

The Correspondence of Isaac W. Dyer and the Froude-Carlyle Controversy

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FOR VICTORIANISTS AND OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES, THE Froude-Carlyle Controversy remains an unsolved mystery that still generates questions, many of which are possibly unanswerable: Did Froude have the right to publish Carlyle's manuscripts? Were Froude's charges of his hero's impotence a matter of his expression of biographical integrity or a betrayal in bad taste? Were Mary Aitken Carlyle and Alexander Carlyle as guilty and as suppressive as Froude in their slightly overbearing defense of their beloved uncle? Did Thomas Carlyle's relationship with Harriet, Lady Ashburton, fatally undermine his marriage with Jane Welsh Carlyle? These questions have served to keep the Froude-Carlyle controversy in the critical eye since it surfaced a very short time after Carlyle's death in 1881. But the grounds for discussing the dispute have changed over time. What began as an emotional and vituperative family disagreement has now been transformed into a literary-theoretical abstraction—"the Carlyle marriage"—that stands as a synonym for patriarchal Victorian hypocrisy and double-standards.¹ With the publication in the *Carlyle Studies Annual* of the Lady Ashburton letters—a vital missing piece in the Froude-Carlyle puzzle—it seems a propitious moment to revisit

¹ For examples of this trend, see Phyllis Rose, *Parallel Lives: Five Victorian Marriages* (New York: Knopf, 1983); Trev Lynn Broughton, *Men of Letters, Writing Lives* (London: Routledge, 1999); and Julia Markus, *Across an Untried Sea: Discovering Lives Hidden in the Shadow of Convention and Time* (New York: Knopf, 2000).

the debate, if only to consider it in light of modern and post-modern assumptions about the relationship of Thomas and Jane.

At Bowdoin College in Portland, Maine, is housed the invaluable Carlyle collection of Isaac W. Dyer (1855–1937). Dyer, a graduate of Bowdoin and Harvard Law, practiced in Portland and served in the Maine House of Representatives. A pillar of his community and of his profession, one of his great interests was Thomas Carlyle, whose works and manuscripts he collected for decades. This tenacious quest led eventually to the publication of his *Bibliography of Thomas Carlyle's Writings and Ana* (Portland: Southworth Press, 1928), a magisterial study that remained a definitive source for students and collectors for more than a half-century and that continues to yield valuable insight. In the book Dyer professes objectivity, but he cannot conceal his dislike of Froude for sullyng the Carlyles' reputation by repeating unfounded rumors and by publishing material that they wished to keep private. During his years of research and collecting, Dyer became acquainted with some of the most significant figures in the Froude-Carlyle controversy: Alexander Carlyle (1843–1931), Carlyle's nephew, who gave Dyer several fragments of his uncle's manuscripts (to be published in *CSA* 28); Waldo H. Dunn (1882–1969) of Wooster, Ohio, who wrote an extensive apologia for Froude in 1930; and Charles Frederick Harrold (1897–1948), who wrote notable studies of Carlyle's sources for *The French Revolution* and for his study of German literature, and who enjoyed a long and prolific career at Eastern Michigan University, then known as Michigan State Normal College.

The correspondence of these scholars represents an important moment in the history of the Froude-Carlyle controversy. In Dyer and Froude, the old alliances hold firm, with Dyer supporting the Carlyle family and Dunn siding with Froude. Their exchanges provide a window into the early days of Carlyle scholarship, which depended heavily upon the collection of primary evidence. Dyer and Dunn held strong views, yet they presented their arguments scrupulously and without the supposition that disagreement, or even personal dislike, should negate scholarly courtesy. They both sought the opinion of Harrold, whose evenhanded appraisal serves as a conclusion to the correspondence. Harrold suggests a more objective perspective

broadened by historical distance and by an open-minded acceptance of new standards for “scientific” inquiry. What would Dyer, Dunn, and Harrold have made of Lady Ashburton’s own contribution to the Froude-Carlyle story? No doubt each would have read her letters differently, but the likelihood is that they would have been startled by her originality, humor, erudition, devotion, and incisiveness. These qualities surely would have led them to reconsider their opinions concerning Froude’s portrayal of both the Ashburton-Carlyle relationship and its effect on the Carlyles’ marriage. And as their own letters vividly confirm, they would never have accepted that this complex and tragic human drama be reduced to an abstraction, however theoretically fashionably or “subversive.”



The following correspondence, selected from the Isaac Dyer Papers on Thomas Carlyle, George J. Mitchell Department of Special Collections and Archives, Bowdoin College Library, Brunswick, Maine, are published with the permission of the director of the Archives, Richard H. F. Lindemann, on behalf of Bowdoin College. The editors wish also to thank Director Lindemann and Librarian Kathy Peterson for their kind assistance and hospitality during their visit to Bowdoin, October 2011.

The editors have retained the typographical aspects of the correspondence; underlined words are underlined, etc. Italics in the text of typescripts denote handwritten portions. Signatures are provided when they appear in the letters. No signature indicates that the letter is a copy of the version sent.



Isaac W. Dyer to Waldo H. Dunn, 26 October 1926

TL; 8 pp.

October 26, 1926
Prof. Waldo H. Dunn,
704 Buckeye Street,
Wooster, Ohio

Dear Mr. Dunn:

Your interesting and valued letters have remained too long unanswered. The fact is I am thoroughly ashamed of myself, and have little excuse to offer except the Macintosh habit of never doing today what I can put off 'till tomorrow. My case is particularly bad, for I am much obliged for the information you have given me, and shall avail myself of it. You must pardon me, and be assured I am not generally so dilatory a correspondent.

To answer your letter in detail: First, although I have made efforts, I have not succeeded in getting trace of Mr. Norwood Young's book yet, nor have I seen the article you mention in the *National Review* of February, 1923.² I intend to keep on trying for these items as I am anxious to include all the adverse criticism of Carlyle, being impartial as a bibliographer. And, besides, in the reading of such articles, I derive no end of amusement, and the more pepper, the more fun.

In the sense of a dry-as-dust chronicler or so-called scientific historian, Carlyle was not a historian; and his critics have wasted a lot of printers' ink and paper to prove this obvious fact, plain to anybody who has the least inkling of the true Thomas Carlyle. But in the sense that a great poet is always the best interpreter of his own or any age,—Carlyle is a historian unmatched save by a few great names in the world's literature. And he will be read long, long, after the little manikin critics are forgotten.

Secondly, it gives me great pleasure to know you are sympathetic to my work.

Thirdly, coming to your own matter, personally I do not know that any more about Froude need be said, but if you are bound to say it, I will be glad to be of any service to you, if in my power.³ But I have no greater knowledge than you already

² Norwood Young, *Carlyle: His Rise and Fall* (London: Duckworth, [1927]). In his *Bibliography*, Dyer comments, "A savage attack on Carlyle's character and writings. Numerous misstatements of fact and reckless exaggeration make the book of slight, if any, value" (488). The article to which Dyer refers, "Thomas Carlyle as the Catspaw of the Hohenzollerns" (*National Review* 80 [February 1923]: 901–13), was published under the pseudonym "Sartor Resartus"; see Rodger L. Tarr, *Bibliography of English-Language Criticism* (Charlottesville: UP of Virginia, 1976) 168–69.

³ Dunn is consulting Dyer for his *Froude and Carlyle* (London: Longmans, Green, 1930).

have from the books. I do not think it will tax you much to show Froude's inaccuracy. Professor Norton has already done it "to the Queen's taste."⁴ If one takes any old letter published by Alexander Carlyle or Norton and compares its text with Froude's version, he will at once see how careless Froude was. But my condemnation leads further than mere carelessness. If I had but a case wherein I should find a systematic falsification of documents, sentences divorced from their context, others garbled, extracts made to show one phase of the matter, and that invariably to support one conclusion and to discredit the opposite; and when in addition I find comment and interpretation rarely supported by the text, I would at once assume, and rightly, I think, that such liberties with the written evidence were intentional and showed an animus not consistent with a desire for the truth.

As to Froude's animus. Professor Norton, in a letter to Leslie Stephen,⁵ calls Froude a "continental liar."⁶ This is pretty strong language and I am not prepared to go as far, although at times I almost feel that way. Somebody, I think it is Professor Hugh Walker,⁷ makes the point that unquestionably Froude's feelings were often stepped on by his great friend and that, consciously or unconsciously, his wounded vanity influenced his attitude. Mr. Froude, you will probably agree with me, was a man of peculiar temperament. He was a literary artist of no mean power, but do you not think he was apt to make his authorities fit his theories, although perhaps he does not deserve all the harsh remarks made on him by E. A. Freeman and others.⁸

⁴ Charles Eliot Norton (1827–1908). For his position on the Froude controversy, see his edition of Carlyle's *Reminiscences*, 2 vols. (London: Macmillan, 1887).

⁵ Leslie Stephen (1832–1904; *ODNB*), author, critic, first editor of the *Dictionary of National Biography* (1885–91), and the father of the novelist Virginia Woolf (1882–1941; *ODNB*).

⁶ Norton wrote to Stephen, 29 November 1884; see *The Letters of Charles Eliot Norton*, ed. Mark Antony De Wolfe and Sara Norton, 2 vols. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1913), 2: 168–71.

⁷ Hugh Walker (1855–1939), British critic, author of *The Age of Tennyson* (London: G. Bell, 1900).

⁸ Edward Augustus Freeman (1823–92; *ODNB*), historian, author of *The History of the Norman Conquest* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1867–76).

Froude had a theory about Carlyle and his wife, amounting, it seems to me, to an obsession. Mrs. Carlyle understood him (vide the incident of the photograph).⁹ In fact, she understood him much better than her husband did and it is not difficult, surveying the whole field, to see how Mr. Froude, having first conceived the idea Mrs. Carlyle was a poor, down-trodden woman, has proceeded with great literary skill (Norton calls it artfully malignant) to bolster up that theory.¹⁰ In doing this, I am not fully prepared to say in print that he intentionally misrepresented but rather he saw through a colored glass. In fact, one can make out a pretty fair case for Froude (I think Mr. Paul, his biographer, has done it) until you come to the pamphlet “My Relations with Carlyle.”¹¹ That production damns Froude to eternity.

Now, in the matter you speak of, I am going to be so frank as to say I do not think the question is worth your attention. Forgive me for my candor, for, assuming Froude Miss Jewsbury and Mr. Harris are correct, what difference does it make?¹² Carlyle belongs to history. His work is to be judged by canons outside the question. It’s a subject of great delicacy. It should have been treated with the greatest reticence by his biographer, and what earthly good will it do to open the subject anew?

