes of Great Britain and Ireland.* (2 vols) London: John Murray, 1842 (Originally published in Vienna by a French editor.)

*Speeches in Parliament and some miscellaneous pamphlets:* ed. Lord Lovaine: (2 vols) London: Bosworth and Harrison, 1860

## **Other works**

Bolitho, H. and Peel, D. *The Drummonds of Charing Cross.* Allen and Unwin, 1967

Brown, Stewart J. *The National Churches of England, Ireland and Scotland, 1801-1846*  
Oxford University Press, 2001

Flegg, C.G. '*Gathered under Apostles.*' *A Study of the Catholic Apostolic Church.* Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1992

Hanson, L. and E. *Necessary Evil. The Life of Jane Welsh Carlyle.* Constable, 1952

Hilton, B. *The Age of Atonement. The Influence of Evangelicalism on Social and Economic Thought, 1795-1865.* Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1988

Milne, M. 'Chartism's Reception: Carlyle's Politics', Carlyle Society, *Occasional Papers*, 20 (2007) 18-31

Oliphant, M. *The Life of Edward Irving.* Hurst and Blackett, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. revised, 1864

Oliver, W.H. *Prophets and Millennialists.* Auckland U. Press, N Z, and Oxford, 1978





## Jane Carlyle: ‘Mads’ and Mad-Doctors

Malcolm Ingram

*‘A week ago my mad friend walked in (if indeed that epithet be now any distinction so many of my friends having become “mads”).’ (JWC to Helen Welsh, 9 Jan 1845)*

Jane Carlyle’s letter to her cousin summarises, without exaggeration, her experiences during 1844 with several of her friends, detailed in many of her letters. Her accounts of their mental illnesses are acutely observed, but are of common disorders, and are of interest for other reasons. Firstly, for the light they cast on Jane’s personality. She is a difficult person to know, despite the wealth of information available about her, and she is often inconsistent. Her behaviour toward these sick friends in stressful circumstances is revealing. Secondly, these letters provide an unusually detailed picture of mid-Victorian psychiatry, although that term was not in use then, and it is necessary to use the language of the time and write of madness and lunacy, of monomania, and of mad doctors and asylums. During the lifetime of the Carlyles, and especially in the 1840’s, major changes occurred in the treatment of the insane: so-called moral treatment was introduced, as well as much legislation to protect patients’ interests and to provide asylums throughout the country. The individual cases recorded by Jane describe treatment both at home and in one of the new asylums, and illustrate the wider changes that were happening.

### **Richard Plattnauer**

Richard Plattnauer was born Salomon Plattnauer in Breslau, then in Prussia, in 1813. As a student in Berlin he joined the political wing of the student’s society, the Burschenschaft (Schmidt, 2004), and was active in promoting democratic reforms, which could lead to a long prison sentence or permanent exile. In 1833 he took part in an unsuccessful attempt to obtain equal rights for Jews in the universities. Amelie Bölte wrote that he ‘dreamed of freedom and was rewarded with lifelong banishment.’ (Ashburton, 1986) On 17 November, 1838, he was baptized in Sankt Nikolai, Berlin, taking the name of Richard Edward – a Jewish convert. (I.G.I.,2009). He first appears in Jane’s letters in 1841, as a political refugee who had already spent some time in France. He probably met the Carlyles

through Cavaignac, another of their refugee circle at that time. He seems to have had no financial problems, but found work as a private tutor to the children of the aristocracy. Plattnauer impressed both Thomas and Jane, and she saw much of him, shopping with him and Mazzini, taking him to exhibitions, and perhaps helping him to find employment.

