

Thomas Carlyle and the making of *Frederick the Great*

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Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is of my own composition, and that it contains no material previously submitted for the award of any other degree. The work reported in this thesis has been executed by myself, except where due acknowledgement is made in the text.

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Abstract

Thomas Carlyle's *History of Friedrich II. of Prussia, called Frederick the Great* was published in six volumes between 1858 and 1865 and was his last major work. Carlyle had a specific purpose in mind when he began writing *Frederick*. He believed that contemporary events had left Europe in disarray and the British nation fragmented. In his view, the nation needed to function as a family unit, with the older, more experienced members of the group instructing and educating the young. Carlyle's attempt to address the situation with the publication of his *Latter-Day Pamphlets* in 1850 had failed, largely due to their aggressive tone. He adopted an entirely different approach when it came to writing *Frederick*.

Chapter one explores Carlyle's vacillation over his choice of Frederick as a suitable subject for his history and investigates his soul-searching over whether or not to proceed with the project. It examines the three-way relationship which Carlyle created between himself, Frederick and the reader and explores the various language techniques that Carlyle used to create and maintain this relationship. In chapter two, Carlyle's style of writing in *Frederick* is investigated. It argues that Carlyle was engaged in the act of storytelling and explores the various literary techniques that he used to achieve this. Chapter three consists of an in-depth examination of Carlyle's use of oral techniques in *Frederick*, investigating the variety of oral devices he employed in order to 'speak' to his readers and create a unified readership.

Chapters four and five focus on Carlyle's research methods. They examine the texts which Carlyle used for his research—original manuscripts, printed texts, letters, histories and biographies—investigating how these were incorporated into *Frederick* and evaluating whether or not Carlyle was true to his source material. Carlyle's two trips to Germany in order to research material are also investigated. In Chapters six and seven, the contemporary reception of *Frederick* is explored. Chapter six focuses on the reaction to the first two volumes which were published together in 1858, whilst chapter seven investigates the response to the later volumes, exploring the ways in which the completed work influenced the public's perception of Carlyle as a historian and ending by examining both Carlyle's and *Frederick*'s places in posterity.

Despite Carlyle's labours on *Frederick* it never received the acclaim of his earlier productions but was regarded by many as a marker which signalled the end of Carlyle's long and illustrious literary career.

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Introduction

“It was customary for those who honoured him to speak of him as a ‘prophet.’ And if we take the word in its largest sense he truly deserved the name. He was a prophet, and felt himself to be a prophet, in the midst of an untoward generation; his prophet’s mantle was his rough Scotch dialect, and his own peculiar diction, and his own secluded manner of life. He was a prophet most of all in the emphatic utterance of truths which no one else, or hardly any one else, ventured to deliver, and which he felt to be a message of good to a world sorely in need of them.”¹

In the eulogy that he delivered at Thomas Carlyle’s funeral in February 1881, Arthur Penrhyn Stanley made a key observation when he noted that Carlyle was not only regarded as a prophet by his contemporaries, but that he “felt himself to be a prophet, in the midst of an untoward generation”. Carlyle’s decision to write a history of Frederick the Great was driven by a strong sense of being engaged in a divine mission, tempered with the knowledge that this might be his final opportunity to deliver “a message of good” to his readers. Sentiments expressed by Carlyle in his 1854 journal appear to confirm his position: “I am getting old, yet would grudge to depart without trying to tell a little more of my mind” (Froude, *Thomas Carlyle* 172). Carlyle first came to the attention of the reading public in the early 1820s when a series of articles that he had written about the German poet and philosopher Friedrich Schiller appeared in the *London Magazine*. This moderate success was followed in 1827 by the publication of an essay on Jean-Paul Richter in the influential *Edinburgh Review*. His most famous work, *Sartor Resartus*, which was serialised by *Fraser’s Magazine* between 1833 and 1834, was characterised by an idiosyncratic style of writing which caught the imagination of contemporary readers. However, it was the publication of the *French Revolution* in 1837, the first work to

¹ Arthur Penrhyn Stanley’s remarks in his sermon at Carlyle’s funeral in February 1881 (Seigel, *Thomas Carlyle: the Critical Heritage* 516).

bear his name that brought Carlyle fame and confirmed his reputation as a highly acclaimed writer, a position he was to enjoy for several decades.² 1850 saw the publication of his *Latter-Day Pamphlets*, Carlyle's response to the current political situation in Britain. In his view, the Government's decision to abandon its traditional authoritarian role and adopt a new policy of *laissez-faire* had led to the nation becoming fragmented.³ It was Carlyle's intention to use the *Latter-Day Pamphlets* to educate his readers and encourage a new social order during a period of rampant democracy. However, their aggressive tone – in one passage he “assert[ed] with great confidence, supported by the whole Universe” that “the few Wise will have, by one method or another, to take command of the innumerable Foolish” – had antagonised a section of reviewers (34).⁴ Carlyle came to realise that a different approach from that used in the *Latter-Day Pamphlets* was required in order to convey his philosophy and restore his reputation.

Carlyle's decision to write his last major work, *History of Friedrich II. of Prussia, called Frederick the Great* was not one that was taken lightly.⁵ It was 1830 when the possibility of writing a history of Frederick was first mooted but not until 1851

² In an article in *Fraser's Magazine* in April 1881 shortly after Carlyle's death, Andrew Lang opined that the *French Revolution* “first proved what Mr. Carlyle could really do” and described it as “by far the greatest of Mr. Carlyle's books” (525, 526). Richard Holt Hutton, in his review of Carlyle in *Good Words* in December 1881, maintained that the *French Revolution* was “perhaps, the book of the century” (288).

³ Writing in his journal on November 11th 1849, a few months before the first of the *Latter-Day Pamphlets* was published, Carlyle claimed that his views in “these paper bundles” were “In dissent from all the world; in black contradiction, deep as the bases of my life, to all the philanthropic, emancipatory, constitutional, and other anarchic revolutionary jargon, with which the world, so far as I can conceive, is now full” (Froude, *Thomas Carlyle* 22).

⁴ In an article on the *Latter-Day Pamphlets* in October 1850, the reviewer from the *Eclectic Review* complained that Carlyle's style was “peculiarly vicious” (“Art. I.—*Latter-Day*” 387).

⁵ When citing material, this thesis refers throughout to the eight volumes of *History of Friedrich II. of Prussia, called Frederick the Great* in the Centenary edition of *The Works of Thomas Carlyle*, edited by H.D. Traill, 1896-1899. This work will hereafter be referred to as *Frederick* and the Centenary edition will be cited throughout as *Works*. *Frederick* was published in volumes 12-19 of this edition between 1897 and 1898.

that he began seriously researching his subject. One of the primary reasons behind this lengthy delay was Carlyle's vacillation over his choice of Frederick as a suitably heroic figure and it took a further five years before he eventually produced his first drafts of *Frederick*.⁶ It was Frederick's proven ability to create a stable and prosperous Prussian state out of a previously chaotic regime that appealed to Carlyle. Furthermore, the king was already known to British readers in his role as a courageous and successful commander of the Prussian army during the Silesian Wars. Yet there was another, less favourable side to the Prussian monarch. In a review of *Frederick* in 1865, General Sir Edward Bruce Hamley noted that although Frederick "had talents, conversational powers, and a fondness for discussion, whether light or philosophic, which would have made him one of the most agreeable men of his time", these favourable traits were marred by "a marked malevolence which rendered the atmosphere around him insecure and capricious" ("Carlyle's Frederick" 49). Hamley was not alone in expressing disapproval not only of Frederick, but also of his father, Friedrich Wilhelm, a man whom Thomas Babington Macaulay had recently revealed to be a monstrous individual.⁷ Pre-existing negative attitudes towards the King of Prussia and Friedrich Wilhelm meant that Carlyle's choice of Frederick as a model for British readers to follow was always going to be problematic.

⁶ It was 1858 before the first two volumes were published, with Volumes III and IV appearing in 1862 and 1864 respectively. Carlyle's laborious work on his six volume epic fully occupied his time until the publication of the final two volumes in March 1865.

⁷ In an 1842 review essay, Macaulay had declared, "The nature of Frederic William was hard and bad, and the habit of exercising arbitrary power had made him frightfully savage. His rage constantly vented itself to right and left in curses and blows. When his Majesty took a walk, every human being fled before him, as if a tiger had broken loose from a menagerie" (246).

In order to use his epic as a vehicle for teaching his readers, it was necessary for Carlyle to write a history of this second King of Prussia in a way that was entertaining, enthralling and held the reader's attention. As a means of achieving this, Carlyle created what Ruth apRoberts has described as "a remarkable three-way relationship between himself, Frederick, and the reader" situating Frederick firmly at the apex of this triadic structure (24). Carlyle hoped that the creation of this relationship would allow him to approach and educate his readers in a manner far removed from the strident tones of the *Latter-Day Pamphlets*. Readers' favourable perception of Frederick's character was a key factor in Carlyle's strategy of maintaining their interest throughout his epic. If readers remained unconvinced of the king's heroic credentials or simply lost interest in Frederick and his exploits, the triadic structure would fail. Carlyle was also aware that for *Frederick* to be successful it would be vital to shed the public's dominant image of him as an authoritarian sage. To this end, he adopted the persona of a storyteller throughout *Frederick*, employing a variety of oral strategies in order to 'speak' to his readers and encourage them to become imaginatively involved in Frederick's history. As part of this strategy, Carlyle repeatedly introduces his own voice into the text in order to maintain a continuous dialogue with his readers and reinforce the Carlyle-reader component of the tripartite relationship.

In his endeavour to write Frederick's history in a manner that was far removed from the "Dryasdust" approach to historiography that he repeatedly criticised, Carlyle's methodology in *Frederick* compares favourably with that of other Victorian

historians. Rosemary Jann makes a distinction between professional historians and what she refers to as “literary” historians during this period:⁸

In England historical writing remained the domain of the man of letters for the better part of the century It was the last age in which the historian could expect to command the attention of a large and relatively homogenous audience of educated general readers and to rest his authority on his ability to teach and uplift rather than on his advance of historical knowledge.

Each of these six historians built his public role on a private, essentially romantic, attachment to the past. Each recognized the importance of imagination to historical reconstruction. Most openly endorsed the romantic view that in order to understand the past event, the historian had to relive it through an act of sympathetic projection, and that to convince readers of its importance, he had to resuscitate it through an act of literary creation. (xxvi)⁹

Whereas the professional historian stood firmly outside the narrative, it was the task of the “literary” historian to make his presence felt. With his emphasis on reader involvement, his imaginative reconstruction of past events, his use of fictive techniques and his insistence on foregrounding himself in the text, Carlyle can be seen to fall into the category of a “literary” historian.¹⁰

One problem facing Carlyle was the Victorian insistence on evidence that had been arrived at by means of thorough analysis and rigorous investigation. If *Frederick* was an “act of literary creation” by Carlyle, it needed to have a sound historical basis in

⁸ Richard W. Schoch makes a similar observation on the distinction between the professional and “literary” historian: “The professional nineteenth-century historian was ... a kind of ghost-writer whose feigned absence from within his own narrative was the precise guarantor of its authenticity” (28).

⁹ In addition to analysing Carlyle’s methodology, Jann also investigates that of Thomas Arnold (1795-1842), Thomas Babington Macaulay (1800-1859), James Anthony Froude (1818-1894), John Richard Green (1837-1883) and Edward Augustus Freeman (1823-1892).

¹⁰ Other recent critics have commented on the relationship of Victorian historiography to fiction. George Levine notes, “Like many other Victorians, Carlyle seems to have found that certain things could only be said through indirection and could best be expressed, therefore, through fiction. This need for indirection seems to me one of the most interesting phenomena of the Victorian experience; and one might be able to make some headway in explaining it by working out why (even to the end of his career, when his various disguises were well known) fictional devices were so attractive to Carlyle” (20).

order to satisfy readers' expectations. Carlyle met these expectations with his well-documented and extensive research for *Frederick*, which included two trips to Germany in 1852 and 1858 to source material and visit the sites of Frederick's major battles. Carlyle employed his first-hand knowledge of these battlefields to create a highly evocative and imaginative account of the Seven Years' War. He repeatedly emphasised Frederick's fame as a successful military commander during this conflict with the intention of not only involving his readers imaginatively but also ratifying the king's position in the triadic structure. In order to investigate Carlyle's literary techniques, this thesis focuses primarily on those sections of *Frederick* that deal with the events leading up to and during the Seven Years' War, an event which was triggered by Frederick's invasion of the province of Silesia in 1740.