But perhaps you will say this point is important as testing the accuracy of Froude. I would rather say the fact he accepted and

Freeman’s insistence on the primacy of sources placed him in opposition to his rival Froude.

⁹The Carlyles’ maid Jessie Hiddlestone recalled “friends invited to tea” at Cheyne Row, including Froude: “[JWC] did not like him much. I remember she once showed me a letter from him, enclosing his photo and begging her to ask him to one of these evenings” (David A. Wilson, *Carlyle in Old Age* [London: Kegan Paul, 1934] 37). The photograph is among the seven Carlyle albums at Butler Library, Columbia University, and is printed, without Froude’s caption in Rosemary Ashton, *Thomas and Jane Welsh Carlyle: Portrait of a Marriage* (London: Chatto and Windus, 2001) opp. 372 .

¹⁰Norton wrote to Mary Aitken Carlyle, 5 July 1882, and referred to his reading of Froude’s biography of her uncle: “I have never read a book that gave me more pain, or that seemed to me more artfully malignant” (*Letters* 2: 135).

¹¹Herbert W. Paul (1853–1935), author of *The Life of Froude* (London: Pittman, 1905). *My Relations with Carlyle* (London: Longmans, Green, 1903) was published by Froude’s daughter Margaret and his son Ashley.

¹²Geraldine Endor Jewsbury (1812–80; *ODNB*); Frank Harris (1856?–1931; *ODNB*).

spread broadcast (for he must have known or at least contemplated the ultimate use of his “My Relations with Carlyle”) such a statement is amply sufficient to demonstrate his worthlessness as a biographer.

Consider the basis of all this. An erotic and neurotic old maid comes to him unsolicited and says Mrs. Carlyle told her that Carlyle was of the kind who never ought to have been married.¹³ There is no evidence, so far as I am aware, that Mrs. Carlyle ever said this (or equivalent language, for I am writing from memory) except the assertion of Miss Jewsbury. Admit Miss Jewsbury reports Mrs. Carlyle correctly, the remark is capable of quite other interpretations than she, with tendencies to the unmentionable, as Mrs. Carlyle said of her, or James Anthony Froude, with his peculiarities, put on it. But did Mrs. Carlyle ever so confide in Miss Jewsbury? Most unlikely, when one reads Mrs. Carlyle’s written opinion of her.¹⁴ It suits Froude to call Miss Jewsbury Mrs. Carlyle’s most intimate friend, her *Consuelo*.¹⁵ This makes sense for his case. Mrs. Carlyle’s letters give no support for all this, but distinctly negative. ([]See Letters to her family, etc.) After Miss Jewsbury’s astounding assertion was made, did the trusted biographer take any pains to inform himself of the truth, although the sources of information were at hand? Not in the slightest. Against the whole theory are the Love Letters,¹⁶ and to my mind conclusive evidence in letters written by Mrs. Carlyle in her early married life to Carlyle and friends. These to her husband are at times highly erotic and not such as your virgo intacta would be likely to write. It

¹³See Jewsbury’s account of JWC in her letter to Froude, 22 November 1876, *CL*: 30: 262–66; *CLO*.

¹⁴For more recent assessments of the friendship that take account of new manuscript evidence, see Ian Campbell, “Geraldine Jewsbury: Jane Welsh Carlyle’s ‘best friend’?,” in *The Carlyles at Home and Abroad*, ed. David R. Sorensen and Rodger L. Tarr (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), 185–94, and *Jane Carlyle: New Selected Letters*, ed. Kenneth J. Fielding and David R. Sorensen (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), xxi–xxvi. For a trenchant attack against Froude and his twentieth-century feminist apologists, see Rodger L. Tarr, “The Victorian Lady: Jane Welsh Carlyle and the Psycho-Feminist Myth: A Retrospective,” in Sorensen and Tarr, 96–208.

¹⁵George Sand, the pen name for Lucile Aurore Dupin (1804–76), author of *Consuelo* (1842–43).

¹⁶*The Love Letters of Thomas Carlyle and Jane Welsh*, ed. Alexander Carlyle, 2 vols. (London: John Lane, 1909).

seems to me it has no basis in fact. At all events, no sufficient basis or probability to justify its further discussion in print.

As for Frank Harris and his confession of Carlyle, I do not suppose anyone believes that tale. I exclude it absolutely. Harris is a disreputable creature, bankrupt in morals, bankrupt in character, and bankrupt in purse. Anyone willing to accept his story that he, a young man and a stranger to Carlyle, listened to this highly confidential and delicate confession from Carlyle's lips certainly is very credulous. But Harris has been very ably disposed of by Sir James Crichton-Browne and Mr. Alexander Carlyle. Frank Harris is out of it as a witness.¹⁷

Take Froude's theory of a loveless marriage, and a heart hopelessly given to Irving.¹⁸ It seems to me this is all refuted by the Early Letters (Ritchie's edition);¹⁹ the Love Letters; and Mrs. Carlyle's own statements.

The Craigenputtock stories of Miss Jewsbury are pretty flimsy when examined in the light of the life of the Carlyles there.

I have no doubt Carlyle was often irritable, moody, (most dyspeptics are); that there were frequent clashes of temper; that he was absorbed in his work; that Mrs. Carlyle was a bunch of jangling nerves; yet all these factors are not sufficient to support the statement that theirs was a loveless marriage, and that they lived a cat-and-dog life. And when, after Mrs. Carlyle's death, the broken-hearted husband sits down to exalt his beloved, and accuse himself, it is unfair as it is unhistorical to take his wild and whirling words of grief literally and press them against him as evidence of neglect and cruelty. Froude had an obligation here to see to it that ill-considered and exaggerated language should be excised from the text, so that the reputation of the man who trusted him should not suffer harm and that his readers should have a true picture of his Master. I fancy that you and I will not disagree that Froude's portrait, admirable as it is artistically, is not a true presentation of Thomas.

These views are the result of considerable study and I have

¹⁷ Harris has remained an occasional witness in accounts of the controversy, in spite of his patent unreliability; see Brent E. Kinsler, "Jane and Shirley," *Midwest Quarterly* 46.2 (2005): 152-68, in particular 153-58.

¹⁸ Edward Irving (1792-1834; *ODNB*).

¹⁹ David George Ritchie (1853-1903; *ODNB*), editor of *The Early Letters of Jane Welsh Carlyle* (London: Swan Sonnenschein, 1889).

tried to form my conclusions as I would when listening to a statement of a client's case. I would greatly appreciate your frank criticism on them, which, of course, I have only given in outline, and for which I have not cited authorities because of your familiarity with the subject. Naturally, they are not for publication.

Your proposed book on Carlyle cannot fail to be of interest and value. As to Froude, it seems to me to depend on your conclusions. At all events, I wish I could include them in the *Bib.* as the latest authoritative utterances.

As to reading my copy, I suppose you refer to the *Ana*. I am not so sure but that it may be feasible to avail myself of your generous offer. In the case of the writings of T.C., the point where one could help, if at all, is in the list of commentators. We have tried to be exhaustive in our lists. If your desire to assist me is still as keen, I will seriously consider sending you the *Ana* section, but do not want to impose on you.

The plan of the book is this: First, Part I (which we call the *Bib.*) a list of Carlyle's writings and chief events of his life arranged chronologically. Second, the writings, alphabetically arranged, with full bibliographical details, citations to comment and reviews. Would you say "Comment" or "Criticism" for this sub-title? Third, a list of publications in which the writings of Carlyle have appeared. This ends the *Bib. Part II*, or *Ana*, arranged under authors; then a list of magazines; then a list of portraits (perhaps) followed by a brief index to the *Ana*.

You can do me the greatest service, however, in confirming or disputing my conclusions in the Froude-Carlyle controversy. You asked for proofs and I've only given you my opinion, because I have no special data, but it is to invite your opinion I have so fully stated mine. What we all want is the truth, and I am glad you are investigating.

You ought to come East and see your namesake, Mr. Charles Dunn, who is a capital fellow, and his charming wife and daughter; incidentally, see my Carlyle collection and discuss the whole question of Carlyle, his virtues and his shortcomings.

Trusting you will heap coals of fire on my guilty head by a pretty prompt reply, I am, with kindest regards,

Faithfully yours,



Waldo H. Dunn to Isaac W. Dyer, 4 November 1926

TLS; 1p. Dunn encloses four typed pages of his notes concerning the Carlyle marriage controversy with this letter.

704 Buckeye Street, Wooster, Ohio
November 4, 1926

Dear Mr. Dyer,

I am delighted to have your good letter of October 26th, and I hasten to reply even though I have only a few minutes at my disposal just now. I am particularly happy to have your assistance because of your legal training and long experience in sifting evidence. Alexander Carlyle, Charles Eliot Norton, Sir James Crichton-Browne, David Wilson, and others, have charged Froude with manipulating evidence. I am enclosing herewith for your inspection and study a few examples that I have already submitted to Alexander Carlyle. I shall be glad to have your best judgment as to whether or not you think the evidence has been manipulated against Froude. Personally, I think Alexander's good faith must stand or fall in connection with the "blue marks" entry.²⁰ Only a very few people know the facts in regard to this point. I have in my possession a copy of the entry in Mary Carlyle's handwriting; you know Mary prepared the copy for her uncle. I have also all the correspondence which passed between her and Froude in regard to this entry. The original of that portion was destroyed by the Carlyles. Yet read what Alexander says in his New Letters and Memorials of Jane Welsh Carlyle, 2.88.²¹ If you were acting in the capacity of judge at a trial, and knew of such skilful suppression

²⁰JWC wrote in her journal, 26 June 1856: "The chief interest of today expressed in bluemarks on my wrists!" (*CLO*). Dunn published a facsimile of Mary Aitken Carlyle's copy of the journal in *Froude and Carlyle*; see opp. 93.

²¹In *NLM* (2: 87–88), Alexander Carlyle defends his publication of only the sections of JWC's journal that had been selected by TC. He is responding to Froude's decision to select and publish in *LM* those sections of the journal not selected by TC. Although he claims that he includes his own selections from JWC's journal "without suppression of more than a proper name or two" (2: 88), he makes no mention of the "bluemarks" entry.

and falsification of evidence, what would you say? But I cannot continue. My twenty years of line by line study has yielded good results. And I hope to talk it all over with you some day.²²

Don't hesitate to send me any material that you want me to read over. It will be only a great pleasure. And of course nothing would give me more pleasure than to read over all the proofs when the book is going through the press. I count myself a good proofreader. It may interest you to know that during the summer I read all the proofs of Professor Walter E. Peck's two-volume biography of Shelley soon to be published by Small, Maynard & Company.²³ It totals about 900 pages.