Jane became concerned about him when she returned from holiday in August 1844 to find a letter from him which showed him to be in a 'very questionable state of mind,' talking of being regenerated and 'now become from the most wretched the happiest of human beings.' He promised to visit the next day, but did not come and she heard nothing for a week, and had no answer to her letters. Jane wanted to leap into a cab and go to his house, but this would have been unseemly behaviour. Mr. Buller came to the rescue and took her in his carriage. Plattnauer had not been seen at his lodgings there, and had written that he would not return and that his letters were to be forwarded to the Accordium, Ham Common, Surrey. The name instantly suggested to Jane some strange 'vegetable, fraternal, universal-religion' establishment. Soon she had letters from friends of Plattnauer, who had heard that he was insane. She told Thomas that something must be done, but he said that he might be able to go next week if she couldn't find someone else or could not go herself. Jane asked George Craik, the writer and historian, to help, and he immediately set off for Ham Common, and returned late that night with the answers. Plattnauer had indeed gone to the Accordium and had worked there for a few days in the garden before accusing the Pater and his staff of hypocrisy and becoming violent, assaulting the staff and breaking furniture. A Magistrate's warrant was obtained and he was put in the local gaol, and found to be 'raving mad' the next morning. He had no identification and was eventually taken to Wandsworth – a new Pauper Lunatic Asylum - 'as a person belonging to nobody.' Jane was incensed that none of his friends had bothered to search for him or come to his aid and determined that she must take charge of the affair. She went to the Asylum, arranging to be taken by Erasmus Darwin, another family friend, in his carriage, so that she would seem respectable and impress people. She saw the house physician, was told that Plattnauer would soon be well, and felt he was in good hands in the best possible place. Jane was reassured: 'Oh what an unspeakable relief was that visit to the Asylum.'

Ten days later she wrote again to her cousin to tell her that her friend was saved:

‘and the Blessing of Heaven be on the head of that good old Sir Alexander Morison, who has treated him so skillfully and so humanely—in other hands I have not a doubt but that he would have been driven into permanent insanity—for this man is the only *real physician* I have seen since I lost my own Father!’ (JWC to JW, 22 Aug. 1844)

Jane’s judgment was sound. Morison was 65 when Plattnauer and Jane encountered him, earning over £1000 annually in private practice and as inspecting physician to all the private madhouses in Surrey and Bethlem hospital. He was involved with the new asylum at Wandsworth from the planning stage and selected the patients from the older hospitals who would be transferred to the new facility. He was an Edinburgh graduate, and was the first person in Britain to offer lectures on mental disease to medical students. He suggested in 1823 that Edinburgh should create a chair of mental diseases but the idea met with much opposition, and it had to wait for another century. He persevered with lectures in both London and Edinburgh, beginning with an audience of six in 1823 and continued with growing success over the next thirty years (Scull et al, 1996, 1999). His appearance is well captured in the painting in the Scottish National Portrait Gallery by Richard Dadd, a professional artist and Morison’s patient in Bethlem, confined there after murdering his father. Dadd is better known for his detailed fairy pictures.(Allderidge, 1974) The portrait shows Morison at the age of seventy-three, sad after retirement and the death of his wife.( Beveridge, 2004) His family home, Anchorfield in Musselburgh, with Newhaven fishwives, is in the background. There is a certain irony in Morison being portrayed by a patient, as his most famous work was a book on *The Physiognomy of Mental Diseases* (1840), propounding the idea that a diagnosis of mental illness could be made from the patient’s facial appearance (Skultans,1975).

Morison told Jane that Plattnauer would have to remain in hospital until his excitability had settled but that it would not be long. Jane had a sensible letter from the patient, visited the asylum again, and Morison took her to see Plattnauer:

‘..... I followed him into the garden, *trusting in God*,—where my poor friend was sitting on a bench apart from all the other patients .....He was dreadfully pale and in the uncouth dress of the Establishment so that the first look was sad enough—but in a minute we were walking arm in arm thro the garden as if we had met after our long separation under the most natural circumstances in the world. During all the half hour that I staid with him he was perfectly rational and composed—more so I am afraid than myself for I was “too happy for anything.’ (JWC to JW, 22 Aug. 1844)