The death of Emperor Charles VI on October 20th 1740 was the catalyst for this invasion, an act which inaugurated the First Silesian War (1740-1742).¹¹ On the Emperor's death, Frederick immediately demanded that Silesia should be returned to Prussia and he contested the validity of the Pragmatic Sanction.¹² As the debate over the Emperor's successor continued and Frederick's demands for the return of Silesia were not met, the king quietly amassed his forces before marching into and occupying Silesia in December 1740. Although Frederick's occupation of Silesia was

¹¹ The First Silesian War was the first phase of the War of the Austrian Succession. It was followed by the Second Silesian War (1744-1745) and the Third Silesian War (1756-1763), also known as the Seven Years' War. As well as the controversy over the ownership of Silesia, the War of the Austrian Succession originated due to the Pragmatic Sanction of April 19th 1713. This decree by Emperor Charles VI allowed a daughter to inherit the throne, giving precedence to his own daughters over those of his elder brother, Joseph I (by then deceased), an act which allowed his daughter, Queen Maria Theresa of Hungary, to succeed him on his death.

¹² The 1537 Treaty of Schwiebus decreed that, on the extinction of the Piast dynasty the Silesian princedoms of Liegnitz, Wohlau and Brieg were to be handed to Brandenburg, a major principality of the Holy Roman Empire that was ruled by the House of Hohenzollern from 1415 onwards. Although the Piast line died out with the death of George William of Liegnitz in 1675, the 1537 treaty was not implemented as the Prussian Elector at the time accepted payment in lieu of the claim.

seen by some as justifiable, the speed with which he achieved his goal prompted many contemporary commentators to regard the invasion as an act of cynical opportunism by the recently crowned King of Prussia. Frederick's actions brought him into conflict with the new Empress, Queen Maria Theresa, a situation that was not resolved until February 1763 when the Treaty of Hubertsuberg, along with the Treaty of Paris, brought the Seven Years' War to an end. Although Prussia was successful in keeping possession of Silesia, for the most part the Seven Years' War left the rest of Europe unchanged.¹³ However, Frederick's perceived military acumen, demonstrated by his many victories during this lengthy conflict raised his profile throughout Europe. Furthermore, his fame became more widespread in Britain due to the collapse of the Anglo-Austrian alliance in 1756. This event saw Britain change sides in the conflict and fight with Prussia against their former allies, the Austrians. In *Frederick*, Carlyle deliberately capitalised on the martial aspects of Frederick's kingship in order to hold him up as an "exemplar" for his contemporaries (*Works* 12: 17).

Although the hostility towards his *Latter-Day Pamphlets* had temporarily undermined Carlyle's reputation, he was still regarded by many as a man of genius and remained one of the era's most eminent authors. As the anonymous author in the *Eclectic Review* maintained in an 1850 article discussing the *Latter-Day Pamphlets*, "The author of these pamphlets may rest assured—if it is any satisfaction to him—that neither readers nor reviewers will, knowingly, pass by any thing bearing his

¹³ In a review of *Frederick* on April 22nd 1865, the *Saturday Review* highlighted this fact, complaining: "Sometimes Frederick wins, and sometimes he loses; but we know beforehand that all the parties to it ended as they began, and therefore the ups and downs do not affect us much" ("Carlyle's Frederick" 477).

name. The position he occupies in the world of letters has been gradually and well earned ... of the many books he has written, there are none that do not bear the stamp of genius” (“Art. I.—*Latter-Day*” 385). The strength of Carlyle’s reputation guaranteed that the long-awaited initial volumes of *Frederick* would command the public’s attention. Press reports of Carlyle’s trip to Germany in 1852 in order to acquire as much information as possible on Frederick had generated an air of eager expectation for his forthcoming history.¹⁴ In addition, Carlyle was given enormous credit for the vast amount of research which he had undertaken in order to write his epic, a process which had fully occupied his time for several years. In the opening pages of Volume I of *Frederick*, Carlyle had informed his readers of the enormity of his task:

With such wagonloads of Books and Printed Records as exist on the subject of Friedrich, it has always seemed possible, even for a stranger, to acquire some real understanding of him;—though practically, here and now, I have to own, it proves difficult beyond conception. Alas, the Books are not cosmic, they are chaotic; and turn out unexpectedly void of instruction to us. (*Works* 12: 10)

When it came to processing these “wagonloads” of source material in *Frederick*, Carlyle favoured eye-witness reports above all other accounts, using these to portray historical events through the actions of the players involved. He used a variety of different media, eye-witness accounts, letters, personal anecdotes and travelogue material, which he weaved together to create a tapestry, his voice acting as the thread which ran through the work, binding the different sections together. However, his policy of eulogizing Frederick at all costs became a dilemma for Carlyle as his

¹⁴ On October 30th 1852, the correspondent from the *Examiner* had written, “Mr Carlyle is now in Berlin, where he has been for some weeks busily engaged in looking over documents &c., in the library, for the purpose of collecting materials from the most authentic sources for his history of Frederick the Great, which he is about to write” (“Foreign Gleanings” 695).

ongoing research revealed traits in the king which were far from heroic. This increasing awareness led Carlyle to edit and censor sections of his research material in Frederick's favour to the point where Carlyle's own credibility became compromised.

In their key position as mediators between Carlyle and the reading public, reviewers from the leading contemporary periodicals could exert a powerful influence on the triadic structure of Frederick, Carlyle and the reader. Volumes I and II of *Frederick* met with a mixed reception when they were published in 1858. Many reviewers reacted angrily when they found themselves unable to reconcile Carlyle's depiction of Frederick and his father, Friedrich Wilhelm, with their preconceptions of either of these characters. Carlyle's insistence on portraying both of these men as heroic individuals, in spite of substantial evidence to the contrary, became a significant factor in determining the reaction to the initial volumes of *Frederick*, and, to some extent, set the tone for the response to future volumes. Subsequent volumes met with more approval, however, with Carlyle receiving many plaudits for his abilities as a military historian, in particular for his vivid battle-field descriptions. In these later volumes, with his coverage of Frederick's various military exploits, Carlyle had finally arrived at a period of intense interest for his readers.

Yet although his reputation as a revered man of letters ensured that Carlyle commanded a degree of deference and respect from the majority of reviewers, as he continued to extol Frederick's virtues in these later volumes, reviewers' attitudes began to harden and Carlyle's capabilities as a trustworthy and competent historian

came into question. By the time that the final two volumes of *Frederick* were published in 1865 and reviewers were finally able to recognise the scale of the project, the majority of them, although still harbouring reservations over his hero-worship of Frederick and Friedrich Wilhelm, were fulsome in their praise of Carlyle's epic. There was an elegiac tone to several of these final reviews, indicating that these reviewers believed that the publication of the final volumes of *Frederick* had signalled the end of Carlyle's long and illustrious literary career.

In chapter one of this thesis, the circumstances surrounding Carlyle's early deliberations over his choice of Frederick as the subject for his history are explored and reasons are posited as to why he eventually embarked on this arduous project. The creation and maintenance of the triadic structure of Carlyle, Frederick and the reader are examined in detail, focusing in particular on the relationship between the reader and Frederick. In an effort to capture the imagination of his readers, Carlyle appropriated the prevailing national obsession with war poetry and songs. He employed various literary devices to convey the sounds and sensations of warfare as accurately as possible, using fricatives, onomatopoeias and pathetic fallacy, amongst other techniques. In order to maintain Frederick's pivotal position at the apex of the triangle, and strengthen the reader-Frederick component of the structure, Carlyle consistently depicted him in three very distinct ways: as a quasi-divine monarch, a courageous military leader and a gracious fellow mortal.

Chapters two and three focus on Carlyle's narrative style and his musicality. Although Carlyle was ostensibly engaged in setting down Frederick's history, his

style of writing in *Frederick* shows more affinity with the practice of storytelling than with traditional historiography. Carlyle's decision to use a variety of oral strategies in *Frederick* is explored in relation to the Victorians' pre-occupation with print culture's displacement of orality and contemporary attempts to 'write voice'. A close reading of specific passages of *Frederick* is carried out in order to demonstrate the various oral techniques that Carlyle employed, such as circularity, repetition and suspense as a means of maintaining the attention of readers and enhancing Frederick's profile. Throughout these two chapters, references will be made to Walter Ong's influential text, *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word* and Penny Fielding's *Writing and Orality: Nationality, Culture, and Nineteenth-Century Scottish Fiction*. An investigation is also carried out into Carlyle's appropriation of the Victorian belief that music could be a civilizing force, both on a personal and a national level. Throughout *Frederick*, Carlyle allows music to become a leitmotif for Frederick's cultured refinement by associating the king with music and rhythm in a variety of forms.

Chapters four and five focus on Carlyle's research methods, examining the texts that Carlyle used for his research. An investigation is undertaken into how this material was incorporated into *Frederick* and an evaluation is carried out into whether or not Carlyle was true to his source material. As a means of maintaining Frederick's position at the head of the triadic structure, Carlyle displays a marked bias in Frederick's favour in his sifting and selection of his research data. Yet Carlyle was, for the most part, a diligent and thorough researcher, leading Joseph Neuberg to remark on the "voraciousness" with which he "devours everything relating to the

subject, and with what powers of digestion he assimilates the contents” (*The Collected Letters of Thomas and Jane Welsh Carlyle* 27: 156).¹⁵ Carlyle referred to a variety of sources for each historical episode that he covered, generally favouring the report of a “seeing Witness” and using a first-hand account where it existed. For all that, my research has revealed discrepancies in Carlyle’s research methods which demonstrate that he omitted, edited and censored material which he considered might be prejudicial to his protagonist.

The contemporary reception of *Frederick* is examined in chapters six and seven. Chapter six focuses on the reaction to Volumes I and II of *Frederick* which were published together in 1858. Many reviewers who were eager to read about the second King of Prussia objected strenuously to Carlyle’s decision to all but ignore Frederick in Volume I and focus instead on outlining his lengthy ancestry, a process which took up almost three hundred pages of the first volume. In addition, in these initial volumes, Carlyle’s attempts to eulogize Frederick and his father, Friedrich Wilhelm (an individual who had been delineated by Macaulay in his recent essay as a man “whose character was disfigured by odious vices, and whose eccentricities were such as had never before been seen out of a madhouse”) provoked an angry reaction from many reviewers and threatened the stability of Carlyle’s triadic structure (245). Chapter seven investigates the reception given to these later volumes, paying particular attention to reviewers’ reactions in 1865 on completion of the work and in 1881 on the event of Carlyle’s death. The thesis concludes by

¹⁵ Joseph Neuberger, 1806-1867, was a researcher and translator who voluntarily assisted Carlyle with his research on *Frederick*. *The Collected Letters of Thomas and Jane Welsh Carlyle* will be referred to throughout as *CL*.

examining both Carlyle's and *Frederick's* places in posterity. It will investigate whether Carlyle's lengthy and persuasive arguments in *Frederick* had been successful in "presenting, in this Last of the Kings, an exemplar to my contemporaries" or if Carlyle's persistent championing of the second King of Prussia had only resulted in causing lasting damage to Carlyle's own credibility as a reputable historian (*Works* 12: 17).

Throughout this thesis, my approach to Carlyle's work on *Frederick* has been from a literary stance, and the finished work is neither primarily comparative history nor historiography. Instead, it is an attempt to explore the literary techniques that Carlyle used, as a deliberate contrast to the "Dryasdust" approach to history which he abhorred, in order to present his source material in a format which would appeal to his readers and therefore allow him to fulfil his aim of instructing them. During the course of my research it became clear that although, historically, a section of reviewers may have appropriated Carlyle for their own political or religious ends, in the main he was regarded by many of them as a special case whose work could not be readily categorized. By the time the final volumes of *Frederick* were published in 1865, it was widely held that Carlyle was nearing the end of his literary career and that his convictions no longer carried as much weight as they had previously. It could be argued, therefore, that *Frederick* was also treated as a special case by reviewers. Although *Frederick* was one of Carlyle's major publications, to date this work has been largely neglected.¹⁶ This is a self-contained and novel thesis focusing on the nineteenth century response to *Frederick*, examining the period of the work's

¹⁶ Even amongst Carlyle scholars, few of whom have read *Frederick* in its entirety.

composition and its contemporary reception amongst reviewers. *Frederick* received scant critical attention in the twentieth century and little has been written about the way in which Carlyle researched and produced his epic.¹⁷ A critical work of this nature is therefore long overdue, a situation which this thesis sets out to address.

¹⁷ Twentieth century texts that I have traced which mention *Frederick* are, in ascending date order: Hughes, A.M.D. *Carlyle's Frederick the Great*. 1916; *John o' London's Weekly*. October 30th 1920; Ralli, Augustus *Guide to Carlyle*. 1920; Dark, Sydney. *John o' London's Weekly*. August 18th 1923; "Sartor Resartus." *The National Review*, February 1923; Young, Norwood *Carlyle: His Rise and Fall*. 1927; Vanden Bosche, Chris. *Carlyle and the Search for Authority*. 1991; *The Carlyle Encyclopedia*, 2004 (contains a critical assessment of the reception given to *Frederick*).