I am inclined to think that Mr. Norwood Young's book on Carlyle was held up last spring by publishing troubles in Britain. I had a letter from him in June in which he spoke of the publication as certain. I shall be writing him within a few days, and shall pass whatever information I secure on to you.²⁴

I shall ask you to consider all the information I am giving you as entirely confidential for the present, as a matter of fact, Alexander Carlyle is threatening to prevent me from making quotations from the books of which he holds the copyrights. In other words, he seems very uneasy, as he may well be. Does not the law of copyright permit brief quotation if the source is acknowledged? I shall be glad of your advice on this point. You see why for the present I wish no word of my work to be spread. Do you know my book English Biography? It contains eight or ten pages on the controversy.²⁵

I hope to hear from you from time to time when you feel in a chatty mood. With kindest regards, I am yours ever sincerely,

Waldo H. Dunn

²² The last four lines of the paragraph (from "trial,") are marked with a vertical line in the left margin.

²³ Walter E. Peck (1891-1954), author of *Shelley: His Life and Work* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1927).

²⁴ The last three lines of the paragraph (from "Britain.") are marked with a vertical line in the left margin.

²⁵ The last two lines of the paragraph (from "Do you know") are marked with a double vertical line and a squiggle mark in the left margin. For Dunn's defense of Froude as a biographer, see his *English Biography* (London: J. M. Dent, 1916) 168-79.



MATERIAL SUBMITTED TO ALEXANDER CARLYLE
FOR CONSIDERATION

“Mr. Froude says it with his usual inaccuracy, ‘Old Larry, doing double duty on the road and in the cart, had laid himself down and died—died from overwork.’” —AC’s footnote to NLM of JWC, 1.33, with reference to Froude’s Life, 2.152.

TC in a letter dated May 8, 1831 says: “We are all thrown into real sadness to-day by poor Larry. The poor old toilworn stout-hearted Nag is dead! . . . I imagine it is mere hard work that has killed Larry: riding to and fro about that Mill, then quite incessant harrowing for extra hours. . . . Letters of TC, edition by Norton, 1.284.²⁶

“For some reason or other, Mr. Froude has clearly done his best (or worst) to paint her condition . . . in the darkest colours possible, by picking from different letters the most gloomy and despondent sentences and placing them together as an extract from one letter. . . .” —AC in NLM, 2.293.

But Froude does not “place them together as an extract from one letter”; he plainly heads them (Letters and Memorials, 3.204) “EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS,” and in a note says: “A series of short extracts from the letters to her husband. . . .”

“The Journal for these years has been not inaptly described as being ‘mainly a record of his sorrows’; he rarely wrote in it . . . except when he was suffering from a fit of special ill-health, sleeplessness, and consequent despondency.” NL of TC, 1.ix-x.

It was Froude who described the Journal as “chiefly a record of his sorrows.” Why is the source of the statement suppressed, and the force of it made to count against Froude? See Life, 3.364

²⁶ See CLO: TC to JAC, 8 May 1831. TC mentions in the letter that he advised his brother to administer Castor oil to Larry, but that the beast “died before midnight.” There is no mention of the animal dying in the road.

“[The New Letters]²⁷ afford unquestionable evidence that he bore his sufferings, sorrows, and losses with a fair share of cheerfulness, patience, dignity, pious resignation, and submission to the inevitable.” —NL of TC, 1.x.

Froude had already made this entirely clear: “Thus calmly and usefully Carlyle’s later years went by. There was nothing more to disturb him. His health (though he would seldom allow it) was good. He complained of little, scarcely of want of sleep, and suffered less in all ways than when his temperament was more impetuously sensitive.” Life, 4.438. “He was still fairly cheerful, and tried, though with diminished eagerness, to take an interest in public affairs.” (Life, 4.465.

“For this purpose I, of course, choose the Note-book selected by Carlyle. It follows here, without suppression of more than a proper name or two, exactly as it stands and stood when it first came into my possession.” —AC in NLM, 2.88.

Your version omits entirely, without hint of omission, the entry of June 26th, the famous “blue marks” entry. It seems that after the publication in 1903 of Froude’s My Relations with Carlyle, you became aware of the entry, and printed a version in the Nemesis of Froude. You print the passage, however, with marked inaccuracy—indeed, your version is not that of the original, at all. I have access to the entry in the handwriting of Mary Carlyle, in one of the copies which she made of JWC’s Journal. Moreover, I know the correspondence which passed between Froude and Mary Carlyle in regard to this entry. If the entry meant nothing of importance, why was it destroyed? You and Sir JCB in the Nemesis of Froude suggest that it should be regarded in a comic light, as perhaps having reference to the bite of a bedbug. Why, then, destroy the record? Froude had only required that it should not be published.²⁸

“But unfortunately for Miss Jewsbury, there was no flower-

²⁷The square brackets are handwritten.

²⁸This entry is marked in the left margin with a vertical line, and to the left of the mark “NB” [*Nota Bene*] framed by two sets of double horizontal slashes.

garden at Comely Bank, but only a bit of a border . . .” —Sir JCB in BMJ, June 27, 1903 (page 6 in pamphlet form).²⁹

Says Jane: “For there is a real flower garden in front. . . (June 28, 1826). —Love Letters, 2.378–379.³⁰ Says AC in a note, Love Letters, 2.301: “The house at Haddington had . . . a beautiful flower-garden; so also at Comly [*sic*] Bank, on a small scale.”

“Had he turned the sheet of paper on which the [Swallow]³¹ poem was written, he might have read in Carlyle’s unmistakable hand, ‘Copied again by Jane!’ The verses are not Jane’s but Carlyle’s!” —AC in NLM 1.40.³² “Moreover, Carlyle has endorsed the poem ‘copied by Jane,’ which seems to show that it was not originally written by her. . . —AC in LL, 2.360.

The endorsements are not the same. “Copied by Jane” and “Copied again by Jane”³³ are two statements of widely different interpretations. Jane might certainly have copied her own poem again and again.

“The poem by Carlyle, called ‘My Own Four Walls,’³⁴ was not written at Hoddam Hill, however, but at Craigenputtock; probably in 1829. . . . Carlyle’s biographer seems to have doubted that anything so cheerful . . . could have been composed at Craigenputtock.” —AC in LL, 2.263.

But to a detached reader Froude does not “seem to doubt”

²⁹ Crichton-Browne, “Froude and Carlyle: The Imputation Medically Considered,” *British Medical Journal* 1 (27 June 1903): 1498–1502; see Tarr, *Bibliography* 140.

³⁰ Dunn reverses the page numbers in this entry. Jane’s description is at 2: 301, and AC’s note is at 2: 378–79. Dyer notes the error by marking the two citations and writing in the left margin, to the left of a squiggle/bracket: “Shift references.”

³¹ The square brackets are handwritten.

³² Although the note begins on 1: 40, the quote appears on 1: 41. The poem, dated 1834 by AC, is “To a Swallow Building under Our Eaves” (*Love Letters* 2: 358–59).

³³ The quotation marks are handwritten.

³⁴ *Love Letters* 2: 355–56.

at all. Froude quotes from Carlyle's letter of April 2, 1826, written from Hoddam Hill, and then says: "This expression, repeated twice, suggests the possible date of a poem—the only poem, perhaps, that Carlyle ever wrote that which is really characteristic of him. It was written either at Hoddam or at Craigenputtock. In some respects—in the mention of a wife especially—it suits Craigenputtock best.³⁵ But perhaps his imagination was looking forward." *Life*, 1.324.³⁶

Again, the following passage was a part of the manuscript of the *Reminiscences* when it came into Froude's hands.³⁷ Froude omitted it along with other passages in which Carlyle was debating with himself. I observe that Norton does not print it. It has a most vital bearing on the fact that Carlyle desired to have the narrative of JWC's life printed. "I will tie up this poor article, put it away among things of hers, and shall very possibly never see it again except outside of it, and on the way to the fire. If I do not burn it, then those who come after me are again charged to be cautious and consider well in this case and in all others what it will be useful to print for such a public as ours, and what to withhold of these jottings about her and about myself; endless silence about us both that really would be my wish, more really in my present now habitual mood, than anybody thinks; but that is probably impossible or unattainable, and instead of hazy nonsense throughout, here and there a bit of certainty. . . ."

³⁵ TC refers to a wife in line 9 and later closes the poem: "The moorland house, tho' rude it be, / May stand the brunt, when prouder falls / 'Twill screen my wife, my Books and me, / All in my own four walls (25–28).

³⁶ In the letter of 2 April 1826, TC writes to Jane Welsh: "It is inexpressible what an increase of happiness, and of consciousness, wholesome consciousness of inward dignity I have gained since I came within the walls of this poor cottage. My own four walls! . . . [I]f I choose to dine on fire and brimstone, they will cook it for me to their best skill; thinking only that I am an unintelligible mortal; perhaps in their secret souls, a kind of humourist, *facheuse* [troublesome] to deal with, but no bad soul after all, and *not* to be dealt with in *any* other way. My own four walls!" (*CLO*).

³⁷ For a history of Froude's mishandling of this manuscript, see Kenneth J. Fielding and Ian Campbell, "Note on the Text," *Reminiscences* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1997) xxii–xxv.

“Carlyle has chivalrously taken most of the blame for these on himself, but hear what Jane says referring to one little quarrel that occurred on one occasion between them.” This sentence is from page 11 of the Nemesis of Froude, ostensibly in regard to the married life of the Carlyles. Why, then, as evidence, is a quotation from a letter of 1824 brought in, a letter written two years before the married life began?

“Froude would have us believe that in relation to his wife Carlyle was an iconoclast and a faith wrecker, an atheist of the most blatant type.” This sentence from page 31 of the Nemesis is followed by statements to prove the essentially religious foundation of Carlyle’s life, and Pope’s “Universal Prayer” is quoted as indicative of the best expression of TC’s spiritual needs.³⁸ But Froude in the Life, 4.371, has given all this fully and honestly, yet here you quote Pope in contradiction to Froude’s view. Please explain why Froude’s statements and quotations are so often used anonymously to contradict the very point of view which he advocated.

“Francis Jeffrey, whom Mr. Froude repeatedly but erroneously calls Mrs. Carlyle’s cousin. There was no trace of consanguinity between them beyond being, of course, son and daughter of Adam and Eve!” —AC in NLM, 1.45.

What does Froude say? “He wrote to her as cousin: what the exact relationship was I know not; but it was near enough, as he thought, to give him a right to watch over her welfare. . . .” Life, 2.126.

And what does TC say? “They discovered mutual old cousin-ships by the maternal side. . . . —TC’s account of Jeffrey, Reminiscences, Norton edition, 2.239.