Jane busied herself mending his ragged clothes; he had been put in chains in the prison and had lacerations to show for it. A week later Sir Alexander appeared at the Carlyles' door to tell them that Plattnauer had appeared before the Committee on the previous day, had been pronounced cured, and awaited some friend to take him out. Would Jane send someone? Jane said she would call for him the next morning and when Sir Alexander asked where he would go she looked at Thomas imploringly, who 'good as he always is on *great* occasions, said directly "Oh he must come *here* for a while till he sees what is to be done next.'" Jane collected him, but because of hindrances had to spend the day at the Asylum - 'and a *happier* day I hardly ever past in life.'<sup>2</sup> The hospital survives, now Springfield University Hospital. It had opened only three years earlier on 15 June, 1841 as the Surrey County Pauper Lunatic Asylum. The first Resident Medical Superintendent was Thomas Quick, who brought in his wife as the hospital's first Matron. Mr. Quick was required to remain in the hospital on a permanent basis, only taking leave with the permission of the Committee. He was responsible for dispensing all medicines, keeping the patients' records up to date and saying prayers twice a day. (Patch, 2010)

Jane took Plattnauer home in a fly, his body still 'lacerated with these infernal chains,' and was pleased that Thomas seemed to take to him 'most lovingly'. But he seemed far from cured:

'I do not consider him by any means *sane*— He is horribly excitable—and has many wild whims in his head ..... And his whole bearing and manner of speech is quite changed—*for the better*— so far as that goes—never did he seem half so clever or noble or highbred—but this very superiority alarms one .....Mrs Buller is worrying herself to death with the fear of his killing me—but no madman will ever hurt a hair of *my* head—I have too much *affinity* with them—' (JWC to Jeannie Welsh, 29 Aug 1844).

Plattnauer's condition worsened: his language was violent at times, especially when there was company. Bain, a talkative Aberdonian and later a professor of psychology, visited in September. Jane wrote afterwards:

'Plattnauer was seized with such a detestation of him that he could not stay in the room for ten minutes together— He told me he had been "strongly tempted to seize a poker and dash his brains out (!) and so put an end to his eternal clack...."—I suggested to him somewhat sternly that it did not become one visitor in a house to dash out the brains of another—a statement which he at once perceived and admitted the justice of.' (JWC to TC, 11 Sept. 1844).

A German physician, Dr Weiss, was consulted and recommended that Plattnauer should go to a Swiss asylum speedily, diagnosing ‘madness and even fury’ to be still in him. He left on the Rotterdam boat on 16<sup>th</sup> September. Thomas had a ‘rag of a note from him – very daft.’ Plattnauer returned to London at the end of the year, sometimes looking ferocious, sometimes simply bewildered and foolish. Jane thought he might require permanent confinement in an asylum. He stayed for some weeks with them, and one of her friends said that she kept that madman to frighten people away, as Lord Byron used to keep a bear.

He travelled on the continent a good deal during 1845, sometimes with short stays in asylums, but became even more disturbed in March of 1846 in London. While dining at the Ashburtons, a gentleman told Jane that a young Prussian called Plattnauer had forced his way into Buckingham Palace, and when laid hold off, had announced that the Queen was about to be confined and had sent for him. He knocked down one of the ushers and was carried away to Marlborough Police Office. Jane looked for news in the papers for days, but made no effort to contact the authorities. She had decided that she had no wish to figure in police reports.

‘— besides the Government takes excellent care of the *insane* destitute however it may leave the *sane* to shift for themselves only they must *seem* to have *no friends*—otherwise the Government washes its hands of them. So that, unless I meant to take the charge of him again myself, I was doing best for his interest in leaving him in the hands into which he had fallen.’ (JWC to JW, 22 4 46).

In this attack of mania Plattnauer developed wild delusions of grandeur, telling someone he met in the street that he had just arrived from Paris to take over from Peel but was returning there the next day to sort out Poland. But after this episode there is no news of him until a year later, when he was visiting the Carlyles at least weekly, and is described by Jane as ‘sane enough for all practical and speculative purposes.’ In 1848 he found work as tutor to three children of Lord George in Ireland, where Carlyle saw him when he visited in 1849. Later that year Plattnauer turned up in London, unwell, having resigned his post. The Carlyles feared that Lord George might not take him back and had discovered that he had been deranged, but Plattnauer returned, and was working there two years later. Surprisingly, when he was to be in daily charge of young children, the Carlyles had not disclosed his past history to Lord George. Between 1851 and 1853, Plattnauer was in London again, far from well; but by 1855 he had a new

post as a tutor to the two sons of the Marquis of Downshire. He visited Jane in 1856: ‘Plattnauer talked pleasantly - so brüderlich.’ He was still with the Marquis in 1857. There are no other references to him in the letters, but the 1881 census shows him, aged sixty-eight, living in Kensington with his sister and her husband, Count von Reichenbach. He died in Fulham in 1895 aged eighty-two.