Chapter 1

Mastering the Narrative: Carlyle's "remarkable three-way relationship"

“Frederick the Great, as an Author, Soldier, King and Man,
well deserves to have his History written.”¹

The driving force behind Carlyle's decision to write *Frederick* was his intention to use this epic as a vehicle for teaching his readers. In order to achieve this, it was necessary to write a history of this second King of Prussia in a way that was entertaining, enthralling and held the reader's attention. Carlyle's richly detailed and highly evocative style of writing brought Frederick and everything associated with him vividly back to life. Through this reclamation of the past, he aimed to transform individual readers into a unified readership, a literary 'audience' who would become, in Swinburne's words, "ravenous with expectation" for the next instalment of Carlyle's six volume epic (1: 115).² Furthermore, Carlyle intended to establish a connection between Frederick and himself in the minds of his readers, effectively creating a triangular structure which consisted of the reader, Frederick and Carlyle. In a recent essay on *Frederick*, Ruth apRoberts notes Carlyle's success in this endeavour: "In the *History of Frederick the Great*, Carlyle presents a remarkable three-way relationship between himself, Frederick, and the reader, which is both open and perpetually shifting" (24). The creation of this relationship allowed Carlyle

¹ Carlyle's reply in the Spring of 1830 to a request from G.R. Gleig to contribute a "Popular History of Germany" to *The Library of General Knowledge* (CL 5:102).

² The English poet Algernon Charles Swinburne, 1837-1909, made this comment in a letter to Pauline, Lady Trevelyan on 15th March 1865: "I am raging in silence at the postponement from day to day of Mr. Carlyle's volumes. He ought to be in London tying firebrands to the tails of those unclean foxes called publishers and printers. Meantime the world is growing lean with hunger and ravenous with expectation" (1: 115).

to approach his readers in a manner far removed from the aggressive tone of his *Latter-Day Pamphlets*.³ On their publication in 1850 these had received unfavourable reviews.⁴ Writing in his journal on 7th February of that year, Carlyle complained that the first of these *Pamphlets* had brought him “Little save *abuse* hitherto”, opining that “Abuse enough, and almost that only, is what I have to look for with confidence” (Froude, *Thomas Carlyle* 28). Carlyle was well aware that in order to avoid further abuse and to enable him to reach his readers, he had to adopt a different approach. By means of this triangular network of connections he hoped to achieve his goal.

In order to maintain the Reader-Frederick-Carlyle trinity, Carlyle is engaged throughout *Frederick* in a sustained, three-pronged, literary campaign. This chapter will begin by investigating the first aspect of his strategy, exploring the various literary devices that Carlyle employed to attract and maintain the attention of his readers, thereby drawing them into the action of his epic. It will then move on to the second part of Carlyle’s campaign, investigating the ways in which Carlyle encouraged his readers in their admiration of and respect for Frederick. The final section will deal with the last part of this literary operation, demonstrating that, in

³ These will be referred to throughout as *Pamphlets*.

⁴ The *Eclectic Review* of October 1850 described Carlyle’s style in the *Pamphlets* as “peculiarly vicious” (“Art.I.—*Latter-Day*” 387). Their reviewer also accused Carlyle of “exaggeration; amounting, not unfrequently, to positive falsehood” (391). In an anonymous review of the *Pamphlets* which appeared in *Blackwood’s Magazine* in June 1850, William Edmonstoune Aytoun said of Carlyle, “we used to hear him lauded and commended as a writer of the profoundest stamp, as a deep original thinker, a thoroughpaced philanthropist, the champion of genuine greatness, and the unflinching enemy of delusions. Now, however, things are altered. Mr Carlyle has got a new crochet into his head, and to the utter discomfiture of his former admirers, he manifests a truculent and ultra-tyrannical spirit, abuses the political economists, wants to have a strong coercive government, indicates a decided leaning to the whip and the musket as effectual modes of reasoning, and, in short, abjures democracy!” (643). Aytoun (1813-1865) was a Scottish lawyer and political writer who was a regular contributor to *Blackwood’s*.

order to maintain his position in the three-way relationship, Carlyle had to ensure that his own voice was always present in tandem with the telling of Frederick's history. He achieved this by frequently interrupting the main narrative either to interject his own informal and often humorous asides to the reader or to express his feelings of empathy with Frederick and his situation. Before proceeding with the investigations outlined above, this chapter will investigate the reasons behind Carlyle's choice of Frederick as his subject, and will present background information which is not only relevant to Carlyle's decision to write this epic, but which also has a bearing on Carlyle's later work as the project progresses.

As noted above, Carlyle had privately expressed disappointment at the public's hostile reception of his *Pamphlets*. In his journal of February 1850 he remarked, "my state of health and heart is highly unfavourable. Nay, worst of all, a kind of stony *indifference* is spreading over me. I am getting *weary* of suffering" (Froude, *Thomas Carlyle* 28). Taking into account these negative feelings coupled with his apparently precarious state of health and advancing years – he was fifty-five at the time of writing this journal entry and nearing his sixties when he began working on *Frederick* – his decision to embark on this lengthy project invites scrutiny. There is a question mark over whether or not he was, at the outset of the project, aware of the full extent of the task. Carlyle first considered writing a history of Frederick as early as 1830, following a request by G.R. Gleig to contribute a "Popular History of Germany" to *The Library of General Knowledge*. Carlyle replied on 21st May of that year, "Frederick the Great, as an Author, Soldier, King and Man, well deserves to

have his History written I will give them the best single Volume I can on the brave Fritz: I think it might be ready before this time twelvemonth; and very probably I might go to Germany in winter to inquire into it better” (CL 5: 102). Carlyle’s suggestion that he could produce a one volume history of Frederick within a year indicates his underestimation of the size of the project and appears rather naïve in hindsight. At this early stage of development Carlyle could, perhaps, be excused for being overly optimistic. However, at the end of December 1863, in a letter to Richard Monckton Milnes congratulating him on his recent elevation to the peerage, Carlyle complained, “My unfortunate history has bulged into a sixth volume” (Reid, *The life, letters, and friendships of Richard Monckton Milnes, first Lord Houghton* 113).⁵ It appears that even thirty-three years later Carlyle was still surprised by the sheer scale of the task he had undertaken.

In a series of letters written in 1852, Carlyle debated over whether or not he should proceed with a history of Frederick. Writing on 1st March to Neuberg, Carlyle opined, “it remains quite unlikely that I shall ever *write* a word about Friedrich” and he reinforced this sentiment in a letter to his brother, John on 13th March, “I am often tempted to renounce it all, some good day” (CL 27: 57, 70). Less than three months later, he told Karl August Varnhagen von Ense, “I decidedly grow in love for my Hero, as I go on; and can by no means decide to throw him up at this stage of the inquiry. That I should ever write anything on *Fk* seems more and more unlikely” (136).⁶ A useful comparison can be made between this letter to von Ense and Carlyle’s sentiments in a letter to his wife Jane on 13th August where he declared

⁵ This work will hereafter be referred to as *Milnes*.

⁶ Varnhagen von Ense, 1785-1858, was a Prussian soldier, diplomat and biographer who regularly corresponded with Carlyle.

“really at heart I do not much love him: yet perhaps I *could* write a goodish kind of Book upon him” (225).⁷ These letters highlight Carlyle’s inner struggle: not only did he vacillate between love and outright dislike for Frederick, but he was also torn between, on the one hand, his belief that a history of Frederick was possible and, on the other, his desire to “renounce it all”.

Carlyle was still wrestling with this problem by the end of 1852, writing in his journal in December of that year, “If I do not stand to myself, and to my own cause, it will be the worse for me! *Eheu!* Shall I try *Friedrich*, or not try him?” (364). Small wonder that in his 1885 *Autobiography*, Henry Taylor remarked of Carlyle that “his mind seems utterly incapable of coming to any conclusion about anything He can see nothing but the chaos of his own mind reflected in the universe” (1: 328). Taylor’s remarks appear to be borne out in Carlyle’s admission to Jane in August 1852 that “a kind of bayonet in the back is *pushing* me on” (*CL* 27: 231). This confession implies that Carlyle’s decision to proceed with *Frederick* was tempered by a strong sense of being engaged in a divine mission. He was acutely aware of the fact that this might be his final opportunity to pass on his wisdom to his readers. Writing in his journal in 1854 he acknowledged his situation: “I am getting old, yet would grudge to depart without trying to tell a little more of my mind” (Froude, *Thomas Carlyle* 172).

Carlyle may also have felt driven to the task in response to Macaulay’s 1842 review essay on Frederick. As Arthur and Vonna Adrian note in their recent essay on

⁷ For Jane Welsh Carlyle see Oxford Dictionary of National Biography.

Frederick, “Instead of a hero, Macaulay had delineated a malicious practical joker, a blasphemer, a tyrannical military and civic leader, a plunderer, a deceiver—in short, an utter scoundrel” (187). Carlyle’s ambivalence towards Frederick did not extend to viewing him in quite such derogatory terms. A comment written by Carlyle which later appeared in Froude’s 1883 publication, *Letters and Memorials of Jane Welsh Carlyle* reveals why he eventually embarked on the project:

I felt uncertain, disinclined; and in the end engaged in it merely on the principle *Tantus labor non sit cassus* [let not such a great work be lost] (as the ‘Dies Iræ’ has it). My heart was not in it: other such shoreless and bottomless chaos, with traces of a hero imprisoned there, I never did behold, nor will another soon in this world. *Stupiditas stupiditatum, omnia stupiditas* [Stupidity of stupidities, all is stupidity]. (209)

Over the thirteen years in which he was involved with researching and writing *Frederick* fewer and fewer “traces of a hero” revealed themselves to Carlyle, a situation that became increasingly problematic, and one which is dealt with later in this thesis. These 1852 letters indicate Carlyle’s ambivalence towards Frederick and demonstrate a certain unwillingness to engage with the project. Yet we can already see the initial signs that Carlyle is locked into this three-way compact. His reluctance appears to be challenged by his perceived need to make this compact after the failure of the *Pamphlets*. Carlyle’s negative feelings towards the project evolved over a period of time into a sense of profound weariness which eventually found its way into the text.⁸

Carlyle chose the figure of Frederick to demonstrate his belief in the absolute necessity of the existence of a strong leader for people to follow. He found much to admire in Frederick. Morse Peckham argues that “Friedrich had created an island of

⁸ In a later volume of *Frederick*, Carlyle refers to himself as a “wearied Editor” (*Works* 18: 330). This event is covered in more detail in chapter three of this thesis.

social order” in what was widely seen as the “chaos of the eighteenth century” (201). For Carlyle, the French Revolution was proof beyond doubt of the century’s chaotic nature. In view of his belief that British society in the nineteenth century was in a similar state of upheaval to that experienced in pre-Revolutionary France, Carlyle heartily approved of Frederick’s ability to establish social order. Here was a man whose proven administrative capabilities could be held up as an example for others to follow. Furthermore, on the battlefield Frederick had shown himself to be an astute and courageous military leader. These were traits which lent themselves well to Carlyle’s plans to portray him as a heroic and inspirational figure. Carlyle realised that these qualities would convey a powerful and telling image to his readers. In order to fully understand Frederick’s military history, Carlyle embarked on “a special study, entirely new to him, of military science and the art of war” (Froude, *Thomas Carlyle* 86).

In addition to his personal reservations concerning the merits and demerits of writing Frederick’s history, Carlyle was conscious of the fact that setting down the history of a foreign sovereign involved an element of risk. The Adrians argue that Carlyle was aware that, “Nineteenth-century England ... was too insular, too complacent to look for military models beyond her own border” (186). Carlyle, therefore, had to write Frederick’s history in a way that would overcome a perceived lack of interest in, or even antipathy towards his subject. One measure of his success in this endeavour is found in a letter sent to Carlyle on 6th April 1865 from Neuberg, who said of *Frederick* that it was “shewing once more (as, to my knowledge, it has never been done in modern Ages) History as a ‘Tale of wonder’” (Ms. 553.278. National

Library of Scotland).⁹ Neuberg's description emphasises three important factors pertaining to *Frederick*. He highlights the fact that Carlyle is breaking new ground by writing history in a manner that, to date, has "never been done". In addition, he stresses that this is a "Tale", inferring that Carlyle is acting as a storyteller rather than behaving as a conventional historian. Finally, he claims that this is a tale of "wonder". This reinforces the notion that Carlyle's text does not conform to the 'Dryasdust' method of writing history but portrays past events in a style that will stimulate the interest and imagination of his readers.

As noted earlier in this chapter, the impetus behind Carlyle's desire to teach his readers was altruistic. He believed that a chain of unfortunate events in the early to mid-nineteenth century had left Europe in disarray, with Governments abandoning their traditional authoritarian roles and adopting a new policy of *laissez-faire*.¹⁰ Carlyle felt that the nation was becoming fragmented. In his view, the nation needed to function as a family unit, with the older, more experienced members of the group instructing and educating the young. Carlyle had already tried to address this problem with the publication of his *Pamphlets*. However, his hectoring tone in these – in one passage he "assert[ed] with great confidence, supported by the whole Universe, and by some Two-hundred generations of men, who have left us some record of themselves there, That the few Wise will have, by one method or another, to take command of the innumerable Foolish" – had produced an adverse reaction in his readers (34). Froude describes the public reaction to the *Pamphlets* as being one of "astonished indignation", maintaining that the "popular impression" was that

⁹ The National Library of Scotland will be referred to hereafter as NLS.