³⁸The sentence quoted by Dunn appears on p. 40. AC quotes the first two stanzas of Alexander Pope’s “Universal Prayer” (1738).

The Carlyles make much of the fact that Jane sometimes referred to Miss Jewsbury as “Miss Gooseberry”³⁹ Of course, such argumentum ad hominem is only silly. Elsewhere, particularly in New Letters of JWC, Mrs. Carlyle refers to Miss Jewsbury as her “chief friend” (2.85).

These are only samples of the seemingly deliberate falsification, &c, of documents and evidence on the part of AC and his coadjutors. I can find no such evidences of deliberate tampering, &c, on the part of Froude. It seems to me that the strongest thing to be said in favor of Froude’s good faith is the fact that he turned the documents back to the Carlyles without even removing old prohibitions which it is clearly known that Carlyle had later cancelled. In other words, this arch conspirator, as he has been represented, took pains to put all necessary proofs of his dishonesty into the hands of his enemies. And he had known of their enmity for years; in fact, most of the biography was written with the sure knowledge that every statement in it would be examined microscopically. Do you think Froude would garble documents in the face of all this? After twenty years of close study, I cannot agree that he did. But I have documentary evidence that AC and others have. I can multiply the instances I have given here by hundreds, perhaps by thousands even; I have not taken the time to count them as yet.

◆

Isaac W. Dyer to Waldo H. Dunn, 31 December 1926

TL; 3pp.

December 31, 1926

Prof. Waldo H. Dunn

Wooster College

704 Buckeye Street,

Wooster, Ohio.

³⁹“As ‘Miss Gooseberry’” is handwritten and inserted above the line.

Dear Professor Dunn:

I have your very interesting letter of November 4. Just as soon as I get the bibliography off my hands, which will be in a few weeks now, I am going to turn to it again and shall have something to say upon your points in relation to the accuracy of Froude and his assailants. But it seems to me, even with the comparatively hasty reading I have given it, your attack is directed rather at Carlyle's defenders than supporting Froude. Now, I hold no brief for Mr. Alexander Carlyle nor anyone else, but I do think that Froude erred most grievously, both as an editor and a biographer, and my objections are not answered by showing that on this line or that line his assailants committed an error, because my objection to Froude's accuracy does not arise upon small matters, of which I rather feel with you that perhaps too much has been made.

In the first place, take the *Reminiscences*, which raised such an awful outcry, an outcry by no means justified by anything contained in them. A little care on Mr. Froude's part would have omitted all the offensive matters, and a man of genuine insight would have seen at once that, taking Carlyle's condition and his sorrow into consideration, the unkind remarks he made of several and sundry were really the opinions of Mrs. Carlyle or views colored by his great sorrow. In any event, they should have been omitted. They add nothing to the genuine charm of that book and have served every little yelping cur to bark at the noble mastiff they did not dare to face in his lifetime.

Now the fault of the *Life*, to my mind, is not so much in this or that misstatement of fact as the coloring Froude has succeeded in giving to the whole portrait. What Froude lacked is a sense of humor, and if he had had it at all well-developed, he would have seen that a great many of the self-communings, a great deal that is in the *Letters*, a great deal in Carlyle's conversations, is to be treated as humorous exaggeration and the result would have been perhaps a less gigantic but a more human Carlyle. Professor Masson sums the whole case up in a nutshell when he says that Mr. Froude has too much the attitude of a man driving a hearse, and indeed I know nothing better than his discussion of the subject in "*Carlyle Personally and in His Writings*."⁴⁰

⁴⁰ David Masson (1822–1907; *ODNB*), *Carlyle Personally and in His Writings*

When you come to Froude's good faith, you open up an entirely different question, and into that I will not go at this time. I would like to know, however, if you agree with my general views which I have expressed above. I think the pamphlet "My Relations with Carlyle" is an outrage. It has damaged Froude a good deal more than it ever did Carlyle. It seems to me ravings of uncontrollable rage and why his children ever published it, I fail to understand.

As to Mr. Norwood Young's book, I can get no trace of it in England, and I confess my shameful ignorance in not knowing of your book, "English Biography." If you will tell me where to apply for it, I will send an order to the bookseller immediately.

Your offer to read the proof is most kind, and I certainly would like to submit to you my note on Froude's Life. Professor Macmechan, however, offered long ago to read the proof and I accepted his generous offer.⁴¹ I do not know that there is any objection to having it read twice, and if you still feel like burdening yourself with it under these circumstances, I would be very glad to send you a set of the galleys.

If you have any particular data bearing on the Froude-Carlyle controversy which we could put in the form of a note, regardless of which side it supports, I would put it in. I mean by "data," citations of books. I would not want to go into criticism of any living Froudian or anti-Froudian.

A Mr. Harrold, of Michigan State Normal College, wrote me telling me that you had told him I was getting up a bibliography.⁴² He later wrote me that he got the impression mine was to be a pretty slim affair.

I note the suggestion in your letter that I may have the pleasure of seeing you and discussing the Froude-Carlyle question and I am looking forward to it with liveliest anticipation of pleasure and profit.

Very sincerely yours

(London: Macmillan, 1885) 17.

⁴¹ Archibald MacMechan (1862-1933), Canadian academic, editor of Carlyle's *Sartor Resartus* (Boston: Ginn, 1897).

⁴² Charles Frederick Harrold (1897-1948), American academic, author, and editor.

**Waldo H. Dunn to Isaac W. Dyer, 13 January 1927**

ALS; 4pp. In the top left corner of page 1, in pencil: "Copied for Mr. Dyer, to read Jan 18/27." There also is a large check mark in pencil on the right top corner.

704 Buckeye Street, Wooster, Ohio
January 13, 1927

Isaac W. Dyer, Esq.
Portland, Maine

Dear Mr. Dyer,

I thank you for your good letter of December 31st, which I found upon my desk when I returned from the meetings of the Modern Language Association at Cambridge Mass. While there I had the very great pleasure of delightful conversations with Miss Esther Dunn, and I now feel very much closer to all of you in Maine. I reached home January 4th, and have since then been very busy catching up with accumulated work; hence my delay in replying.

With reference to the material I sent you about misstatements even falsifying on the part of Alexander Carlyle and his adherents, permit me to say that such minor matters do not at all constitute the main line of my defense of Froude. My main defense will be conducted on an entirely different basis. So much has been made, however, by the opposition of such matters as typographical errors, differences in punctuation, capitalization, &c, on the part of Mr. Froude, that I shall, of course, point out that whereas Mr. Froude's are not intentional those of the opposition are. I think you will be intensely interested when the whole story is unfolded.

Take the story of all that is behind the reason for the publication of "My Relations with Carlyle," for example. Only those who know how treacherously Mr. Froude was dealt with can ever understand the matter. I have the correspondence which passed between Mary Aitken Carlyle and Mr. Froude, a correspondence that reveals the facts. Mary Carlyle well knew the kind of life led by both Thomas and Jane. When I have the strongest kind of documentary evidence in support of Geraldine

Jewsbury, who was not at all responsible for originating the story of the relations between the Carlyles. I do not, however, intend to make much of the personal life of the Carlyles. I am intent on giving the plain facts about Froude as Carlyle's biographer. I should like to feel that you would care to read my manuscript as it goes into shape, and apply your legal training to every statement that I make. And I am particularly glad that you are a strong Carlylean, for you can be all the more severe on my work. I wonder whether you are willing to help me thus?

Mr. Norwood Young's book is not yet published. I shall give you further information a little later. Have you come upon a recent very good little book entitled "Thomas Carlyle," by Mary Agnes Hamilton, published by Leonard Parsons, Devonshire Street, London?⁴³ Apart from the fact that it perpetuates the traditional attitude towards Froude, the book is very interesting. My own book, "English Biography," is handled in this country by E. P. Dutton & Company, 681 Fifth Avenue, New York City. Unfortunately, I have not an extra copy at hand. Lest you should not have a chance to see the "National Review" article, I am forwarding my copy to you for reading.

I do not understand how Mr. Harrold formed the notion that your bibliography is a "slim affair." When he wrote me for information, I gave him the summary of it which you had given to me. In his last letter to me of recent date he says he is surprised at the magnitude of your undertaking! Mr. Harrold is, I understand, a promising young man. He recently received the Ph. D. degree from Yale University, and has written a thesis on the sources of Carlyle's "French Revolution." He is worth encouraging.

Now as to the proofs, let me assure you that few things would give me greater pleasure than the opportunity to read a set of the galleys for you. Do not hesitate a moment about having them sent on. I shall undoubtedly learn something, and it may be that I can make a few suggestions or additions. When I see what titles you have on the controversy, I can prepare my note.

I trust that before many months we may meet. One of my dreams is ultimately to have a summer home on the Maine coast!

⁴³ Mary Agnes Hamilton (1884–1966), author of *Thomas Carlyle* (London: Leonard Parsons, 1926), and M.P. for Blackburn (1929–31).

With warmest regards, I am
 Yours ever sincerely,
 Waldo H. Dunn



Isaac W. Dyer to Waldo H. Dunn, 24 January 1927

TL; 3 pp. In a large hand, written diagonally at top of p. 1:
Strictly personal

Professor Waldo H. Dunn,
 704 Buckeye Street, Wooster, Ohio

Dear Mr. Dunn:

I have your letter of January 13. You and I are very far apart on Mr. Froude and it would be no use for us to attempt to get together on it.

Admitting that every line in "My Relations with Carlyle" is the exact truth, even then Mr. Froude did a shameful thing in publishing it.⁴⁴ There was an obligation on Mr. Froude which, according to my code, does not apply to the ordinary man. He was born a gentleman and he should have had a gentleman's code. There is not a single thing that could be urged in extenuation of his performance. As to whether Mrs. Carlyle treated him rightfully or wrongfully, whether Mr. Alexander Carlyle is a truthful or an untruthful person, whether Sir James Crichton-Browne is a man of honor or not, are all outside the mark and it gives me positive pain to know that anybody in America will, at this day, stand up to defend "My Relations with Carlyle."

When you say I am a Carlylean, if you means as between Froude and the Carlyles, you are mistaken. I am neither for nor against him as regards his personal integrity. This only applies up to the writing and publication of "My Relations with Carlyle." The book I am preparing aims to give an impartial reference to all the authorities, so everyone can make up his own conclusions on this controversy. I am, therefore, suggesting that if it suits

⁴⁴The book was published in 1903, nine years after Froude's death, by Froude's daughter Margaret and son Ashley.

you in the pursuit of truth to bring your authorities forward, I will be very glad to print and credit to you a list of them. These citations would fall under the headings of Mrs. Carlyle's Letters and Memorials, and Froude's conduct in relation thereto; under the Reminiscences, and particularly the memoir of Mrs. Carlyle; and again in the Ana, under Froude, J. A.