## Charlotte Sterling

Compared with Plattnauer, Jane’s next ‘Mad’ of 1844 was a close family friend, one of the Sterling family. Edward, the father of two sons, was the main leader writer of *The Times* and a co-proprietor; he was the ‘Thunderer,’ as the *Times* was then nicknamed. John Sterling is remembered today because of Carlyle’s biography. He died of tuberculosis aged 38 in 1844. His older brother, Sir Anthony Sterling (1805-71), had a military career, retiring as a colonel after serving with distinction in the Crimean War and in India during the Mutiny. He wrote an account of his Crimean experiences, still in print. For many years he was on half-pay and led a leisurely life in wealthy circumstances, collecting art and taking up photography (Fielding, 1985). Jane was admired devotedly by both brothers and their father.

Anthony married Charlotte Baird (b. c.1808, d 1863), the daughter of a Major-General, in 1829. She became acutely disturbed in 1844, and Jane first mentions Charlotte’s health at the beginning of October:

‘I have been greatly vexed lately with one after another of my acquaintance *going mad*..... A very intimate Friend has just been here since I began to write, telling me that he has had to lock up his wife in two rooms, she having been running about like a wild cat flinging the poker at people and things. This one however in losing *her wits* has sustained no great loss for they were never anything to speak of.’ (JWC to M.W. 1. 11. 1844)

Jane is coy about names here, but ten days later gives a detailed account:

‘*There is another of my intimate acquaintance gone mad!*—madder than twenty March hares—and as if *I* must needs be mixed up with all the madness that occurs in my sphere—the *idea* of her *Monomania* is, that her husband is *my Lover!*!— The poor creature (Mrs Anthony Sterling) has done nothing—absolutely nothing—these many years but read *novels*—and now I suppose we are witnessing the *consummation* of her futile existence!—’ (JWC to Helen Welsh, 12 Nov. 1844)

She had heard that Mrs Sterling was unwell and had called at their house to ask after her. Both Captain Sterling and the servants looked at her strangely, and Sterling took her into the Library, and told her his wife 'was out of her wits simply and shortly,' that she believed that he had fallen in love with Jane, that Jane was a dreadful person and that he was ruining himself by giving Jane gifts. She accused him of giving her a new dining room carpet and a piano. In fact he had once given her a crockery jug – nothing more. Jane made her apologies and left at once, but someone told Charlotte of the visit, her condition worsened, and Sterling could not leave the room without his wife shrieking that he was off to walk with Mrs. Carlyle, and throwing the poker about. Later she refused to see him and became increasingly violent. A part of the house was boarded off with planks and lined with flock to dull the noise. Three attendants looked after her in this padded cell, where she sometimes became very destructive and had to be placed in a strait-waistcoat.

Jane seemed little troubled:

‘—meanwhile it is slightly annoying to have ones name uttered *in shrieks*, before assembled Drs and servants—and coupled with the most ignominious epithets. Happily I never liked her much, so that I can bear her misfortune *like a christian*—and her madness is of such a very repulsive sort that one cannot feel any *tender* sympathy with it.’ (*idem*)

Jane, in the same letter, mentions that another married Lady of her acquaintance (Bessie Helps) has developed ‘a rabid jealousy of poor little me,’ and is giving her husband a difficult time, but Jane does not think she is mad. Thomas was vastly amused, took to calling Jane ‘Destroyer of the peace of families,’ and teased her by saying: ‘just look at you there, looking as if butter would not melt in your mouth, and think of the profligate life you lead.’ (JWC to HW, 12 11 44) This was at a time when he was soon to be besotted with Lady Baring, the future Lady Ashburton.