¹⁰ For example the failure of Chartism, the 'Hungry '40s' [1840s] in England, the Irish potato famine in 1845 and the Revolutions in Europe in 1848.

Carlyle had “taken to whisky” (*Thomas Carlyle* 36). In an essay on the *Pamphlets*, Jules P. Seigel describes Carlyle’s style: “The language is violent as Carlyle agitates, urges and threatens ... familiar themes and images, however unsystematically presented, seem mainly held together by the urgency of the writer’s voice, painfully haranguing, relentlessly arguing his readers into accepting his prophetic message” (*“Latter-Day Pamphlets”* 156).

Carlyle had come to realise that “painfully haranguing” his readers into submission with this “violent” language was not the best way in which to deliver his message. When he wrote *Frederick*, therefore, he took an entirely different approach. Although he named this work a *History of Friedrich II of Prussia*, Carlyle was acting not as a conventional historian but creating, in Neuberger’s words, “a Tale of wonder”. He was cloaking his didacticism within an epic tale of a man who he considered to be one of the last great kings of Europe. As early as 1830, Carlyle had noted the importance of the role of the historian as a storyteller and teacher. In his essay “On History” he opined:

whereas, of old, the charm of History lay chiefly in gratifying our common appetite for the wonderful, for the unknown; and her office was but as that of a Minstrel and Story-teller, she has now farther become a School-mistress ... all learners, all inquiring minds of every order, are gathered round her footstool, and reverently pondering her lessons, as the true basis of Wisdom. (*Works* 27: 84)

Significantly, in this passage Carlyle is alluding to an oral performance, with the audience “gathered round” the “footstool” of History. Simulation of oral performance is a key technique which Carlyle uses throughout *Frederick* and one which will be dealt with more fully in this chapter and the next. Carlyle employs oral techniques to ‘speak’ to his readers and impart his wisdom informally and intimately

as opposed to lecturing them. This reworking of “the innumerable Foolish” of the *Pamphlets* being commanded by “the few” would, he hoped, be more acceptable to his readers. In spite of their capacity to “smote as with the rebuke and warning of a prophet”, Frederic Harrison argued that the *Pamphlets* had “exerted a great and wholesome effect” on the reading public (*Studies* 47). More recent critics such as G.B. Tennyson have also commented on Carlyle’s success in instructing his readers: “If one had to settle upon a single word to characterize the general Victorian view of Carlyle, that word would be—Teacher It was the response he sought from his readers and in the main they made that response intelligently and thoughtfully” (34-35).

Carlyle was confident of his abilities as a teacher; what was required was an appropriate vehicle to convey his teachings to the reading public. He would have been aware that he had only to look back to the Napoleonic Wars to find examples of the ways in which the British public had been strongly influenced by contemporary war poetry and songs. Simon Bainbridge has written extensively about the rise in popularity of this type of material and the militarization of British society at this time. He refers to Walter Scott’s long narrative poem, *The Lady of the Lake*, arguing that this became the British army’s “secret weapon” during the Peninsular War against Napoleon (1). Not only was this poem inspirational to the troops when it was read out to them *en masse*, but, Bainbridge argues, the private act of reading the poem “transport[ed] the reader to the battlefield itself” and transformed “the reader into a warrior” (17, 144). Bainbridge claims that during the Napoleonic Wars, “for the majority of the population, war, at least in the form of battle, was something that

took place outside their immediate experience” (18). He makes the case that writers were well aware of this disparity and that they “saw the imagination as the means of bridging this gap and of making war visible” (18). In *Frederick*, Carlyle adopts a similar strategy. As the following section will demonstrate, he, too, appealed to the imagination of his readers by using various techniques to involve them in the action of his epic and thus cement their position in the triadic structure.

In order for Carlyle to situate his readers in the three-way relationship, he had to attract and maintain their attention. He achieved this by presenting a highly-detailed, lively, quasi-first-hand account of the various battles in the Seven Years’ War which drew them into the action of his epic by “transport[ing]” them “to the battlefield itself”. *The Athenaeum* of 3rd May 1862 noted that Carlyle’s “style, when he follows the army, marches with it, echoes its guns, reflects its bayonet gleams, is in harmony with its wildest music” (“*History of Friedrich*” 585). This description is particularly important as it highlights Carlyle’s expertise in accurately conveying the sights and sounds of battle to his readers, an ability which was a significant factor in his strategy of commanding their attention. In addition, Carlyle regularly allows the narrative to move between tenses, often slipping into the present tense, “nothing alive, as you pass, but a few poor oxen languidly sauntering up and down” (*Works* 17: 66) and in particular, using the present tense in battle scenes to heighten the sense of immediacy and involve the reader in the proceedings, “It is 6 o’clock. Damp dusk has thickened down into utter darkness, on these terms:—when, lo, cannonade and musketade from the south ... seriously loud; red glow of conflagration visible withal, —some unfortunate Village going up” (18: 317).

Through his careful choice of language, Carlyle places the reader at the heart of the battle and firmly holds his or her attention. In his coverage of the Battle of Lobositz, the first in The Seven Years' War, Carlyle describes "flickerings as of Horse squadrons, probably Hussar parties, [which] twinkle dubious in the wavering mist" and "a crackling of Pandour musketry and anti-musketry" (17: 67, 68). Carlyle succinctly and accurately conveys the appearance of the heavily armed cavalry by his use of the fricative "flickerings", and the sound of the musket fire with the onomatopoeic "crackling". For the Battle of Kolin, Carlyle adds the sense of smell, coupled with pathetic fallacy, another oft-used technique, when he describes the "thunder of artillery, case-shot, cartridge-shot, and sulphurous devouring whirlwind" (180-181). In his description of Torgau, the decisive and final battle of the war which took place on November 3rd 1760, Carlyle emphasises the noise and confusion which exist in the heat of battle. He highlights a confrontation between Frederick's forces and the Austrian army led by field-marshal Daun.¹¹ Carlyle describes how Daun, "opened 400 pieces of artillery" on the Prussians which "go raging and thundering into the hem of the Wood" (18: 310):

Archenholtz, a very young officer of fifteen, who came into it perhaps an hour hence, describes it as a thing surpassable only by Doomsday: clangorous rage of noise risen to the infinite; the boughs of the trees raining down on you, with horrid crash; the Forest, with its echoes, bellowing far and near, and reverberating in universal deathpeal; comparable to the Trump of Doom. (311)

Once more, Carlyle's description of the "artillery ... raging" and "the Forest ... bellowing" contains a highly effective use of pathetic fallacy which conveys to the reader the sense of hideous entrapment experienced by the Prussian soldiers.

¹¹ Count Leopold Joseph von Daun, 1705-1766, was a distinguished military commander in the Austrian army.

The extract above includes another technique favoured by Carlyle to draw his readers into the action of his epic. Throughout *Frederick*, Carlyle pointedly includes the reader in the scenes which he is portraying, here in the phrase “the boughs of the trees raining down on you”. This is a clear indication of his intention that readers will join Carlyle and Frederick as they march arm and arm into battle. All of these techniques are designed to “transport the reader to the battlefield itself” and position him or her at the heart of the action. As well as conveying the sights and sounds of the battle scenes, Carlyle applies this technique to other areas of the text. Prior to the battle of Torgau, Carlyle provides a description of the surrounding area: “the trees poor and mean for most part, but so innumerable, and all so silent, watching you all like mute witnesses, mutely whispering together; no voice but their combined whisper or big forest *sough* audible to you in the world” (303). In this excerpt, Carlyle combines several different techniques: addressing the reader, using the present tense, pathetic fallacy and alliteration. The reader can virtually hear the whisper of the trees through the words on the page. The structure of this passage indicates that its meaning would become more apparent to the reader through an oral performance. Read aloud, the sound of a voice might mimic the sound of the trees “whispering together”. This highlights Carlyle’s emphasis on the importance of oral techniques, and confirms the notion that he is ‘conversing’ with his readers. These attempts at a form of dialogue with his readers are a far cry from his approach in the *Pamphlets* and his technique of “painfully haranguing” them. Using the techniques outlined above, Carlyle hoped to involve his readers in his epic thus maintaining

their position in the three-way relationship. The remaining two thirds of this relationship required an equal amount of assiduous and constant attention.

The lynchpin of Carlyle's triadic structure was the figure of Frederick. If readers were not sufficiently enamoured with, or interested in Carlyle's leading man, or if Carlyle proved unable to forge a connection in their minds between Frederick and himself, the structure would fail. The reader's favourable perception of Frederick was key. At the outset of his epic Carlyle declares his intentions of portraying Frederick in a manner which would encourage admiration and respect from his readers. However, he admits that he harbours reservations about the success of his project; "My hopes of presenting, in this *Last of the Kings*, an exemplar to my contemporaries, I confess, are not high" (12: 17). This is not because Carlyle believes that Frederick himself is not worthy. Although he asserts that Frederick was "To the last, a questionable hero", Carlyle commends the manner in which he "comported himself in the Eighteenth Century, and managed *not* to be a Liar and Charlatan, as his Century was" (14, 15). In Carlyle's view, the problem was the dearth of suitable material concerning Frederick.¹² He complained, "it is evident the difficulties to a History of Friedrich are great and many We must renounce ideals. We must sadly take up with the mournfulest barren realities;—dismal continents of Brandenburg sand, as in this instance; mere tumbled mountains of marine-stores, without so much as an Index to them!" (17). Nevertheless, it is clear that even at this early stage of the proceedings Carlyle intended to portray Frederick

¹² "With such wagonloads of Books and Printed Records as exist on the subject of Friedrich, it has always seemed possible, even for a stranger, to acquire some real understanding of him;—though practically, here and now, I have to own, it proves difficult beyond conception. Alas, the Books are not cosmic, they are chaotic; and turn out unexpectedly void of instruction to us" (*Works* 12: 10).

as “an exemplar”, despite his personal reservations regarding Frederick’s heroic status, a dichotomy which became increasingly more problematic.

In a deliberate strategy aimed at winning the respect and trust of his readers on behalf of his hero, Carlyle depicts Frederick in three very different but complementary ways; as a quasi-divine king, a heroic military leader and a compassionate, gracious individual. Carlyle felt strongly that a portrait was an invaluable medium for communicating biographical information, and he urged the student of history to “search eagerly for a Portrait, for all the reasonable Portraits there are; and never rest till he have made out, if possible, what the man’s natural face was like” (29: 405).¹³ Carlyle was of the opinion that a portrait was “a small lighted *candle* by which the Biographies could for the first time be *read*, and some human interpretation be made of them”, and he himself had collected as many portraits of Frederick as he could find (405). Carlyle emphasised Frederick’s god-like qualities in particular in order to promote him in the eyes of his potentially refractory readership.

Carlyle goes to great lengths to suggest that there is a quasi-divine aspect to Frederick. An example of this can be seen in his coverage of the tale of one of Frederick’s subjects, Linsenbarth of Hemleben. On meeting the king to discuss a personal grievance, Linsenbarth’s recollection that the king ““gave such a look at me, like a flash of sunbeams glancing through you”” is only one of many references

¹³ Carlyle’s interest in portraits is reflected in his decision to sit on the selection board of the National Portrait Gallery in London and the “ardent wish, rather without much hope”, which he expressed in a letter to David Laing on 3rd May 1854, that a “*General Exhibition of Scottish Historical Portraits*” might one day become a reality (CL 29: 84).

to the appearance of light flashing out from Frederick's person, elevating him to the level of a superior being and likening him to a god (16: 253). Indeed, in certain contemporary accounts he is often directly referred to in god-like terms. Prior to his return to Berlin in 1750, Voltaire writes to Frederick, ““Well, Sire, your old Danae, poor malingerer old wretch, is coming to her Jove”” (269). Carlyle notes that in reply, Frederick enclosed expenses for Voltaire's trip, and then in response to a subsequent letter from Voltaire, Frederick “answered him like a King: By Gold Key of Chamberlain, Cross of the Order of Merit, and Pension of 20,000 francs (850*l.*) a year,—conveyed in as royal a Letter of Business as I have often read; melodious as Apollo, this too, though all in business prose, and, like Apollo, practical God of the *Sun* in this case” (269). Comparisons of Frederick to Apollo, the Greek god regarded as the symbol of light, and depictions of Frederick emanating rays of light, occur in many other instances throughout Carlyle's text. As part of the entertainment surrounding the Berlin Carrousel, a quasi-jousting contest hosted by Frederick, Carlyle describes “the Suppers of the King: chosen circle, with the King for centre; a radiant Friedrich flashing-out to right and left, till all kindles into coruscation round him; and it is such a blaze of spiritual sheet-lightnings,—wonderful to think of” (270).