It would give me great pleasure to read the copy of your forthcoming book, and I appreciate the honor you do me in suggesting it. Unfortunately, the state of my eyes is such that I cannot even read my own manuscript.

I am returning to you under separate cover the magazine you so kindly sent me, and thank you for it. The article was tremendously interesting to me, but I am frank to say that I never saw a sillier attempt at displaying scholarship and more absolute ignorance of the facts than are displayed in that article. I don't wonder he shelters himself behind a nom de plume. However, I plan to list it.

I have already ordered Miss Hamilton's book, and I am also ordering yours.

I am glad you had the privilege of meeting Miss Dunn, whom we regard as one of our best Maine products.

Very truly yours,



Waldo H. Dunn to Isaac W. Dyer, 23 March 1927

ALS; 2 pp. Dunn encloses two pages of handwritten notes on the proofs of Dyer's *Bibliography*.

704 Buckeye Street, Wooster, Ohio
March 23, 1927

Dear Mr. Dyer, I am returning herewith the galley proofs together with a few observation upon them. You are indeed undertaking an elaborate bibliography, and there can be no question of its usefulness. Whether for the reason that I know so much of the inside history of the relations between Froude and Carlyle and have formed a pretty definite opinion in regard to the unjust treatment Froude received at the hands of Alexander Carlyle and Mary Aitken Carlyle. I know not; at any rate, the material which

you give under the New Letters and Memorials seems ordered so as to count as heavily as possible against Froude. One instance is the remark that “Paul’s Life of Froude contains an extremely clever special plea for Froude on the whole controversy.” To me, that remark seems designed to disparage Paul’s book. A non partisan statement would be: “Paul’s Life of Froude presents evidence on the controversy favorable to Froude.”⁴⁵ Mr. Ralli’s discussion of the controversy is based upon secondary sources, not upon first-hand documentary evidence. Your reference to Mrs. Carlyle’s Notebook No. 2 does not explain that the version published by Alexander Carlyle is emasculated, &c, &c.⁴⁶ As I read these proofs I am reconvinced of the importance of the work I am undertaking in presenting all of the evidence in the case. When I do so, I fancy that a good many discussions of the controversy will be set aside.

So far as I can see you have listed all the references to the books mentioned in these two galleys. I can think of none that you have omitted. You speak of the first edition of the New Letters and Memorials as in “red cloth.”: Mine are in a beautiful blue cloth, as are all I have seen.⁴⁷ Perhaps the American binding of sheets differs from the English binding of the first edition. I haven’t investigated that problem.

I have already requested our librarian to send an order to the Southworth Press, and I have no doubt it is already on file in Portland. It is very kind of you to think of me, and I shall greatly appreciate a copy autographed by you.

Don’t fail to send along the rest of the proofs. I shall mark whatever errors I see, give my opinions, and suggest whatever additions I can.

Yours sincerely,

Waldo H. Dunn

⁴⁵ Dyer left the comment as written and then adds a rather damning litotes: “It is not an unfair presentation of the case on behalf of Froude.”

⁴⁶ See the published versions of JWC’s Notebook (*CL* 30: 157–72; *CLO*) and of her Journal (*CL* 30: 195–262; *CLO*).

⁴⁷ Tarr, *Thomas Carlyle: A Descriptive Bibliography* (Pittsburgh: U of Pittsburgh P, 1989), identifies four styles of binding in three colors: purple, red, and reddish-maroon (487).

P.S.— I suppose it is unnecessary to ask whether you know the “Catalogue of the Samuel A. Jones Carlyle Collection” published by the University of Michigan in 1919.



Suppose Carlyle had died in 1873 immediately after making his will. Then, in accordance with a literal interpretation, Froude would have had a right to publish the Letters and Memorials in 1880, if seven years were taken as the limit; in 1883, if ten years were taken. A will is made to provide against any contingency, and it is well known that Carlyle was expecting, even hoping to die early. As a matter of fact the Letters and Memorials were published in 1883. It is easy to understand, however, that they might have been published at least one to three years earlier.⁴⁸

I think you are unfair to Froude where you say, in the next to last paragraph at the bottom of galley 8, “The title, therefore, is misleading, for it purports to be ‘prepared for publication by Thomas Carlyle,’ &c.” That is only half of the truth. A part of the title is “Edited by James Anthony Froude.” And see further Letters and Memorials, 2.254, where Froude plainly states: “A part only of the following extracts was selected by Mrs. Carlyle . . . ,” and elsewhere he makes the fact clear. Why not give Froude credit for his frank statements?⁴⁹

According to the will Froude was to consult John Carlyle and John Forster about biographical matters. When? Before or after TC’s death? The object of a will, I believe, is to give direction for the conduct of affairs after the death of the maker of the will. When Carlyle made his will he did not expect to survive his brother John and Forster. Query: Did Froude know the contents of the will?

With regard to the material’s keeping in Froude’s hands in 1871, are you aware of the fact that Carlyle himself has borne

⁴⁸ See Dyer 45–50 for his discussion of the Froude-Carlyle controversy, including the publication of JWC’s *Letters and Memorials*.

⁴⁹ The published version in Dyer’s *Bibliography* retained his charge that Froude’s title was “misleading” (47).

witness to the fact in a letter to Froude? Mr. Paul had access to Carlyle's letter. Observe the quotations from it as given in note 2 at the bottom of page 294, Paul's Life of Froude.



Alexander Carlyle to Isaac W. Dyer, 5 April 1927

TLS; 2 pp. Enclosure (TLS; 1p.) is a response to Dunn's "Materials Submitted to Alexander Carlyle for Consideration," which Dunn had sent also to Dyer enclosed in his letter of 4 November 1926.

30 Newbattle Terrace, Edinburgh—
5 April, 1927

Dear Mr. Dyer:

In reply to yours of March 12th: I did think of making a Magazine article on the horseshoe invention, but hearing from Mr. Barrett that you were already printing?⁵⁰ I feared there wasn't time left for that; and so decided to make a Newspaper article of it. Accordingly it appeared in the "Scotsman" of Saturday, 12th of ~~April~~ March,⁵¹ and I sent you a cutting from that issue, with the date clearly marked on it, by the earliest Mail after the Q 12th, which I trust reached you safely, I am rather suspicious of the American mails, however, for I have never yet heard whether you received my letter of 28th Sep. '26.

I take it for a good omen that Prof. MacMechan approves so highly of the part (of your work) on Sartor; his opinion is of value as he is well up in that subject. Of course you know Mr. Barrett's Sartor, his annotated Edition is also capitally done. I have known him for some twenty years; and MacMechan and I are graduates of the same University (Toronto), but not of the same years. We have corresponded for many years, but never met.

Dunn appears to me rather a vain, conceited and not over-courteous young man; he has got a Glasgow Degree of "Litt.D.,"

⁵⁰Dyer published AC's letter to the *Scotsman* and TC's account of his horseshoe invention in his *Bibliography* as Appendix I (579–81).

⁵¹ March is handwritten above the crossed-out April.

which has entirely spoilt him. I never think of him without reflecting on the truth of the old saying, "A little learning is a dangerous thing"! He is out to try to rehabilitate Froude—a hopeless task—of whom he is a partisan and devotee, and may perhaps do some little harm for a brief time; but I am confident that Truth will prevail in the end. He sent me a while ago a long list of what he called "Remarkable Findings," of which, for your amusement, I enclose a copy of the first two and my observations on them. I also put in a copy of what I sent to the "Scotsman" on the horseshoe. This latter will only be of use to you if my letter with the cutting from the Newspaper failed to reach you. I do not happen to have another spare copy of the "Scotsman" by me at present.

With my best wishes for the success of your great Enterprise,
Yours, dear Mr. Dyer,
Very sincerely,
A. Carlyle.

P.S. Please excuse a short letter. I find writing very difficult to me now, which you will not wonder at when I tell you that my 85th Birthday falls on the 29th of this month! My health mentally and bodily is not very bad, I think; but I am weak and not able for much exertion, and must try to "take things easily" whenever that is possible. I do not mean to get into a prolonged controversy with Mr. Dunn, and shall probably not answer his last letter at all. He intends to revive the despicable fiction that Thomas Carlyle, the ideally strong man, was a weakling and unfit for marriage. That is a Froude-Jewsbury myth, which even Froude himself did not believe—as he confessed to a friend of mine who was intimate with him. I have, since our little book called the "Nemesis of Froude" was published, found plenty of indubitable proof that that vile story was most certainly a myth and nothing but a myth. A.C.



The first couple of Dr. Dunn's "Remarkable findings," and my (A.C.'s) Reply to them.

1. Dunn: — "Mr Froude says with his usual inaccuracy, 'Old Larry, doing double duty on the road and in the cart, had

laid himself down and died—died from overwork.” —A.C.’s footnote to NLM of JWC, i.33, TC with reference to Froude’s Life, ii.152.

TC in letter dated May 8, 1831 says: “We are all thrown into real sadness today by poor Larry. The poor old toilworn stout-hearted Nag is dead! . . . I imagine it is mere hard work that has killed Larry: such riding to and fro about that Mill, then quite incessant harrowing for extra hours. . . .” Letters of TC i.284, Edited by Norton.

A.C.’s remarks on the foregoing: — Carlyle “imagined” Larry died from “mere hard work”; Froude states unconditionally he died from “overwork”; Carlyle after he had learned that Larry died from a horse epidemic gave the real cause of death. Froude had before him both accounts, the imagined and the true: yet he gave the former (in an altered and vitiated form) and suppressed the latter entirely! I might have used with propriety a much stronger word than “inaccuracy” in describing this duplicity of Froude. Dr. Dunn seems to sympathize with him in this Froudacity,—a curious commentary on his claim of being out solely in search of Truth!

2. Dunn: — “For some reason or other, Mr. Froude has clearly done his best (or worst) to paint her condition . . . in the darkest colours possible, by picking from different letters the most gloomy and despondent sentences and placing them together as an extract from one letter . . .” — AC in NLM, ii.293.

But Froude does not “place them together as an extract from one letter”; he plainly heads them (Letters & Memorials, iii.204), “Extracts from Letters,” and in a note says: “A series of short extracts from the letters to her husband . . .” .