Six weeks later, Mrs. Sterling’s condition improved. She was peaceable, and became friendlier to her husband, but her ideas had not changed. During all this, Anthony had continued to visit Jane secretly, coming stealthily, without a carriage or servants, which annoyed her. She wrote that she would rather he told her that he could no longer visit, or told his wife he was going to visit Jane.

Two years later Charlotte was well enough to go to Italy with her husband, but became ‘raging mad’ in Rome. She had to be brought back by force, with an



English doctor and attendants, at a cost of £600. (TC to JAC, 21 3 1846) Mrs. Sterling recovered from that and other attacks, and came to make her peace with Jane three years later. Jane described the visit:

‘I have had a visit—indeed *two* visits from—Mrs Anthony **Sterling!**!— .....Nothing could be more beautiful than her behaviour—she came alone—stopt “on the mat” (Helen said) until I said she might come in, and then came forward with meek and brave words of apology—which you may be sure I cut short with kisses— Poor Soul I almost fainted myself from putting myself into her situation— I begin to think I must have some sympathy after all— She said I “must be an *angel* to receive her as I did after her conduct”—but it was *she* who was the angel this time.’ (JWC to J.W. 5 Feb 1849)

Anthony had warned her of the visit, and Jane had thoughtfully donned a cap and shawl to make herself look like an old woman. She wrote her an encouraging letter afterwards and Charlotte returned with her husband a day or two later, but the marriage had deteriorated, and the couple lived separately from 1849, she in their town house and he at their country estate. She refused an official separation. Jane wrote:

‘....he cannot conceal the worse than indifference which all that is past between them has left in his mind towards her, One cannot blame him—he was the most devoted husband for sixteen years—and even her madness did not estrange him from her—until she got into that horrid state in Rome and *exposed her person* before the male servants—no man’s *love* could stand *that*—his died of it .....You may fancy the little domestic *hell* of all this!’ (JWC to Jeannie Welsh, 29 Jan.1849)

These details about her behaviour in Rome were thought too shocking to be printed in earlier editions of Carlyle letters. It is an interesting reflection on the times that throwing pokers around and being boarded up in her own house could be forgiven, but exposing her person before male servants could not.

In a later attack her suspicions of Jane did not recur:

‘—for a *fortnight* she was in a strait-waistcoat occasionally; but is now more quiet tho’ still confined to a room with two mad-nurses. She has shewn no dislike of *me* this time—on the contrary seems to want to make *me* a party against her Husband—poor thing. But all this of *her*, is nothing new now—’ (JWC to Jeannie Welsh, 27 Feb. 1849)

The situation did not change over the years, and she died in 1863.

## **Joseph Henry Garnier**

One other ‘mad’ of 1844 deserves a brief mention. In early May Jane had a visit from Garnier, a German journalist the Carlyles had known for over ten years. He was at the best of times a swarthy man with many duelling scars. Now he was unkempt, dirty, ‘and the rolling eyes clearly indicated him to be as mad as a March hare.’(JWC to JW, 6 5 1844). She was very frightened, more so when he told her he had a nest of murderers for neighbours and that they had murdered twelve people already, but the authorities would not believe him. He told her the blood of the whole English nation would wash out his disgrace. Jane rapidly assured him that she was a Scotswoman, not English. She coped with him for half an hour, but when she gave him her hand as he left he crushed it and held it fast for a minute. She cried out. He said: ‘Oh you are hurt – well I am sorry but it was necessary.’ Jane could not hold anything in her hand for the rest of the day.