Carlyle also brings to the reader's attention an instance where Frederick is likened to Mars, the god of war. During this Carrousel, Carlyle quotes “one high Gentleman ... at the Palace Supper-table” who remarks, ““Never in Athens or Rome were there braver sights or a worthier prize: I have seen the son of Mars' (King Friedrich) ‘with Paris's features’” (264). As part of his design to attribute quasi-divine aspects to

Frederick, Carlyle also makes biblical allusions. An example of this can be seen in his tale of Collini, an Italian who has just settled in Berlin. Carlyle remarks on the masses of people who have travelled to this city in recent years and pointedly makes a biblical connection: “What clouds of winged migratory people gathering in to Berlin, all through this Reign! Not since Noah’s Ark a stranger menagerie of creatures, mostly wild” (261). The description of “winged ... people” with its angelic connotations and the reference to Noah’s Ark conjures up images from the Book of Genesis. This passage infers that everyone is flocking to Berlin because of Frederick’s ‘divine presence’. For contemporary readers who were steeped in the literature of the Bible, these echoes of a biblical structure would help to reinforce Frederick’s status as a mortal god.

Carlyle has been roundly criticized in some quarters for his lengthy and detailed description of Frederick’s ancestry in Volumes I and II, and his predilection for offering numerous glimpses of the mundane goings-on at court. Harrison complained that *Frederick* was

not a book at all, but an encyclopædia of German biographies in the latter half of the eighteenth century. Who reads every word of these ten volumes? Who cares to know how big was the belly of some court chamberlain, or who were the lovers of some unendurable Frau? What a welter of dull garbage! In what dustheaps dost thou not smother us, Teufelsdröckh! Oh Thomas, Thomas, what Titania has bewitched thee with the head of Dryasdust on thy noble shoulders? (*Studies* 47)¹⁴

Carlyle’s presentation of Frederick’s lineage is a prolonged and often tedious affair. Significantly, however, this description takes place after Frederick’s birth which Carlyle covers in Book I, Volume I. Even at this early stage, Frederick is described

¹⁴ Harrison is erroneous when he refers to *Frederick* being published in ten volumes. This work was originally published in six volumes although later editions, for example Chapman and Hall’s Centenary edition, published *Frederick* over eight volumes between 1897 and 1898.

in quasi-divine terms: “Him Heaven had kneaded of more potent stuff: a mighty fellow this one ... of a swift far-darting nature this one, like an Apollo clad in sunbeams and in lightnings” (*Works* 12: 22). Harrison is clearly missing the point. The positioning of the “dull garbage” between the powerful description of Frederick’s birth and his eventual arrival much later in the narrative was a tactical ploy by Carlyle which was specifically designed to lend extra emphasis to this arrival. With Frederick’s birth, Carlyle had already foregrounded his subject’s presence in the three-way relationship. Frederick’s subsequent reappearance on the world’s stage ratifies his position.

While it is clear that Carlyle successfully assigns quasi-divine attributes to Frederick and presents these to his readers, his depiction of Frederick as a remote, god-like ruler could have had the undesirable effect of distancing the king from these same readers. In order to encourage empathy for his hero, it was necessary for Carlyle to make Frederick more accessible, a feat which he achieved by depicting him as a strong and capable military commander. By mollifying Frederick’s image, Carlyle aimed to close the perceived gap between Frederick and the reader and strengthen the reader-Frederick component of the triad. It is in his portrayal of Frederick as a military leader, especially his conduct in the heat of battle, where Carlyle’s efforts to depict him as a hero come to the fore:

Friedrich had marched from Lübben, after three-days settling of affairs, *October 20th*; arrived at Jessen, on the Elbe, within wind of Wittenberg, in two days more. ‘He formed a small magazine at Düben,’ says Archenholtz; ‘and was of a velocity, a sharpness,’—like lightning, in a manner! Friedrich is uncommonly dangerous when crushed into a corner, in this way; and Daun knows that he is. (18: 298)

Not content to let Archenholtz's complimentary remarks stand for themselves, Carlyle emphasises Frederick's "sharpness" by, once again, adding his own flattering comment, "like lightning". His remark that Daun is aware that Frederick is "uncommonly dangerous when crushed into a corner" implies that Frederick's military expertise is well known and adds extra emphasis to Carlyle's portrayal of him as an accomplished military leader. Even in rare moments of defeat Frederick is portrayed in heroic terms. Describing the aftermath of the 1759 battle of Kunersdorf in which the Prussians were heavily defeated by a combined Russian and Austrian army, Carlyle says of Frederick, "Such a day he had never thought to see. The pillar of the State, the Prussian Army itself, gone to chaos in this manner" (80). Despite this chaos, Carlyle insists that "Friedrich still passionately struggles, exhorts, commands, entreats even with tears ... but all ears are deaf", and finally, when all is lost, Carlyle makes a point of highlighting Frederick's bravery, "Friedrich was among the last to quit the ground" (80).

Given that Carlyle expends a large amount of effort in portraying Frederick as a heroic figure, it is rather puzzling to encounter remarks by David Sorensen commenting on "Carlyle's peculiarly anti-heroic representation of Frederick in his biography" ("Tyrannophilia" 20). Sorensen continues, "Carlyle's pessimism and fatalism are at their sharpest in *Frederick*, precisely because he now sees that heroes no longer have a part to play in the world after the French Revolution" (21). I would argue that Carlyle consistently portrayed Frederick as a hero precisely because he was acutely aware of the fact that, in his day, the king had a "part to play in the world". By holding Frederick up as an "exemplar", Carlyle believed that he could

instruct his readers in the ways in which they, too, could play their part. When he describes him in these heroic, quasi-divine terms, Carlyle is portraying Frederick as a mortal god. However, in order for Carlyle's readers to truly empathise with Frederick, it was important for Carlyle to depict him as a compassionate individual who was in touch with his subjects.

In its issue dated 2nd June 1860, the *Saturday Review* noted, "There is no one subject which Mr. Carlyle so much delights to draw as the hero or great man. He always specifies what may perhaps be called the moral size of his characters" ("Mental Stature" 706). One example of this morality can be found in Linsenbarth's tale. Carlyle suggests that Linsenbarth's "Interview with such a brother mortal as Friedrich King of Prussia may be worth looking at" (*Works* 16: 249). This description of Frederick as "a brother mortal" is a signal that this tale will concentrate on showing his sense of justice and humanity. Linsenbarth "a *Candidatus*, say Licentiate, or Curate without Cure" had travelled to Berlin to find employment, but had been left penniless, through no fault of his own (249). Linsenbarth's carefully hoarded savings were in a currency (batzen) which, six years previously, Frederick had decreed to be no longer legal tender, announcing that they "were not to circulate at all in his Countries" (251). Linsenbarth is advised "to go direct to the King; as every poor man can, at certain hours of the day" and put his case forward (252). Carlyle then provides a section of dialogue between Linsenbarth and Frederick during which Linsenbarth is informed that he will be immediately recompensed over and above the amount of money he had lost. This is followed by a

passage in which Linsenbarth, who “had not tasted food” for “twenty-seven hours” is sumptuously fed and watered on the direct orders of the king (255).

In this extract, Carlyle portrays Frederick as a king with a strong sense of justice and compassion who makes himself available on a regular basis to “every poor man” in his kingdom. This incident occurred during “The Ten Years of Peace” from 1746 to 1756, a period of relative stability between the second and third Silesian wars. These peaceful circumstances meant that there were no opportunities for Carlyle to portray Frederick in his role as heroic military commander. Carlyle could have opted to pay little attention to these tranquil times, or even by-passed them altogether. Instead he chose to devote all of Book XVI, more than half of the entire volume, to Frederick’s activities during these years. Carlyle only embarks on this lengthy description of Frederick at peace after giving the reader a final portrait of him as a fearless warrior: “he is a very demon for fighting, and the stoutest King walking the Earth just now He himself is decided ‘not to fight with a cat,’ if he can get the peace kept” (195). Although Carlyle appears to be acting as an apologist on Frederick’s behalf in this passage, in reality he is taking pains to inform his readers that Frederick’s desire for peace should in no way affect his reputation in their eyes as a warrior king. Frederick could fight like a “demon” if he so chose, but at the moment he favours peace.

These anecdotes of Frederick in peacetime are specifically designed to reinforce Carlyle’s portrayal of the king as a compassionate individual. The portraits of Frederick as a quasi-divine ruler and heroic military commander are softened by the

depiction of Frederick as a just and compassionate human being. Carlyle uses the account of Sir Jonas Hanway to portray Frederick's generosity and kindness towards one of the men under his command. During one of his frequent military reviews, Frederick's troops had inadvertently strayed into the grounds of Lieutenant-Colonel Keith's mother-in-law, Madam Knyphausen. Carlyle recounts Hanway's description of the events that followed this review:

“Monsieur Keith,” said the King to him, “I am sorry we had to spoil Madam's fine Shrubbery by our manœuvres: have the goodness to give her that, with my apologies,”—and handed him a pretty Casket with key to it, and in the interior 10,000 crowns. Not a shrub of Madam's had been cut or injured; but the King, you see, would count it 1,500*l.* of damage done, and here is acknowledgement for it, which please accept. Is that not a gracious little touch?” (260)

The tone of this passage is informal and intimate. Carlyle recounts Hanway's pleasant anecdote regarding Frederick and then embellishes it. He involves the reader directly in the proceedings when he writes “the King, you see” and “Is that not a gracious little touch?”. This strengthens the bond he is creating between the reader and Frederick. In this excerpt, Carlyle pointedly highlights Frederick's admirable qualities, his sense of justice, his compassion, his “gracious little touch[es]”. Interestingly, Carlyle introduces this episode by declaring, “The King did a beautiful thing to Lieutenant-Colonel Keith the other day” (260). This phrase suggests that the beneficiary of Frederick's generous actions was Keith himself and not his mother-in-law, although it was she who reaped the financial reward. By demonstrating that Frederick is well aware that his gracious generosity towards Madam Knyphausen not only shows himself in a good light but also reflects well on her son-in-law, Carlyle deliberately highlights Frederick's knowledge of the prevailing social mores.

Carlyle repeatedly depicts Frederick as a just and humane individual. He illustrates Frederick's religious tolerance and compassion for his subjects on his ascension to the throne on the death of Frederick Wilhelm. One of Frederick's first acts as monarch demonstrates this tolerance. He decreed, "All religions must be tolerated ... and the Fiscal must have an eye that none of them make unjust encroachment on the other; for in this Country every man must get to Heaven in his own way" (14: 290). Furthermore, Carlyle portrays Frederick's compassion when he informs readers that, during the first week of his succession, the king instituted the first of many acts of Law Reform by ending both the practice and the threat of legal torture. In addition, Carlyle points out that within the first few days of his kingship, Frederick alleviated the misery of some of the poorest subjects in his kingdom when he opened the Public Granaries and ordered "grain to be sold out, at reasonable rates, to the suffering poor" (285). All of these acts depict Frederick as a compassionate, caring individual who is prepared to act quickly and decisively in his new role as king. By portraying Frederick in this manner, Carlyle is doing his utmost to impress his potentially sceptical readership. He gradually softens Frederick's image from remote, divine king through harsh, military leader to gracious, compassionate man. Carlyle's success in this endeavour was noted by W.C. Brownell in a review of *Frederick* in 1902. He commented on "the way in which the central figure is at once made to stand out in accentuated individuality and [is] at the same time intimately connected with related figures and events remote or near at hand" (79). The suggestion that Frederick was "intimately connected" with his fellow human beings is one of the images of the king that Carlyle was attempting to present to his readers.

By means of these anecdotes, Carlyle is making his readers aware that Frederick is adept at social as well as military manoeuvres.

These complimentary portrayals of Frederick served Carlyle's purpose well: two thirds of the triad were falling neatly into place. In order to avoid becoming an absent authorial presence, it was essential for Carlyle to place himself in the foreground of the text. Carlyle's ability to forge a connection in the minds of his readers between Frederick and himself was vitally important to this strategy. There is evidence to suggest that a connection already existed between the two men. The Adrians suggest that,

Royalty notwithstanding, Frederick can at times be seen as the *alter ego* of the humble Scottish stonemason's son. Each came from a strict Protestant background, from which he broke away to become no atheist, but a free thinker, tolerant of all religions ... Each retained from his heritage a sober frugality and an aversion to ostentation, frivolity, and fashion. (178)

This frugality can be seen when Frederick, while still Crown Prince, refurbishes a mansion at Reinsberg for himself and his bride: "Much is admirable to us as we study Reinsberg, what it had been, what it became, and how it was made; but nothing more so than the small modicum of money it cost" (*Works* 14: 163). Carlyle attributes this frugality to Frederick's "methods of administering money ... managing it with wisdom and veracity" and adds that "Impious waste ... will be spared him in those foreign departments" (163). Carlyle's suggestion that the most "admirable" feature of Reinsberg is the "small modicum of money it cost" is a reflection of his own upbringing in an austere Calvinist household.