A.C.’s reply to the preceding: — “What I say in NLM, II.293, is strictly and absolutely true,—not a single word of it requires emendation; and Dr. Dunn is entirely wrong when he says, ‘Froude does not place them together as an extract from one letter’; for that is exactly what F. does do again and again. Take LM, iii.208; the extract there given under August 30 is composed of two extracts: from the letter of Aug. 30 he gives less than two and a half lines, then runs on without even a new paragraph, or marks of omission, quoting from a distinct letter of a different date, and thus makes the two extracts appear

as an extract from one and the same letter! Again, on the next page, iii.209, the extract which he pretends is from Mrs. Carlyle's letter of Sep. 9th is really made up of two extracts,—only two lines and a quarter being taken from the letter of Sep. 9th, and the rest of the extract, with several unmarked omissions, is copied from a letter of Sep. 13th. I could go on almost ad infinitum [*sic*] with this; but surely that is unnecessary, especially as Mr. Chamberlin proves that Froude did exactly the same thing with letters at Simancas. See "Sayings of Queen Elizabeth," p. xl. note. . . .

A. Carlyle



Waldo H. Dunn to Isaac W. Dyer, 20 November 1928

ALS; 2pp.

704 Buckeye Street, Wooster, Ohio.
November 20, 1928.

Dear Mr. Dyer, Your gift, the beautifully printed Bibliography of Thomas Carlyle, has been the companion of all my leisure moments during the last ten days. I congratulate you upon this monument to your forty years of devotion to Carlyle. I class your book with Judge John Gest's volume, "The Old Yellow Book,"⁵² and salute these contributions to letters by two distinguished members of the legal fraternity.

I find many things to praise. First of all the sheer beauty of the book satisfies. The arrangements of matter could scarcely be better. The alphabetical and chronological lists and the index guide are most useful. Your own comments add a personal touch that marks the work as your own. Of course, I have read everything eagerly.

And of course I find much from which I must dissent emphatically, a fact which only adds to the zest of reading. I am

⁵²John Marshall Gest and Guido Franceschini, *The Old Yellow Book; Source of Browning's The Ring and the Book, a New Translation with Explanatory Notes and Critical Chapters upon the Poem and Its Sources* (Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 1922).

surprised at your reliance upon the statements of Alexander Carlyle, Charles Eliot Norton, and David Wilson. My volume, just ready to go to the publisher, cuts across almost everything those gentlemen say. I am going to give you plenty of new facts, as well as a remarshalling of the old, in this forthcoming book. You call Wilson's Mr. Froude and Carlyle "a valuable book."⁵³ Have you ever noticed to what extent it is based upon anonymous evidence and gossip? I think it absurd and ridiculous. His new biography has never been adequately reviewed. When it is we shall have a new contribution to "the gaiety of nations."⁵⁴ I am publishing documentary evidence which shatters the statements about Carlyle's intention to burn the love letters when they were found, and the document is in Mary Carlyle's own handwriting! You say that Charles Eliot Norton's letters are very severe on Froude. You do not say that they exhibit petty personal dislike. And so I might go on.

I regret most of all the serious omissions. Had I been provided with a list of your findings, I could have added immensely to your items. You do not catalogue the letters of Froude and Mary Carlyle to the Times in 1881 (with the exception of Mary's one on May 5th),⁵⁵ and a reference to one of Froude's). There is a very important series running to seven or eight. You do not mention the long Times editorial of May 9th, 1881, in which the Editor expresses the hope that "no terrorism" may prevent Froude from telling the facts; certainly a most valuable bit of contemporary evidence. You fail to mention the Letters of Edward Fitzgerald [sic] to Fanny Kemble in which occurs Fitzgerald's commendation of Froude.⁵⁶ And so again I might

⁵³ David A. Wilson, *Mr. Froude and Carlyle* (London: William Heinemann, 1898).

⁵⁴ Compare Dr. Johnson's famous epitaph for his friend the actor David Garrick: "I am disappointed by that stroke of death that has eclipsed the gaiety of nations, and impoverished the public stock of harmless pleasure." The quotation can now be found on a monument to Garrick in Lichfield Cathedral.

⁵⁵ MAC's letter of 5 May in the *Times* is on p. 8, and that of 7 May is on p. 12. Froude wrote to the *Times* on 25 February (8), 6 May (10), and 9 May (10); see Tarr, *Bibliography* 72, 74. The extra parenthesis is Dunn's.

⁵⁶ In *The Letters of Edward Fitzgerald to Fanny Kemble*, ed. William Aldis Wright (London: Macmillan, 1895), Fitzgerald does commend Froude for the *Life*, but not for the *Reminiscences*, which "long indisposed [him] from taking up the Biography" (237).

go into a long list. You have confirmed my confidence in one particular. I find that I am familiar with every item you have included.

Some of these days we must have a visit. I'm eager to see your collection of Carlyle books, and have a chat in regard to the many questions of interest.

If I can find the time soon I plan to write a notice of your Bibliography for one of the literary periodicals.

With warmest regards, I am

Yours ever sincerely, *Waldo H. Dunn*



Isaac W. Dyer to C. F. Harrold, 14 April 1930

My dear Mr. Harrold:

I wish I were more confident than I am that this confidential letter will be of some use to you in your self-imposed task. But you can, at lowest, take it as a good-will offering. Anyone who is willing, for the sake of another, to wade through Professor Dunn's dull book shows at least some spark of good fellow-ship. I warn you, although you probably do not need it, that you are tackling a very thorny problem.

The book has two glaring faults. First, its fundamental weakness is that it is an expression of personal opinions instead of a statement of evidential facts; and second, it is in no sense a study because it asserts that Froude being an eye-witness knew what he was talking about and was, therefore, accurate, but it leaves out of consideration the very large number of eye-witnesses who saw things very differently than Mr. Froude did. It is, therefore, a special plea and as a special plea it is, to the legal mind, very inferior to Mr. Paul's.

It may not be proper for me to say to you that Mr. Dunn and I agree on Froude's literary and artistic skill. I doubt if he intentionally misstated or colored his facts. I hold no brief for Mr. Wilson nor for that matter for any of Froude's critics. Dunn and Wilson strike me as very much on a par. "The Life" first sent me to Carlyle and today I read Froude's pages with the same zeal and delight I did nearly fifty years ago.

Yet, after forty years of it, I came to the conclusion that in some ways Froude was in error. I am sure, unless I am mistaken, if you were willing to devote the time to it you would reach the same conclusion. I arrived at it unwillingly but it was inescapable. This is very far from accepting all or even much of what his assailants allege.

In this spirit, I assembled the evidence and opinions on both sides. I started to give a note on the details of Froude's Biography but gave it up as involving too minute details and discussion, and which, with my limited skill in composition, I could not state fairly, giving the exact truth.

The whole crux of the matter is the relations between Carlyle and his wife. Leave that out and Froude's critics would have hard work to assail his book with much show of reason. I am convinced Froude painted Carlyle in too somber colors but that is as it may be. For good authorities on this point, see Sir Henry Taylor's Autobiography, Harriet Martineau, Espinasse, and above all Masson (especially Carlyle Personally and in His Writings. This latter is a rare book and I will loan it to you if you cannot get it otherwise. The Jones Collection at Ann Arbor must have it.)

But to get back to Mr. Dunn's book, which is what you will deal with. I have not attempted to cite all the numerous passages which I think can be justly criticized or successfully controverted.

On page 8, there are statements and insinuations about Mrs. Alexander Carlyle not only not supported by the evidence but in part in direct contradiction to it. I deprecate Mr. Dunn's method in ascribing unworthy motives to all who disagree with him, or by insinuation raising suspicions unwarranted by any known facts.

Page 9. He seeks [seems] to think Froude silly for failing to be dishonorable.

Page 16. Note Mr. Dunn's wonder and compare with Froude's statement at bottom of page 25.

At the close of page 27, there is a statement about Mrs. A. Carlyle which I suggest before you rely on it should be verified.

Page 38. The Froude letter (now published for the first time according to Mr. Dunn) tells nothing new.

Page 39. Speaks of "legal proceedings." There never were any. Sir James Stephens takes special pride that he prevented any. How far Sir James was justified in his proceedings may

make (in fact did make) lawyers of high ethical standards open their eyes somewhat. To say the least, they were adroit.

Page 40, the letter quoted is of little evidential value because it is a self-serving declaration. The use of such material illustrates Mr. Dunn's methods. He first introduces a letter or a statement of Froude's, treats it as evidence, and deduces from it what he wishes in order to bolster up a statement of his own. Such instances occur frequently.

Page 42. If the opinions of Carlyle's family are to be considered, should we not remember that they were old and entirely incompetent to express any opinion on the question of accuracy, as they say themselves (see page 42).

Page 43. A letter from Froude to Max Mueller is quoted but Mr. Dunn does state that there or elsewhere the illuminating fact that Max Mueller elsewhere has said that in spite of Froude, he still believes in Carlyle; thus giving his opinion of Froude.⁵⁷

Page 54. The statement that Mrs. Carlyle exerted herself to the utmost to prevent Froude from fulfilling the express wishes of Carlyle as set forth in his will is not supported by facts.⁵⁸ From her standpoint, she was trying to do just the opposite. It may be permissible from Mr. Dunn's standpoint (page 58) to doubt the good faith of Mary Carlyle in her claim to the ownership of certain manuscript. Evidently that doubt was not firmly held by Froude and his legal advisers since, in the settlement, her ownership of the papers was acknowledged. And, after all, what has all the row about papers profits, etc. got to do with the real issue? Both sides, however, have dragged in these collateral matters.

The controversy between Mrs. Alexander Carlyle and Mr. Froude occupies a considerable portion of the book. It is all "dead horse." It does not tend to prove that Froude was an accurate and loyal biographer, or the reverse. The matter was settled without litigation, Mary Carlyle receiving practically what she asked for. Mr. Froude said he was content. Sir James Stephens congratulated himself on the skill with which he

⁵⁷ Friedrich Max Müller (1823–1900; *ODNB*), Professor of Comparative Philology at Oxford. His wife, Georgina Adelaide Grenfell (1834/35–1916) had ten sisters, among them Froude's first wife Charlotte Maria and Charles Kingsley's wife Frances Eliza (Fanny).

⁵⁸ Dyer, of course, means Mary Aitken Carlyle, not JWC.

brought the matter to a conclusion without litigation, and at the present day it is hard to see that it is of interest to anyone.