## **Diagnosis**

All these patients had straightforward psychiatric disorders. Plattnauer suffered from a bipolar disorder: recurrent mania, which varied in severity from mild elation and overconfidence to extreme excitement with violence and grandiose delusions. Garnier’s madness was brought on by alcoholism. Charlotte Sterling had a paranoid illness, with recurrent violent episodes, which eventually became chronic. Her first attack in 1844 predated the publication of *Jane Eyre* by only three years, and inevitably calls to mind Bertha Rochester, the madwoman in the attic, and all the sensation novels that would follow in the 1860’s. In ‘The Madwoman in the Attic,’ (Gilbert and Gubar, 1979) the mad wife in *Jane Eyre* came to symbolize the way in which female voices were silenced in both Victorian society and literature. Legally women were still objects, male possessions, in courts of law. And there were many Victorian scandals involving wrongful confinement, especially of women. The separated wife of Bulwer Lytton, the author, was restrained in this way for several weeks after she had denounced him publicly when he was standing for parliament in 1858. In the eighties, wrongful confinement became almost a staple of sensation fiction. So it is necessary to be sure that Mrs. Sterling was not being unjustly labelled as mad, especially as she had some reason to be jealous of her husband’s attentions to Jane, and that Jane records another wife being jealous of her. But the course of

the illness, her apologies to Jane when in a remission, and her delusional ideas not involving Jane in later attacks, all show that she was genuinely ill.

## **Nineteenth Century Psychiatry**

Until the nineteenth century, visiting Bedlam to laugh at the patients was still acceptable. The mad were either cared for by their families, or neglected and roamed the countryside; or were brutally ill-treated, punished, and chained in prisons, workhouses, or private unregulated madhouses. The new century brought huge changes: moral treatment, legislation, and the building of asylums. ‘Moral treatment’ reversed previous abuses, and involved treating the insane with kindness and good sense, in the belief that if the insane were treated like animals, and physically restrained, it was little wonder that they behaved like animals. Plattnauer was imprisoned in chains overnight, but a few days later was walking free in the asylum’s garden with other patients.

Above all, the nineteenth century was the age of building asylums to care for the insane, and of framing legislation to protect them. In England an Act of 1808 allowed local authorities to use taxpayers money to build asylums for pauper lunatics. In 1842 a commission of enquiry was set up. Its members included doctors and lawyers, who travelled widely in England and Wales inspecting facilities of all kind, and identifying patients in and out of care. Their Report of 300 pages was published in 1844, and included the first census of the insane in England, and legal recommendations. In parliament in July, Ashley startled the Home Secretary by reporting their finding that there were 12000 pauper lunatics outside asylums, many of them dangerous. Of the asylums they visited, at least fifteen practiced non-restraint, including Wandsworth. The report led to the County Asylums Act of 1845, which compelled each local authority to erect an asylum at the public expense for pauper lunatics; and to the Lunacy Act 1845, which appointed commissioners to oversee, regulate and inspect all these asylums. Larger changes in society were behind all this activity, much of which had been provoked by the condition of England question, the sufferings of the poor, and fears of civil unrest. Carlyle had published *Past and Present* in 1843, and Ashley had been campaigning vigorously about the condition of the poor. There were also public concerns about increasing depravity and drunkenness among the poor as causes of insanity. And above all, just as today, there were fears of violence from the insane. Such fears have always been the spur to legal reforms, even

though such violence is rare. There were several attempts to assassinate Queen Victoria prior to Plattnauer's visit to the palace, and in 1842 Daniel McNaghten shot dead Peel's secretary and was acquitted on grounds of insanity. The so-called McNaghten Rules, defining insanity in legal terms in murder cases, were published in 1844.

In all the letters of this period it is evident that Jane and Thomas have more liberal views about insanity than many of their friends, perhaps because of their backgrounds. Carlyle had experienced his mother's madness ( Ingram,2004 ), and Jane was the daughter of a general practitioner. In their early years both would have seen much visible mental illness and handicap in their rural communities. By 1844 the asylum movement was already changing all that, and by the end of the century, having started with high hopes, chronic patients accumulated and disillusion set in. Care was kindlier but there were no effective treatments. Anti-psychiatry critics have often said that the main purpose of the Victorian asylums was to hide the ill away from sight. That is an oversimplification. It is true that asylums were partly a response to public fears, but those who founded the asylum movement began with the best of intentions, and reformed centuries of neglect.