Apart from recognising certain Calvinistic traits in Frederick, Carlyle also realised that Frederick had undergone painful episodes in his life with which Carlyle himself could readily identify. Margaret Fuller Ossoli alluded to the similarity between Carlyle and Frederick when, after meeting Carlyle in 1846 she declared “never was man more fitted to prize a man, could he find one to match his mood. He finds such, but only in the past” (184). In Frederick, Carlyle felt he had found just such a match, albeit with certain caveats. On occasion, Carlyle’s admiration for Frederick is obvious. In the following passage he reveals his empathy for his hero: “Friedrich’s happiest time was this at Reinsberg; the little Four Years of Hope, Composure, realisable Idealism: an actual snatch of something like the Idyllic, appointed him in a life-pilgrimage consisting otherwise of realisms oftenest contradictory enough, and sometimes of very grim complexion” (*Works* 14: 160). In these lines, it is easy to detect Carlyle’s own longing for respite from his own, self-inflicted, “life-pilgrimage”. At this relatively early stage in the book’s history, Carlyle already appeared to be feeling the weight of the task he had undertaken. Writing to his sister Jean on 21st July 1857 when Volumes I and II were at the printers, Carlyle complained “I see, as it were, no human company at all ... but sit steady at my dismal work” and then rather optimistically opines, “by Heaven’s grace, we shall hope to be thro’ it in a twelve month or so” (*CL* 32: 193).

Carlyle was aware that this tentative relationship with Frederick needed to be more fully integrated into the text and that, in addition to the implied connection between Frederick and himself, it would be necessary to forge an explicit association in the minds of his readers. Carlyle achieved this in several ways, the most obtrusive of

these being his constant interruptions to the narrative, a technique which is dealt with later in this chapter. He also employed other, more subtle ways of stimulating comparisons between himself and his protagonist. Describing the immediate aftermath of Frederick's succession to the throne, Carlyle notes

Friedrich's actual demeanour in these his first weeks, which is still decipherable if one study well, has in truth a good deal of the brilliant, of the popular-magnanimous; but manifests strong solid quality withal, and a head steadier than might have been expected ... he is wise, too; creditably aware that there are limits, that this is a bargain, and the terms of it inexorable. We discern with pleasure the old veracity of character shining through this giddy new element. (*Works* 14: 280)

Much of this excerpt could be read as concealed autobiography: Carlyle could be describing his own nature in his portrayal of Frederick's "strong solid quality", his steady head and his wisdom. In particular, Carlyle's suggestion that Frederick was "creditably aware that there are limits, that this is a bargain, and the terms of it inexorable" seems to mirror his own personal experience as he toiled with his writing of *Frederick*. This semi-autobiographical approach could only strengthen the link between Frederick and Carlyle in the minds of his readers who would be able to recognise this implicit connection between author and subject.¹⁵

apRoberts also noted this semi-autographical aspect of Carlyle's work, suggesting that throughout his narrative "little glimmers of light about himself break through"

(24). She continues:

At one point when Voltaire's position at Berlin is troubled, he nevertheless works on his history of *Louis Quatorze*. As Carlyle notes, it must have been 'a potent quietus in these Court-whirlwinds inward and outward He did *not* go mad in that Berlin element, but had throughout a bower-anchor to ride by' One cannot but think of Carlyle himself, who in spite of his

¹⁵ By the time Volume III of *Frederick* was published in May 1862, readers would have been aware that Carlyle had been working solidly on his epic since well before the publication of the first two volumes in 1858, and that at least one more volume would be forthcoming.

complaints, found a certain peace in the ‘bower-anchor’ of his own history writing. (24)

What apRoberts fails to comprehend is that this identification with Frederick was precisely Carlyle’s strategy. Her assertion that, “One cannot but think of Carlyle himself” is a clear indication that his techniques are working. However, as the epic progressed Carlyle began to reveal his empathy with Frederick on a more regular basis which suggests that the connection between Frederick and Carlyle was increasing in strength. Commenting on letters written by Frederick to his friend the Marquis D’Argens at a particularly precarious period during the Seven Years’ War, Carlyle remarks that they “are those of a man drenched in misery” (*Works* 18: 215).¹⁶ Frederick writes, “I grieve to resemble Cassandra with my prophecies; but how augur well of the desperate situation we are in, and which goes on growing worse? I am so gloomy today, I will cut short” (214). Carlyle, however, does not let his hero succumb to this misery, suggesting that he is “used to his black element, unaffectedly defiant of it ... Friedrich does wonderfully without sympathy from almost anybody; and the indifference with which he walks along, under such a cloud of sulky stupidities, of mendacities and misconceptions from the herd of mankind, is decidedly admirable to me” (215).

In a rather negative critique of *Frederick*, John Rosenberg highlights this “grim paragraph”, maintaining that it “marks the moment of closest identification between Carlyle and Frederick. The paragraph is not history but distraught autobiography” (168). Although in agreement with Rosenberg’s claim that this episode is autobiographical, I take issue with his assertion that this description is in any way

¹⁶ Jean Baptiste de Boyer, 1704-1771, was a French writer, particularly of political pamphlets. He lived in Prussia for twenty-five years and was a favourite of Frederick’s.

“distraught”. On the contrary, read in tandem with an excerpt from the previous page, the passage above emphasises Frederick’s resilience and strength of character against unfavourable odds. In this earlier passage, Frederick is described as “one of the bravest human souls weighed down with dispiriting labours and chagrins, such as were seldom laid on any man; almost beyond bearing, but incurable, and demanding to be borne” (*Works* 18: 214). Carlyle’s assertion that Frederick is dealing with “labours” that are “demanding to be borne” can also be read as concealed autobiography. Both men could be seen to be involved in a divine mission: Frederick in his campaign to establish Prussia as an economically strong and politically reformed state, and Carlyle in what he believed might be his final endeavour to instruct his readers. Carlyle notes that Frederick writes to D’Argens “not wearisomely, or with the least prolixity, but in short, sharp gusts, seldom now with any indignation, oftenest with a touch of humour in them” (214). Far from being “distraught”, I would argue that these lines indicate a healthy defiance coupled with a sense of humour. The implication is that both Frederick and Carlyle are doing “wonderfully”. We can, however, deduce from Rosenberg’s comments regarding “the moment of closest identification between Carlyle and Frederick” that Carlyle has successfully introduced himself into the text, albeit in a reasonably subdued manner (168).

As noted earlier, on other occasions Carlyle’s style is far from subtle, and he pointedly and repeatedly forces his presence into the text. *Frederick* is punctured throughout with Carlyle’s interjections and interruptions which take a variety of different forms and which lend credence to the suggestion that he was attempting to

create an oral quality in his written text. Carlyle often breaks in to the text to make an intimate or informal aside to the reader. As Frederick marches with his army towards Lobositz, the scene of the first battle in these wars, Carlyle sets the scene for his readers:

The Country-roads where Friedrich's Army is on march, I should think are mostly on the mounting hand ... through various scrubby villages which are not nameworthy; through one called Kletschen, which for a certain reason is. Crossing the shoulder of Kletschenberg (*Hill* of this Kletschen), which abuts upon the Pascopol,—yonder in bright sunshine is your beautiful expansive Basin of the Elbe, and the green Bohemian Plains, revealed for a moment. Friedrich snatches his glass, not with picturesque object: 'See, yonder is Feldmarschall Browne, then! In camp yonder, down by Lobositz, not ten miles from us,'—(it is most true; Browne marched this morning, long before the Sun; crossed Eger, and pitched camp at noon) (*Works* 17: 64-65)

In this excerpt, Carlyle uses parentheses to enclose remarks that he is directing specifically towards the reader from himself. This has the effect of creating a pause in the narrative and mimics the act of a speaker addressing an informal remark to a listener. In addition, he introduces another oral technique, the element of suspense. Carlyle refers to villages which are “not nameworthy” but then specifically names Kletschen. This village warrants being named, he tells his readers, “for a certain reason”. However, in order to discover this reason they must continue reading. In addition to generating an element of suspense by this technique, Carlyle is also forcing himself into the picture. After all, the only person who can relieve the suspense is Carlyle himself.

Typically, when Carlyle quotes from a letter that Frederick has written he cites the relevant document in a footnote: “‘Never have my troops,’ says Friedrich, ‘done such miracles of valour, cavalry as well as infantry, since I had the honour to command them. By this dead-lift achievement (*tour de force*) I have seen what they

can do” (72). The source for this is footnoted as “Letter to Schwerin, ‘Lobositz 2d August 1756’ (Retzow, i. 64)” (72). The production of hard evidence to support a quotation can be regarded as an interruption to the text for a valid reason. However, Carlyle also presents what appear at first glance to be Frederick’s thoughts on events. Crucially, he offers no supporting evidence either in the form of a citation or a relevant embedded excerpt. In the passage above when we read ““See, yonder is Feldmarschall Browne, then! In camp yonder, down by Lobositz, not ten miles from us,””, no supporting evidence is provided by Carlyle (64). He is, in effect, ventriloquizing Frederick. In addition, Carlyle gives passages of narrative which he specifically claims are Frederick’s thoughts. Carlyle describes the scene as Frederick manoeuvres his troops into position prior to the battle of Lobositz: “Once, for some time, in the wavering of the mist, there was seen, down in the plain opposite our centre, a body of Cavalry ... ‘Browne’s rearguard this, that we are come upon,’ thinks Friedrich” (68). Before the battle of Torgau, Carlyle notes that Frederick has caught sight of his opponent, Daun: “From Daun’s returning to Torgau, Friedrich infers that the cautious man has got Order from Court to maintain Torgau at all costs,—to risk a battle rather than go. ‘Good: he shall have one!’ thinks Friedrich” (18: 301). Carlyle is ventriloquizing Frederick’s inner deliberations and then presenting the results to the reader as a direct transcript of Frederick’s thoughts. By dramatizing Frederick in this way, Carlyle is moving away from the documentary evidence. Furthermore, the excerpt from Frederick’s letter to Schwerin was written in French which means that the letter also comes to the reader translated and edited by Carlyle. It could be argued that Carlyle was straying too far from the role of the historian by presuming to know Frederick’s thoughts and offering these to the

reader. There is no doubt that Carlyle is embroidering the text: he is weaving fiction amongst the facts. The question is whether or not this amounts to deceit or a legitimate tactic when it comes to writing history. In Carlyle's view, these tactics were all part of his plan to assert his presence in the text and maintain his position in the triadic structure.

As well as offering Frederick's supposed internal musings, Carlyle repeatedly gives the reader his opinion on events by inserting his own thoughts into the narrative. In the earlier passage describing Frederick's journey towards Lobositz through the village of Kletschen, Carlyle's observation that "The Country-roads where Friedrich's Army is on march, I should think are mostly on the mounting hand" is no doubt based on the information that he gleaned from visiting the various battlefields (17: 64). Carlyle applied himself enthusiastically to this task, visiting different sites to see for himself the lay of the land and visualise the conflict that took place. In a letter to Varnhagen von Ense on 6th June 1852, Carlyle mentioned the possibility of "a little Tour to Germany" (CL 27: 139). He informed von Ense that the primary purpose of the trip "would be to assist myself in these inquiries after Frederick. To look with my eyes upon Potsdam, Ruppın, Rheinsberg, Küstrin, and the haunts of Frederick; to see the Riesengebirge country and the actual fields of Frederick's 10 or 12 grand battles: this would be a real and great gain to me" (139). Carlyle's trips to Germany did indeed prove to be "a real and great gain": his highly-descriptive, thrilling account of the various battles in the Seven Years' War won him unqualified praise. Nevertheless, in the earlier excerpt, the insertion of the phrase "I should think" is unnecessary in terms of imparting additional meaning into the passage. The

phrase is there specifically to force Carlyle's voice into the text and, by doing so, maintain his presence in the three-way relationship. There are numerous other instances where Carlyle makes his presence felt. Following a description of two strategically important hills outside Lobositz, the Lobosch and Homolka Hills, Carlyle states, "I did not find the Peasants much know them under those names" and during the battle of Lobositz he opines, "Browne beaten from the field ... lies quiet in Budin again,—with his water sure to him; but what other advantages gained?" (*Works* 17: 66, 74).¹⁷

Carlyle also interrupts the narrative by reproducing letters to and from Frederick at the conclusion of many of the battles. These are sprinkled with asides from Carlyle in parentheses. Following his victory at Lobositz, Frederick writes to Valori, "'Had my advice been asked, a year ago, I should have voted to preserve the Alliance' (with *you*) 'which we had been used to for sixteen years' (strictly for twelve, though in substance ever since 1740)" (17: 75). After the battle of Torgau, Frederick informs D'Argens, "'Duke Ferdinand's affairs are not in a good way' (missed Wesel, of which presently;—and, alas also, George II died, this day gone a fortnight, which is far worse for us, if we knew it!)" (18: 324). Carlyle's use of these letters allows Frederick to step into the text as an actor and foregrounds his presence. By