When we come to the pamphlet "My Relations with Carlyle," we come to an entirely different matter from that of Froude as editor and biographer. Here Froude does something which, by reading backward, largely gives support to the charges of his critics. If I were writing so keenly in defence [*sic*] of Froude, I should not emphasize this book (pamphlet) so strongly. It is the weak point of the Froude defence. Granting all that Froude says is true, how does it prove that Froude was an accurate Biographer and a judicious editor? Many of the statements in that pamphlet flatly contradict those he has put forth in the Life. But this is not its worst fault. It has done Froude great harm and irretrievably lowered him in the estimation of all honorable men. Mr. Paul, the ablest defender of Froude who has so far appeared, glides over it. In charity, we should remember that the pamphlet was written by a very angry man (perhaps a justly angry man) to protest himself against further attack and it was used as a threat. I have an idea, Mr. Froude being what he was, he would not have sanctioned the publication of that pamphlet if he had had time to reflect upon it. His children did his memory no good in publishing it. I for one discount it as not being any fair expression of Froude's true character. Its publication did much more harm to Froude than anyone else. At all events, it started a very merry war, and, as in most heated controversies, both sides perhaps have indulged in language which, to say the least, is to be regretted.

Page 134 and subsequent pages, Mr. Dunn complains that Mr. Alexander Carlyle would not let him see original letters &c and he intimates that there are reasons. There certainly were reasons, but not the reasons Mr. Dunn would have the reader believe. Some of the material Mr. Dunn feels has been so kept from his inspection can be inspected by anyone in the Library at Edinburgh (Advocates Library, now I think under some other name).⁵⁹

Page 135, about omitted passages, grave suspicion, etc., I think is not justified.

⁵⁹Dyer refers to the establishment of the National Library of Scotland in 1925, when the Faculty of Advocates donated all of their non-law materials to the nation.

On page 137, if my memory serves me right, there is no independent evidence that Mrs. Carlyle ever told Froude that Carlyle had taken away her faith. In fact, as a girl Mrs. Carlyle's "faith" was very far from orthodox, as can be very easily shown by reference to her letters, etc. Froude says so himself. See *Life*, First Forty, page 120.

Page 138. Mr. Dunn admits most of his citations relate to trivial matters but claims they are cumulative. This is quite a common practice among lawyers, but when we resort to it, it always indicates a weak case.

Chapter 14 relating to Edward Irving is perhaps a subject for an honest difference of opinion. Personally I doubt if the love of an untrained school girl for a much older man seriously and permanently affected her life. Mrs. Carlyle herself says that she got bravely over it and thought herself absurd for having had such a passion. This is in Mrs. Carlyle's letters. It would seem as though she was the best witness.

Chapter 15 seems to me all poppycock and I am not a social democrat either.—⁶⁰ From a worldly point of view, she made a good match and if in the weariness of age she said, as is reported that she married for ambition and was miserable, she only got what was fairly her due. As a matter of fact, however, she married for love, as anyone who reads the *Love Letters* will see.

The Craigenputtock business shows Froude at his worst in misapprehension.⁶¹ The *Life* there involved no such great hardship as Froude makes out. Many a lady in this country, more highly born and delicately nurtured than Mrs. Carlyle was, has done more work without injury to herself than Mrs. Carlyle did at Craigenputtock. In fact, for young people, confessedly poor, they got a good deal out of Craigenputtock. They had a maid practically all the time. They had horses to ride and the advantages of country life, and if Mrs. Carlyle's letters at the time are to be believed, she had a pretty good time of it. See *Early Letters of Jane Welsh Carlyle*, Ritchie, London, 1889.

It is true, in old age, in ill health, and morbid, she wrote letters describing her hardships and I've no doubt she harrowed

⁶⁰ In chapter 15, "Jane's Misalliance," Dunn explores the differences in social status that existed between Jane and Thomas.

⁶¹ The title of Dunn's chapter 16 is "Craigenputtock."

the susceptible feelings of that old maid whom she would persist in calling "Miss Gooseberry," but a fair examination supports the view that Froude greatly erred in his account of it.

Page 177. The silly and misconstrued episode of the railway carriage is brought out and freshened up to do duty again, but when our author, as on page 178, undertakes to say that the acquaintance with Lady Ashburton had created public scandal, on the basis of the malicious teasing of old Rogers, he shows ignorance of Rogers, the Carlyles, the Ashburtons, and of London society of the day. Note here the comments of Lord Houghton (Monographs) are carefully omitted. The Ashburton stuff is old stuff and poor stuff.

Chapter 18 is a joke.⁶² It is not true that a man who is difficult to deal with is always difficult to live with.

As to Chapter 19, I doubt if anyone really know the real facts about the journal entry. If they have the sinister meaning the pamphlet attaches to them, then "a kind and loyal friend" should have suppressed the passage.

On page 202, occurs one of those very numerous insinuations which suggest that Mr. Dunn is neither a fair nor an honest opponent. I refer to the sentence beginning "We shall perhaps never know exactly" etc.⁶³

Also see page 203. Comment is needless.⁶⁴

Chapter 21 I decline to comment on.⁶⁵

While perhaps I should not say so to you, I very much hope, and I take the great liberty to express the hope, that you will either leave out or touch as little as possible that phase. It is no

⁶² Dunn's chapter 18, "The Meaning of a Phrase," addressed the issue of Froude's reporting of the infamous charge that Carlyle was "gey ill to deal wi'," which had been alluded to by Carlyle in *Letters and Memorials* (1: 49n) as a phrase used by his mother to describe him.

⁶³ The sentence continues: "to what extent, or in what ways, Mary and Alexander Carlyle hindered [Froude], and actually concealed from him information which he should have had."

⁶⁴ On p. 203, Dunn describes the treatment of a packet of letters left to Mary Carlyle. Dunn notes that according to Wilson (*Froude and Carlyle* 279), these letters were Jane Carlyle's letters about Harriet, Lady Ashburton, not then published. Dunn concludes that it would have been "better for the honour of Carlyle if the story of the reserved letters were of a piece with the account of the injunction to burn" (203).

⁶⁵ Dunn's chapter 21 is entitled, "The Sexual Question."

credit to anyone whether it is D. A. Wilson or W. H. Dunn, and least of all was it any credit to Froude. As a matter of fact, I have evidence that Froude did not believe the story told him by Miss Jewsbury. The pamphlet is the work of a very angry man, as I have said. Besides the matter is wholly a personal one and has nothing whatever to do with Carlyle or any aspect of him with which the public can be legitimately concerned. The filthy story rests on no evidence beyond an alleged remark of Mrs. Carlyle's, capable of an entirely different construction. Furthermore, it is entirely irrelevant to the question of Froude's accuracy. You will note he is very careful not to make himself sponsor for the tale. And when we take into account the neurotic and erotic character of Miss Jewsbury (See Mrs. Carlyle's Letters) the evidence is worthless. The fact that the story ever gained any credence only shows the filthy nature of the average mind. Mr. Dunn, in his early correspondence with me, showed more interest in securing evidence on this point than any other.

As to the Wilson biography, I have nothing to say. I neither approve it nor condemn it.

It seems to me that Mr. Dunn concedes a large part of his case, on page 229.⁶⁶

Professor Dunn is somewhat unhappy in his reliance on Ruskin, for at the time he quotes him as furiously disagreeing with Norton, Ruskin, if we are to trust his latest biographer, was insane.⁶⁷

I haven't burdened you with citations. You will find them, on both sides, all in the Bibliography. The Nemesis of Froude and Wilson's Froude and Carlyle, while highly controversial, and not to be relied on, do give convenient clues to authorities which one can search out for himself.

Further, Professor Dunn's book leaves out an immense body of evidence (and opinion) against Froude. So the book at the best is only a special plea. As a rule, I find no glaring misstatement of fact, but rather an adroit coloring of the

⁶⁶ On p. 229, Dunn begins a long paragraph that qualifies Froude's accuracy, "I make no claim that either as editor or biographer Froude is free from errors; this claim cannot be made even on behalf of his severest critics, as has been abundantly demonstrated."

⁶⁷ Amabel Williams-Ellis (1894-1984), *The Exquisite Tragedy: An Intimate Life of John Ruskin* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1929).

evidence coupled with suggestions and insinuations which seem to me unjustified.

And finally, since the book contains not one new material fact, leaves out the contra evidence, is far less skilful in its presentation than Paul, what reason is there for it? Of course vanity was no factor in its production.

If you have not done so, I suggest you examine Vol. I of the New Letters and Memorials. The text of the letters, I mean, not the introduction and notes, which are highly controversial.

The destination of my effort to be of aid to you will probably be your waste-basket, and I shall not complain. I've tried to be fair about the book, but somehow Professor Dunn does not impress me very favorably. His Biography was a much better book.⁶⁸

I wish you would tell me in what publication your reviews appear. You need not draw on your own copies to supply me. If I know about them, I'll send myself for them.

And so, good luck to you. Without any acquaintance beyond what we have, I am confident you will deal fairly with the book as you see it.

Very sincerely yours,

Charles Frederick Harrold, Esq.,
Michigan State Normal College,
Ypsilanti, Michigan⁶⁹



C. F. Harrold to Isaac W. Dyer, 2 May 1930

Mr. Isaac W. Dyer
85 Exchange Street
Portland, Maine

My dear Mr. Dyer:

While my train swings on toward Grand Rapids, I will try to answer your two recent very kind letters. I must say at once

⁶⁸ Harrold refers to Dunn's *English Biography*.

⁶⁹ Dyer includes Harrold's address as a postscript.

that I hardly know exactly how to begin. We are far apart, I believe, not merely in space xxxxxxxxxxxx⁷⁰ but also in ideas toward life, and in adjustments to what we glibly call “modern standards.” I feel that this fact has much to do with our respective attitudes toward the Froude-Carlyle affair. You were brought up in the last years of Carlyle’s time; you have collected his books and books about him; you had the advantage (and the disadvantage, from the point of view of objective analysis of the man) of reading his works before they had become things of a past epoch and no longer vitally prominently expressive of the most contemporary impulses; you naturally regard certain phases of Carlyle’s life—of any man’s life—as not proper for unlimited discussion. Now you are aware that whether rightly or wrongly, many present-day writers and many of their readers have ~~adpted~~ adopted what they call a scientific attitude toward the most intimate details of a man’s life; they think that it is fit and proper to discuss whether Carlyle’s marriage was really unsuccessful and whether, if unsuccessful, the trouble lay in sexual incompatibility, incompetence, or some other such cause. If Froude erred at all, they say, it was not in hinting such things about Carlyle but in not coming right out with ~~it~~ them; the shock would have been terrific, true enough, but soon the air would ~~clear~~ have cleared and both Carlyle’s fair name and literary reputation would ~~be~~ have been seen as in no way impaired by such a revelation. This is presuming that Froude was right, of course. Whether he was, we may never know; Professor Dunn, while nowhere specifically saying that he personally thinks Froude was right, leaves an impression that he was. ~~But~~ I think that from the materials he has assembled the reader ~~will~~ can, and should, judge for himself. That is the great merit of the book; it is a survey of the controversy and a collection of all available data. I cannot think that Carlyle’s greatness or the effect of his work is in any way damaged by ~~what~~ anything that Froude said. We still read Byron, in spite of his incestuous relations with his half-sister; we still read Shelley in spite of his detestable treatment of his first wife; we still read Milton even if he ~~couldn’t~~ did believe in Bolshevik divorce;⁷¹

⁷⁰Harrold struck through this passage with x, 3, and #, rendering it illegible.