## **Jane Carlyle**

Jane's adventures with her 'mads' illustrate many aspects of her personality but leave all manner of contradictory impressions. She behaved with great expedition in the case of Plattnauer, who was a friend but not a particularly close one; her involvement went far beyond any call of duty. She visited him when it was not a woman's place to do so, firmly enlisted male friends to investigate, to accompany her, or to lend her a coach. And best of all, agreed without hesitation to take a still disturbed man into her home, and persuaded her husband to agree. When friends warned her that Plattnauer might be violent or dangerous, she defended him, even to a foolhardy extent. She showed both courage and compassion in these circumstances, and was astonishingly brave in her painful encounter with Garnier. Jane's first biographer rightly described Jane's ministrations to Plattnauer as 'kindly and heroic' (Ireland, 1891). She, her husband, and her brother-in-law, Dr John Carlyle, continued to regard Plattnauer as a good friend over many years. Her attitude to Mrs Sterling was markedly different. Jane was angered by Anthony Sterling's behaviour when he continued to visit her secretly, but was contemptuous of his novel-reading wife, and amused by being the focus of her

delusions. Three years later Caroline Fox noted in her diary how Jane ‘gave a wondrously graphic and ludicrous picture of an insane imagination, cherished by a poor invalid respecting her.’(Monk, 1972). But her almost brutal contempt vanished when, temporarily recovered, Mrs Sterling came to visit and to ask forgiveness. Jane was moved by her courage, behaved graciously, and encouraged her to visit again.

Jane appears to have been a ‘ministering angel,’ but more to men than to women. De Quincey, nursed by Jane during their Edinburgh years, always extolled her kindness to him, but in February, 1844, she was irked and far from sympathetic when she visited the distressed wife of William Fraser, disgraced in a Criminal Conversation case, and found that she remained in love with her husband despite his infidelities (Ingram, 2007). In general it seems that Jane was happier in the company of men than of women, and her many close male friendships, flouting the etiquette of the time, support this.

Jane’s frequent encounters with her ‘mads’ in 1844 may have been mere coincidence, but reflect the public anxieties and the governmental findings of these years, just as her efforts to help mirror the many changes that were being introduced to protect and care for the mentally ill. Her enthusiasm for the new asylums did not last. She feared them, and feared insanity in the dark year of physical and mental ill-health that followed her accident in 1863, when her husband recorded this conversation:

“”Dear,” she said to me, on two occasions, with such a look and tone as I shall never forget, “promise me that you will not put me into a mad-house, however this go?” I solemnly did. “Not if I do quite lose my wits?” “Never, my Darling, oh compose thy poor, terrified heart.”” (Reminiscences, p.169 )

# SYLLABUS 2010-11



## CARLYLE SOCIETY: PROGRAMME FOR 2010-11

**All meetings in 11 Buccleuch Place, Centre for Lifelong Learning,  
starting at 1415. All welcome.**

- |             |  |
|-------------|--|
| 16 October  | Jonathan Wild: "The Edwardian Literary Era"  |
| 30 October  | Linda Stewart "Carlyle the Master Storyteller: telling stories and spinning yarns in <i>Frederick the Great</i> ".   |
| 4 December  | Aileen Christianson, "The Carlyles and Photography", AGM and Christmas party.  |
| 29 January  | Liz Sutherland, "Who do they think they are?": uses of genealogical methods in editing the Carlyle Letters"  |
| 12 February | Jane Roberts, "John A. Carlyle: the centre of the Carlyle family"  |
| 5 March,    | Thomas Green Lecture, Kathy Chamberlain "The Personal and Political Drama of 1844: Jane Welsh Carlyle, Giuseppe Mazzini, and the Government's Secret Opening of His Mail." |

Enquiries should be addressed in the first instance to  
the President at the Department of English Literature  
The University of Edinburgh  
David Hume Tower, George Square, Edinburgh EH8 9JX

Enquiries can be made by fax to 0131-650 6898; or by electronic mail to  
[Ian.Campbell@ed.ac.uk](mailto:Ian.Campbell@ed.ac.uk)