¹⁷ In addition to these deliberate interjections of his own voice, at random intervals throughout the text Carlyle also introduces "*Tourist's Note*" material that he has amassed from his trips to Germany. In one example, Carlyle describes the route that a tourist would take if travelling from Weimar and heading east towards Torgau, the scene of the final and decisive battle of the Seven Years' War. Carlyle informs the reader, "'Tourists, from Weimar and the Thuringian Countries,' says a Notebook, sometimes useful to us ... 'endeavour to eat dinner, and, still more vainly, to snatch a little sleep in the inhuman dormitories of the Country'" (*Works* 18: 302). Carlyle's well documented distaste for travel, his dislike of unfamiliar food and his inability to sleep in a strange bed pervades this extract. By these means, Carlyle allows the reader to join him in a tour of the area that he is describing, where the reader is the tourist and Carlyle is his guide. Their journey together here can be read as a metaphor for the journey throughout these volumes.

interrupting these passages with his own remarks, Carlyle joins Frederick in this foregrounding, a move which emphasises the connection that he is establishing with Frederick. Peckham offers an insight into Carlyle's narrative style in *Frederick*:

The dissolution of the narrator into a variety of roles is of the highest interest. It is a device which, without compromising *Frederick* as historical discourse, nevertheless pulls it into the general field of art. The narrator, as increasingly in the novels of the time, *Vanity Fair*, for example, the "I" is not a category with a fixed and stable set of attributes. He becomes something like the central figure of a major work of fiction. (208-209)

Peckham's suggestion that Carlyle's prose style moves *Frederick* "into the general field of art", and his likening of the narrator to a figure more often found in fiction, lends credence to the notion that Carlyle is not attempting to write a history *per se* but is involved in producing and telling a story, casting Frederick in the role of heroic protagonist and himself in the role of storyteller.

As the epic progressed, the repeated interjection of Carlyle's voice, albeit in a variety of different guises, led to an ever-increasing stamp of his authority on the text. This allowed Carlyle to become a "central figure" in the narrative and resulted in a strengthening of the three-way relationship between Carlyle, Frederick and his readers. These frequent interruptions to the text led Brownell to complain:

Even in his most objective writings he never gets away from himself. His personality confuses his history. You are never allowed to escape from it. It is obtrusive, exasperating, domineering. The simplest record is complicated with his view of the facts. In his "Frederick," for example, he divides attention with his hero; he is incessantly—wearisomely—parading his views, preaching his gospel, even complaining, now humorously, now querulously, always superfluously, of the difficulties of his task; pervading the scene, in short, with his extremely accentuated personality. (55)

I would argue that Brownell is missing the point, which is, that this constant interference by Carlyle was a deliberate policy on his behalf, by means of which he

carried on a continual dialogue with his readers. If Carlyle were to approach the text in the way suggested by Brownell, the result would be the very ‘Dryasdust’ writing of history which Carlyle abhorred.

In a personal encounter with Carlyle in 1846, Ossoli noted certain physical characteristics which may prove useful to us here: “He does not converse,—only harangues Carlyle allows no one a chance, but bears down all opposition, not only by his wit and onset of words, resistless in their sharpness as so many bayonets, but by actual physical superiority, raising his voice and rushing on his opponent with a torrent of sound” (184). Ossoli softens this rather harsh description of Carlyle by then claiming that, “you like him heartily” (184). The point is, in his writing of *Frederick* Carlyle was attempting to replicate this spoken “torrent of sound” by interrupting the narrative and keeping up a constant flow of dialogue with the reader. In order to avoid alienating readers in the way that he had done previously with the *Pamphlets*, his dialogue in *Frederick* was informative but informal. Carlyle’s intention was to keep the reader’s attention at all times, to promote a sense of familiarity and empathy between the reader and Frederick, and to forge a connection in the reader’s mind between Frederick and himself. By means of this constant flow of conversation, Carlyle was able to create and maintain the triadic structure throughout these volumes.

Carlyle’s creation and deployment of his “remarkable three-way relationship” served its purpose, and Volumes I and II of *Frederick* sold well. However, as the Adrians note, although Carlyle’s epic garnered from “the non-literary general public ...

respect inspired by the awesome research behind the work”, its “critical reception was less than enthusiastic” (188).¹⁸ One reading of this situation could be that Carlyle’s tripartite structure worked almost too well. By focusing on the reader and inviting him to march arm in arm with Frederick and himself, Carlyle excluded readers who were not disposed to enter into this three-way compact, and who chose instead to approach *Frederick* as a conventional history. For the majority of his readers, however, as the high sales of these initial volumes of *Frederick* illustrate, Carlyle’s strategy appeared to be a success. It encouraged readers’ receptivity of his brand of history, and allowed him to teach them “History, as ... poetry, prophecy, biography, and social criticism—all in one” (Rosenberg vii.).

¹⁸ In chapter six of this thesis, a detailed investigation into the reception of Volumes I and II reveals reviewers’ mixed responses to these initial volumes of *Frederick*.

Chapter 2

Telling stories; spinning yarns: Carlyle's narrative style

“what ... is Writing itself but Speech conserved for a time”¹

The industrialisation of publishing in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries led to profound changes in methods of literary production. As Lee Erickson notes, early nineteenth century essays in periodicals were eclipsed by the rise of newspapers in the middle of the century, before the periodicals eventually found themselves superseded by fiction.² These transitions were driven by market forces: industrialisation had led to the greater availability of affordable reading matter which in turn had created a mass readership that was eager for new material. In 1836, Thomas Love Peacock had observed the influence of this new readership in shaping the literary market: “Every variety of mind takes its station, or is ready to do so, at all times in the literary market; the public of the day stamp the currency of fashion on that which jumps with their humour” (294).³ Erickson insists that “Carlyle was the first English writer to observe that industrialization had affected publishing and the literary marketplace” (106). Although this appears to be a rather grand claim on Carlyle's behalf, Erickson substantiates his remarks by referring to passages from *Sartor Resartus* and Carlyle's 1829 essay, “Signs of the Times”.⁴

¹ From Carlyle's *The French Revolution* (*Works* 3: 28)

² For a detailed account see Erickson's chapter “The Marginal Utility of Literary Form” in *The Economy of Literary Form: English Literature and the industrialization of publishing, 1800-1850*, 3-18.

³ Thomas Love Peacock (1785-1866) was an English satirist and author.

⁴ “Signs of the Times” (*Works*: 27: 56-82). Erickson comments on Carlyle's claim in *Sartor Resartus* that literature is connected to materiality by the nature of its own production, that is, because of its

Erickson notes that in this essay, Carlyle “points to the way that the modern production of literature has become mechanized: ‘Literature, too, has its Paternoster-row mechanism, its Trade-dinners, its Editorial conclaves, and huge subterranean, puffing bellows; so that books are not only printed, but, in great measure, written and sold, by machinery’” (106). Carlyle’s remarks in this essay form part of a much larger critique on the effects of mechanisation on society in general. In another passage he complains that, “Men are grown mechanical in head and in heart, as well as in hand ... Their whole efforts, attachments, opinions, turn on mechanism, and are of a mechanical character” (*Works* 27: 63). Carlyle was also acutely aware of the need for authors to cater to the demands of the new mass readership that had been created by the mechanisation of literary production. More than a decade later, in his essay, “The Hero as Man of Letters”, Carlyle suggested that in this guise “the Hero from of old has had to cramp himself into strange shapes: the world knows not well at any time what to do with him, so foreign is his aspect in the world!” (5: 155).

An example of the kind of “strange shapes” into which the man of letters had to contort himself can be found in Walter Scott’s 1824 historical novel *Redgauntlet*. Penny Fielding describes this work as “made up of many different textual media: letters, a personal journal, third-person narrative, oral inset tales” and she attests that “none of these takes narrative precedence but together they explore the conditional nature of historical recollection” (104). Although *Frederick* was published three decades after *Redgauntlet*, Fielding’s description of Scott’s work could be equally

manufacture from old rags. See Erickson’s chapter “Carlyle’s Old Clothes Philosophy: The Material Form of Literature”, 104-123.

applied to Carlyle's epic with its patchwork of "different textual media". However, in the case of *Frederick*, Carlyle's aim was not just an exploration of the "conditional nature of historical recollection", but a reshaping and re-representation of that recollection to suit his own didactic purposes. Carlyle weaves together different strands of historical recollection to create a tapestry, his voice acting as the thread which runs through the work, binding the different sections together before he presents the finished article to his readers. Fielding makes the point that in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, authors such as Scott "perceived themselves to be writing at a point of transition between oral and written narratives", and she notes his anxiety over whether or not oral storytelling was capable of making this transition (101). Through his inclusion of "oral inset tales" in *Redgauntlet*, Scott allowed oral storytelling to be represented in print as one element of a composite narrative structure. According to Fielding, the concerns which had been expressed by Scott and his contemporaries over the written word's displacement of orality continued to be felt "Throughout the nineteenth century—and into the twentieth". She suggests that "the death of orality is something always just about to happen" (99).

Fielding's sentiments are echoed by Ivan Kreilkamp when he discusses Francis James Child's five volume collection, *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads*, which was published between 1882 and 1898. Kreilkamp suggests that "Victorian print culture was also a vocal culture" (3) and he claims that Child's collection

typifies a self-doubting quality of Victorian print culture: its guilty conscience about its own participation in the displacement of a native orality believed to have expired around the turn of the nineteenth century, and its quixotic desire to use print forms, methods, and technologies to recover and

sanctify an obsolete pre-print voice. The Victorian novel offered itself as a form performing much the same work as Child's ballad collection – that of preserving and reproducing a charismatic voice. (5)

Kreilkamp's observation that "Victorian print culture" was in the process of recovering a "pre-print voice" because of its deep sense of guilt over print's occlusion of orality is particularly relevant with regard to *Frederick*. Carlyle was keenly aware that this would, in all probability, be his final opportunity to pass on his teachings to his readers, an awareness which lent an air of urgency to the writing of his last major work. In order to maintain the reader's position in reader-Frederick-Carlyle trinity, Carlyle had to capture and hold the reader's attention throughout his epic. He achieved this by writing *Frederick* in a style which mimicked an oral performance, using his own "charismatic voice" to address his readers repeatedly, thus maintaining a continuous dialogue with them and ensuring that their attention did not waver.

Carlyle's preoccupation with the introduction of voice into his text was part of a marked trend in Victorian England. The Victorians' obsession with the recovery and preservation of the human voice in print was one reason behind the tremendous excitement which greeted Isaac Pitman's creation of phonography, a revolutionary system of shorthand, in 1837. As Kreilkamp explains, "Pitman's phonographic technique – a form of shorthand that, unlike those that had existed for centuries before, based itself directly on phonetics and the sounds of human speech – emblemizes Victorian culture's ongoing romance with voice as a cure for print

culture's ills" (70).⁵ Kreilkamp suggests that from this point onwards, "up to and beyond Edison's invention of the phonograph in 1877, Victorian culture struggled resourcefully to find ways to transcribe and write voice" (70). One author who was successful in this endeavour was Charles Dickens, whose personal skill at shorthand supplied him with the literary tools needed to represent his characters' voices in such a way as to imbue them with the characteristics inherent in the spoken word.

For Dickens and Carlyle, the ability to "write voice" was a far more complicated process than the mere setting down of speech in print. The printed voice had to communicate to each individual reader, as well as take on the inflections, nuances and animation of an actual, speaking human voice. At times, both Dickens and Carlyle used a version of shorthand in order to represent this voice in print. In *The Pickwick Papers*, Jingle's speaking voice is very similar to shorthand script:

'Ah! you should keep dogs – fine animals – sagacious creatures – dog of my own once – Pointer – surprising instinct – out shooting one day – entering inclosure – whistled – dog stopped – whistled again – Ponto – no go: stock still – called him – Ponto, Ponto – wouldn't move – dog transfixed – staring at a board – looked up, saw an inscription – "Gamekeeper has orders to shoot all dogs found in this inclosure" – wouldn't pass it – wonderful dog – valuable dog that – very.' (26)

In an effort to represent Jingle's speech in a convincingly realistic manner, Dickens uses a version of shorthand to create language with a staccato register which seems almost telegraphic in style. This accurate representation of direct speech draws the reader into Jingle's conversation just as it does Mr Winkle, the character to whom these words are being addressed, and invites the reader to agree with Mr Winkle's droll observation that he "should like to have seen that dog" (29).

⁵ See Kreilkamp's chapter "Speech on paper: Charles Dickens, Victorian phonography, and the reform of writing" in *Voice and the Victorian Storyteller*, 69-88, for a fuller description of Pitman's phonography and its effects on Victorian culture.