⁷¹In 1917, the first family law reform of the Soviet government was to liberalize

we still revere Wordsworth in spite of his illegitimate French daughter. The worst feature of the Froude-Carlyle affair, in my estimation, is the fact that Froude's mistake in hinting and his generally vague stand in regard to his enemies' attacks, has led us all to stress Carlyle's private life to the neglect of his work. The world has gone crazy over mere biography—mere factual, day-by-day, realistic and ironic narrative. We read Ludwig instead of Goethe, Maurois instead of Shelley and Byron, Strachey instead of Newman, Fay instead of Franklin, etc.⁷² The sooner the Carlyle mystery is cleared up the sooner his work will be seen in a proper perspective. I suspect that to readers of the future, Carlyle's marriage or Mrs. Carlyle's tribulations will be but incidentals in the greater subject of what Carlyle means for us today. They will not worry over whether Craigenputtock was hard on Mrs. Carlyle, or whether Carlyle was "gey ill to deal with," or "gey ill to live with," or whether Mrs. Carlyle ever loved Edward Irving (even if she once did, what, after all, is the difference?), or whether it was Mr. or Mrs. Carlyle, or neither, whose physical make-up prevented a happy marriage. They will not be able to regard the sexual question as filthy. For good or bad, the present age has decided to divest sex of as much filth and morbid secrecy as possible and to look at it in a clean, frank way. As a teacher in a college attended largely by girls, I can truthfully say that Carlyle's sexual problem, if there was one, would give them the least concern, cause the least discussion (it would not be discussed in class, of course), get the quickest and cleanest statement (one way or the other) and be dropped with an air of having merely dealt with a relatively infrequent but understandable phenomenon. Even our class discussions

the divorce laws so that either party could demand a divorce for any reason.

⁷² Emil Ludwig (1881–1948), German author of many biographies, including *Goethe: The History of a Man* (London: G. P. Putnam, 1928); André Maurois (1885–1967), French author of several fictionalized biographies of British figures, including *Ariel: A Shelley Romance* (London: Bodley Head, 1924) and *Byron* (New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1930); Lytton Strachey (1880–1932; *ODNB*), British author of *Eminent Victorians* (London: G. P. Putnam, 1918), which included a biography of Henry Edward Cardinal Manning (1808–98; *ODNB*) that is deeply critical of Manning's alleged machinations against his rival, John Henry Cardinal Newman (1801–90; *ODNB*); Bernard Faÿ (1893–1978), author of *Benjamin Franklin: The Apostle of Modern Times* (London: Sampson Low, 1929).

at times even surprise me—and I am only thirty-two—by their innocent boldness and their admirable grip on realities. So I cannot—nor could my students, if they were to take the matter up—pass up Chapter XXI [“The Sexual Question”] as too filthy for consideration. My only regret is that it ~~does~~ is not final, though I feel that Dunn thinks the answer implied really is. I think he would have been unwise to ~~have~~ over-stressed it; but that means that proportion is the first law of composition, regardless of the subject.

I have re-examined Dunn in the light of your citations, and I am once more convinced of the large part that opinion plays in this whole controversy. Sentences in Dunn which strike you in one way strike me in just the opposite way. I will cite one example. On page 9, where Dunn says that Froude was silly in leaving the ~~written~~ marginalia on the papers he returned to Mary, I interpret Dunn as meaning that Froude’s reasons for doing so were these: either an almost Quixotic confidence in the ability of sheer integrity to clear him (under the circumstances) of any blame, or a very ~~fool~~ naïve belief that Mary (a woman, his enemy, and jealous and resentful) would be equally given to silent faith in integrity. Not that integrity is a weak force in the world, but that integrity without a grain of realistic sense is bound under such circumstances to land in trouble sooner or later. That is my interpretation of the passage. The other citations either have the same to be said about them or strike me, as even if true, as of relative unimportance and debatable after all.

I agree with you that the central point is whether Froude is an accurate biographer and editor or not; and Dunn would agree with us that he is not, yet that he is not so misleading as Mr. Alexander Carlyle, Mr. Wilson, and others would have us believe. His errors are numerous but minor; the coloring of the biography may be too somber, but, as a ~~bi~~ biographer, Froude had a right to see paint Carlyle in the light in which he saw him (compare him with Boswell, Ludwig, Maurois, and, above all, with Strachey!) The parts of Mr. Dunn’s books that might strike one as “deadhorse” are, I think, put in to make the book not merely a vindication but, more, a survey and a collection of data. Even if Mr. Dunn’s book can be proved to be a special plea, is it not more honest and less incoherent and

wrathful than Mr. Wilson's? I have re-examined the "Nemesis of Froude" and "Mr. Froude and Carlyle," and I feel compelled to say that Dunn shows better manners, better argument, more impartiality, more of an effort to put a period to a ~~most~~ vexing controversy by giving the data, the arguments, and a verdict, the verdict to be tested by the reader in the light of the data assembled. I may be completely deceived. I am comparatively quite young. I have not read as much about the question as you have. I am not a lawyer, and have no technic [*sic*] for weighing arguments nicely. But Dunn's book, when put beside Wilson's, for example, or read in the light of the books by angry Victorians (like Sir James Crichton-Browne) or personal champions (like Masson) or pompous self-deceivers (like old Sir Henry Taylor) or a sick spinster (like Harriet Martineau), ~~Mr. Dunn's book has~~ strikes me as having at least a relative superiority.⁷³

I have reviewed the book for *Modern Language Notes*, the *Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, *Sewanee Review*, the *Yale Review* (not yet accepted so far as I know); and I am at present writing another (the last one) for the *Saturday Review* (New York). I have made no plea for Dunn; but I have stated at times my own reaction to the book. I am sure, however, that, much as we may differ on the subject, you will concede my right to a statement of my own convictions. When you open the magazines, you will expect to find a rather sympathetic treatment of Dunn. It is all that a reviewer can do, if he is to be honest and at all useful; to take a hostile attitude, even if warranted, is bad, for even a bad book deserves at least a balanced approach, and I cannot think Dunn's is bad. At the worst it may be a special plea; but if it is, it is so constructed that readers will be far less blinded to the truth than by what they have read by Froude's enemies. Let me say here that on re-reading your own ~~æe~~ statements of the matter in your Bibliography I find you admirably judicial; no one could quarrel with what you say or the way you say it.

So I wish to say again that I certainly hope that our difference of opinion on the issues of the controversy will not strike you as serious. We still have that vast common ground: Carlyle's work and its significance. Surely to disagree over a

⁷³ In the left margin, Dyer tics the final passage of the paragraph and writes "Lovely!"

few details of his own private business would should not make it difficult to continue to find a mutual satisfaction in the study of Carlyle's life-long efforts.

I deeply appreciate your sending me the little pamphlet by Mr. Alexander Carlyle. It can be regarded from several angles: as a pathetic and admirable endeavor on the part of Carlyle's nephew to do one more service for his uncle; as an only partial explanation of the facts it attempts elucidating; and—perhaps under the circumstances one should not say it—as a curious piece of Carlyleana. One continues to be struck by the way the Carlyle's [*sic*] try to make Jane Welsh the goat; rather than consider that Carlyle might have been the cause of the childlessness of the marriage, they try to show that either Jane was barren (the Welshes, says Sir James Crichton-Brown [*sic*], tended to sterility) or she was cursed with female weakness (which, however, would hardly cause barrenness). As you have said, though, the sexual question probably will never be cleared up. It requires more evidence than can now, at this late date, be gathered to make a decision quite certain.

I am also thankful to be able to see the clipping you sent me. I am returning it, as you desired.

I hope—and I believe—that you will take my remarks in the spirit in which I send them. They are impersonal, purely argumentative; and I have remembered that I am addressing a lawyer, who will perhaps smile at my poor efforts at making anything like a case (which, in reality, I have not tried to do). Before closing I will clear the air by stating briefly what I personally think on the issues. ~~They are~~ It is as follows: that Froude's colors in the biography are somber but without serious distortion; that Craigenputtock certainly was no holiday period in Jane's life, nor quite the ordeal that Froude pictured, but more what Froude suggested than what Mr. Alexander Carlyle maintains; that Jane's marriage was more a social adventure of a dubious sort in a worldly sense than Carlyle's, especially when considered in the light of the social differences of the two mothers-in-law; that Carlyle was in fact hard to live with from day to day (what literary man is not? I can parallel Carlyle's case in a dozen examples, and more) but that Jane's sharp tongue was no mollifying element in Cheyne Row; that Jane was not too young or inexperienced (she had been a precocious child) to fall in love with Irving, but that

it probably did not have quite the destructive effect that Froude implies; that it ~~is not~~ would not have been hard for a strong man (and Carlyle was relatively a strong man muscularly) to put a ð mark on a woman's arm if she (as Jane conceivably might have done) pestered him and in a peevish spirit pushed him about the room or even slapped him (in keeping her at arm's length or in setting her down, Carlyle could have left the famous marks, but the whole affair could have been, and probably was, the most trivial matter); that if any sterility existed it was probably on Carlyle's side (creative artists are subject to that abnormality); that the Carlyles were really in love with each other through the years; that Carlyle probably did show too much attention to Lady Ashburton at one time in the spirit of admiration, but not as Froude has it in "My Relations"; that Froude's work was conscientious, not disloyal or treacherous to Carlyle's trust, inspired by the ideas of biography set forth in the essay on Scott, but blemished ~~with~~ by a great number of inaccuracies in fact, in copying, in memory, etc., but not, according to the highest standards of biography, in taste mistakes of taste. The whole matter of Mary Carlyle vs. Froude I dismiss as not very pertinent; Carlyle was forgetful and vacillating; it is conceivable that he did write an injunction to burn and to write no biography and then give Froude oral injunction go right ahead with the work (as a lawyer, you know how vacillating, procrastinating, and confusing people can be regarding their wills and their valuable papers).

Well, probably this long letter is an act of folly. But its very length should indicate how much I respect your opinions and how much I desire that we shall continue to be agreeable fellow-Carlyleans.

Yours sincerely,

Charles Frederick Harrold

P.S. In the course of writing this letter I have arrived back home. Will you pardon the untidiness of my typing? The movements of the train, and my desire to say exactly what I mean are responsible for the interlineations.

C.F.H.