

Editors' Note

THE YEAR 2008 HAS BEEN EXCEPTIONAL FOR CARLYLE STUDIES, with a distinct upsurge of interest in Thomas Carlyle, Jane Welsh Carlyle, and their circle of friends. The Carlyles were featured at a number of major international conferences in 2008, including the British Association of Victorian Studies meeting in Leicester (1–3 September), the Carlyle Conference in Dumfries on the Crichton campus of the University of Glasgow (4–7 September), and the Ruskin, Venice, and Nineteenth-Century Cultural Travel Conference at the Scuola Grande di San Rocco and the Università Ca' Foscari Venezia (25–27 September). The first anniversary of the publication of *The Carlyle Letters Online* occurred in September, and in late November the site recorded its one millionth unique access event. Volumes of the Duke-Edinburgh edition of the *Collected Letters of Thomas and Jane Welsh Carlyle* and the California Strouse edition of the essential *Works of Thomas Carlyle* continue to appear at regular intervals. On the near horizon, scholars and general readers can look forward to the publication of two landmark texts: the Strouse edition of *The French Revolution*, edited by Mark Cumming, Mark Engel, and David R. Sorensen, and a new Yale University Press edition of *On Heroes, Hero-Worship, and the Heroic in History*, to be included in the “Rethinking the Western Tradition” series and edited by Sorensen and Brent E. Kinser. The presence of the Carlyles is prominent in several recent and important studies, including William Christie’s edition of *The Letters of Francis Jeffrey to Thomas and Jane Welsh Carlyle*, Christopher Harvie’s *The Floating Commonwealth*, and Paul Johnson’s *Heroes*. Quite simply, scholars continue to recognize that the nineteenth century without the Carlyles is a “simulacrum,” to borrow one of TC’s favored terms. As the liberal theologian Frederick Denison Maurice remarked to his friend J. M. Ludlow, “There are

terrible contradictions in [Carlyle's] thoughts, which express themselves in his wild speech. But the contradictions belong to the time: we may find them in ourselves" (30 May 1862).

The year has also been a successful one for the *Carlyle Studies Annual*. The editors recently signed an agreement with Chadwyck-Healey to offer the journal (beginning with *CSA* 22) in their "Literature Online" database. We particularly relish the prospect of making previously unknown or unpublished primary materials available to a much wider, web-based audience. Consistent with our policy in earlier numbers, we begin Number 24 with a collection of new letters by the portrait artist Samuel Laurence—discovered, transcribed, and edited by David Southern—that throw fresh light on the Carlyles' close friends and acquaintances. Owen Dudley Edwards follows with his second installment on TC and Catholicism, focusing on the sage's enduring influence on one of the leading "Romanists" of the early twentieth century, G. K. Chesterton. George F. Seelinger and Kinser offer a persuasive plea for TC's continuing relevance in the field of mathematics and geometry. Sorensen comments on the curious reciprocity of TC and John Ruskin, which he explores in *The Stones of Venice* and *Frederick the Great*. Using material from a previously unknown and inaccessible family archive, David Taylor charts the complex relationship between TC and Vernon Lushington, his friend, editor, and a leading positivist. Nora Foster identifies *The French Revolution* as a signal text in the development of "the modern historical approach," and Marie Laniel adds depth and texture to our knowledge of Carlyle's impact on Virginia Woolf. In a tribute to the Irish writer and broadcaster Benedict Kiely, the selection of articles concludes with a little-known essay he wrote on TC in 1946. In the Miscellanies section we continue to mine buried nuggets, including an account of JWC's death, the immediate impressions of Mark Twain upon hearing the news of TC's death, and a memoir of a visit to Cheyne Row in 1864 by the famed editor and Confederate sympathizer John Reuben Thompson. In an afterword, Sorensen discusses TC's paradoxical influence on Goldwin Smith—abolitionist, liberal-radical, and vehement opponent of "Carlyleism"—as an introduction to selections from Smith's journal *The Bystander*. Reviews of Vanessa Dickerson's *Dark Victorians*, of Julia Markus's biography *James A. Froude: The*

Last Undiscovered Great Victorian, and of the Duke-Edinburgh edition round out a collection designed to reveal fresh insights into the “wonder-loving and wonder-seeking” (Tarr, *Sartor* 153) Carlyles.

The editors remain deeply indebted to Saint Joseph’s University and its long-term financial commitment to the journal. We are especially grateful to the President of Saint Joseph’s University, Timothy J. Lannon, its Provost Dr. Brice Wachterhauser, and its Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, Dr. William Madges. We would also like to thank Carmen Croce and Thomas Malone at Saint Joseph’s University Press for their encouragement and professional expertise. At Western Carolina University, special thanks are due to Wendy Ford, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, and to Elizabeth Addison, Chair of the Department of English, for their continuing support of Dr. Kinser’s research, and we deeply appreciate the outstanding work of Jennifer Veilleux on this issue. Thanks are also due to James Brack at Saint Joseph’s University Press for his role in the final production stages and to Neil Torda at Western Carolina for his patient technical assistance, especially in securing the file transfer from Cullowhee to Philadelphia. To our colleague and brother-in-arms at Duke University Press, David Southern, we can only acknowledge that without his input, passionate curiosity, and friendship this journal would not exist. Because of his efforts, we have “a blooming, fertile, Heaven-encompassed World,” rather than a “dark wasteful Chaos” (Tarr, *Sartor* 246).