A useful comparison can be made between the excerpt above from Dickens and the following passage from *Frederick* in which Carlyle describes an incident which took place during the battle of Kolin in 1757:

Friedrich calls halt: rest here a little; to consider, examine, settle how. A hot close morning; rest for an hour or two, till our rear from Kaurzim come up: horses and men will be the better for it,—horses can have a mouthful of grass, mouthful of water; some of them ‘had no drink last night, so late in getting home.’ Poor quadrupeds, they also have to get into a blaze of battle-rage this day, and be blown to pieces a great many of them,—in a quarrel not of their seeking! (*Works* 17: 172)

In a manner similar to Dickens, Carlyle also uses a version of shorthand to produce a piece of clipped prose which conveys a sense of immediacy and draws the reader into the proceedings. The voice in this excerpt is similar to Dickens’ portrayal of Jingle’s speech and the language that Carlyle uses also hints at a telegraphic style of delivery. Carlyle allows the text to slip seamlessly into free indirect thought, giving the reader Frederick’s own internal deliberations. Unlike Dickens, Carlyle was not engaged in writing a novel, although he often used novelistic language in his attempt to capture an authentic voice in print. In the excerpt above, Carlyle deliberately inserts his own voice into the text with his comments concerning the “Poor quadrupeds”. It is Carlyle’s insistence that his own voice be heard throughout *Frederick* which emphasises the importance he placed on replicating an oral performance and which firmly situates him in the role of storyteller. In this respect, Carlyle, like Dickens, conforms to the Victorian requirement that at the heart of a novel there must be an authoritative voice, an authentic speaker, a teller of stories.

Carlyle's reasons for adopting the role of a storyteller throughout *Frederick* are not difficult to comprehend. Fielding's claim that "a story does not prove what happened in the past but performs a version of it that is relevant at the moment of narration" is particularly appropriate when Carlyle's didactic aims are taken into consideration (105). Carlyle hoped that by presenting his version of Frederick's life in the form of a story and by using his "charismatic voice" to appeal to them directly, his epic would be relevant and instructive to his readers, and would, in Walter Benjamin's words, have "counsel for his readers" (86). According to Benjamin, this aspect of storytelling was crucially important in a social context. He stated what he believed were the characteristics that were essential to a "real story":

It contains, openly or covertly, something useful. The usefulness may, in one case, consist in a moral; in another, in some practical advice; in a third, in a proverb or maxim. In every case the storyteller is a man who has counsel for his readers. But if today 'having counsel' is beginning to have an old-fashioned ring, this is because the communicability of experience is decreasing. In consequence we have no counsel either for ourselves or for others. After all, counsel is less an answer to a question than a proposal concerning the continuation of a story which is just unfolding. To seek this counsel one would first have to be able to tell the story Counsel woven into the fabric of real life is wisdom. (86)

Carlyle's approach to writing *Frederick* was to use these volumes as a means of re-establishing "the communicability of experience". However, instead of communicating orally to a limited audience, through this written story Carlyle would be able to pass on his "wisdom" to a vastly increased readership, at the same time ensuring that his own voice was always present, addressing his readers. He came to realise that "writing in the form of print" would allow him to address "a dizzyingly unlocalized listenership" (Kreilkamp 21).

There were other benefits to be gained from setting down Frederick's history in this manner. Kreilkamp stresses the special power inherent in what he terms "Vocalized print", claiming that this "produces a new kind of mass audience that is at once transcendent and personalized. Figured as voice, print communicates to a mass readership as if speaking individually to each of its members" (21-22). "Vocalized print", according to Kreilkamp, had the potential to offer Carlyle the means by which he could speak to each reader individually, while at the same time addressing readers *en masse*. This would allow Carlyle to achieve his goal of creating a unified audience. For Carlyle, another major advantage to be gained from producing this written work would be its permanence. Writing in 1494, the Benedictine Abbot Johannes Trithemius pronounced:

The devotion of the scribe is more valuable than the office of the preacher because the admonition of the preacher disappears in time, but the message of the scribe lasts for many years. The preacher only speaks to those present, whereas the scribe also preaches to those in the future When the preacher dies, his work is finished; the scribe continues to be a teacher of morality even after his death. (Müller 145)

The sentiments expressed by Trithemius were key to Carlyle's aims when he wrote *Frederick*. He wanted to create a permanent record of what he believed would be his final message to his readers, one which would be accessible to not only contemporary but also future readers. Walter Ong's comment that "Oral discourse has commonly been thought of even in oral milieus as weaving or stitching – rhapsōiden, [sic] to 'rhapsodize', basically means in Greek to 'stitch songs together'" is entirely relevant to Carlyle's methodology in *Frederick* (13). Taking Ong's remarks into account, it becomes apparent that the impetus behind Carlyle's strategy of assembling a variety of textual media was the desire to mimic an oral performance

and at the same time create a permanent and tangible record. By these means, he would become “a teacher of morality even after his death”.

There were other, more personal reasons behind Carlyle’s decision to write *Frederick* as a simulation of an oral performance. He had become aware of the need for a new mode of expressing himself almost two decades earlier after performing a series of four lecture tours between 1837 and 1840. In a letter to Ralph Waldo Emerson on 16th March 1838, Carlyle complained: “While you read this, I shall be in the agonies! ... by what bayonets of Necessity clapt to my back I am driven into that Lecture-room and in what mood, and ordered to speak or die, I feel as if my only utterance should be a flood of tears and blubbering!” (CL 10: 52). Although these lectures had been well received by his audiences, Carlyle had experienced severe physical discomfort during his performances. In 1840, he wrote a series of letters to his mother whilst engaged in his final lecture series, entitled, “On Heroes”. On 9th May he informed her: “The people seemed greatly astonished, and greatly pleased; I vomited it forth on them like wild Annandale grapeshot; they laughed, applauded, &c., &c.” (12: 139). Carlyle’s suggestion that he is “vomit[ing] forth” on his audience clearly illustrates his bodily unease. Nevertheless, in a letter to his mother on 20th May, near the end of his lecture tour, he revealed that he might be adjusting to the situation:

I delivered my fifth Lecture yesterday, with as much acceptance as ever; and now there is but one more, which also I hope to get honourably thro'. Jane says, and indeed I rather think it is true, that these two last Lectures are among the best I ever gave ... and certainly they have not done me nearly so much mischief as the others were wont; I feel great pain and anxiety till I get them done, on the day when they are to be done; but no excessive shattering of myself to pieces in consequence of that: the thing seems a thing I could learn to stand by and by. (147-148)

Despite his assertion that performing in public might be a situation that he “could learn to stand by and by”, Carlyle clearly felt driven to avoid further discomfiting episodes and deliberately set out to reproduce his spoken lectures in print. His challenge was to achieve this transition without losing any of the forceful impact of his oral performance.

Writing to his sister Jean on 15th June 1840, Carlyle declared, “I am endeavouring to write down my Lectures somewhat in the style of *speech*; as they were, or rather as they might have been, and should have been, and wished to be, delivered to the people. It is a new kind of task for me; and does not prosper as one would expect” (167-168). Carlyle’s stated intention to write these lectures down as they “should have been” is a clear indication of his dissatisfaction with his oral performance and his desire for a more effective method of delivery. In the fifth lecture of the series, “The Hero as Man of Letters”, Carlyle stressed the “importance [which] lay in the speaking of man to men” (*Works* 5: 159). He then went on to note the crucial role of writing, and print in particular, in terms of mass communication:

everywhere in the civilised world there is a Pulpit ... that therefrom a man with the tongue may, to best advantage, address his fellow-men But now with the art of Writing, with the art of Printing, a total change has come over that business. The Writer of a Book, is not he a Preacher preaching not to this parish or that, on this day or that, but to all men in all times and places? (159)

Carlyle’s assertion that the “Writer of a Book” possessed the capability of reaching a mass audience demonstrates his recognition of the change that modern printing had brought to the practice of one man addressing other men. Carlyle’s words offer distinct echoes of the opinions expressed by Trithemius, writing more than three centuries earlier about “the scribe [who] also preaches to those in the future”. Both

men demonstrated an acute awareness of the power and scope of the written word, and the writer's ability to preach to this new mass readership.

As well as the obvious appeal of being able to reach a mass readership, of equal importance to Carlyle was his belief that the reproduction of speech in print would be a powerful medium for communicating to this readership. During a discourse on "the Government of men" in "The Hero as Man of Letters" Carlyle declared:

Literature is our Parliament too. Printing, which comes necessarily out of Writing, I say often, is equivalent to Democracy: invent Writing, Democracy is inevitable Whoever can speak, speaking now to the whole nation, becomes a power, a branch of government, with inalienable weight in law-making, in all acts of authority. It matters not what rank he has, what revenues or garnitures: the requisite thing is, that he have a tongue which others will listen to; this and nothing more is requisite. (164)

The sentiments which Carlyle expressed in 1840 had gained a new sense of urgency by the time he began working on *Frederick*. As he confessed in his 1854 journal, he felt compelled to speak to the nation one last time before departing this world. By writing Frederick's history in the style of reproduced speech, in a mimicry of oral performance, Carlyle aimed to use the power inherent in this technique to target a mass audience, "the whole nation", with a "tongue which others ... [would] listen to". As noted above, during his lecture series Carlyle had noticed that the audience had responded enthusiastically, appearing "greatly astonished and greatly pleased" at what they had heard (*CL* 12: 139). In her journal of May 22nd 1840, Caroline Fox wrote, "To Carlyle's lecture. The Hero was to-day considered as King, and Cromwell, Napoleon, and French Revolutionism were the illustrations chosen" (100). She then goes on to note the "many ... most effective touches in this sketch, which compelled you to side with Carlyle as to Cromwell's self-devotion and

magnanimity” (101). Fox’s description of Carlyle’s ability to compel his audience to believe his rhetoric illustrates the persuasive power of his oral performance. The challenge for Carlyle was to convey the same message in an equally powerful manner, but through a medium which would prove to be less physically demanding. He hoped to avoid enduring any more “unspeakable day[s]” where he felt “half dead with fret agitation and exasperation” prior to addressing “extempore an audience of London quality people on the subject of German literature!”.⁶ Equally, Carlyle did not want to repeat the mistakes he had made in 1850 with his *Pamphlets*, “relentlessly arguing his readers into accepting his prophetic message” (Seigel, “*Latter-Day Pamphlets*” 156). Yet he was well aware that there was more to the task than merely transcribing his lecture notes. According to Kreilkamp, Carlyle’s search for the most effective way to transcribe voice led him to discover that “writing gained a special power when it imitated spoken words That is to say – and ironically so, considering his disdain for fiction – Carlyle found the language that became characteristic of the genre of the Victorian novel” (20).

Carlyle’s readers had only to glance at the chapter titles of Book I, Volume I of *Frederick* to become aware of his intention of setting down Frederick’s life in the form of a story with Carlyle in the role of storyteller.⁷ These chapters are primarily concerned with Frederick’s birth, his parents and grandparents. Frederick is described as, “A small infant, but of great promise or possibility” (*Works* 12: 20).

⁶ Carlyle had expressed his dread of public performance in a letter to Ralph Waldo Emerson on 1st June 1837, telling his friend: “The heart’s wish of me was that I might be left in deepest oblivion, wrapt in blankets and silence, not speaking, not spoken to, for a twelvemonth to come” (*CL* 9: 218).

⁷ Chapter I. Proem: Friedrich’s History from the Distance we are at; Chapter II. Friedrich’s Birth; Chapter III. Father and Mother: The Hanoverian Connexion; Chapter IV. Father’s Mother; Chapter V. King Friedrich I. (*Works* 12: v).

Carlyle is behaving in typical storyteller fashion by introducing a recognized oral technique, the element of suspense, when he alludes to Frederick's future greatness. He juxtaposes Frederick's "great promise or possibility" with his description of him as, not just an infant, but "A small infant". The inference is that despite his smallness, Frederick will go on to do great things. Frederick is then referred to as a "little creature" and a "little Prince" (20, 21). Carlyle also uses the terms "little Princekins", "little Prince" and "baby Prince" to describe two siblings of Frederick's who had died as infants (21). Ong describes this oral technique as "aggregative":

This characteristic is closely tied to reliance on formulas to implement memory. The elements of orally based thought and expression tend to be not so much simple integers as clusters of integers, such as parallel terms or phrases or clauses, antithetical terms or phrases or clauses, epithets. Oral folk prefer, especially in formal discourse, not the soldier, but the brave soldier; not the princess, but the beautiful princess; not the oak, but the sturdy oak. (38)

By repeating or reworking the description "little Prince", Carlyle attaches this epithet to Frederick and implements this connection in the minds of his readers. In a clever twist, by associating this description with Frederick's deceased siblings, when he eventually attaches it to Frederick, it gains additional emphasis. Carlyle demonstrates that he is well aware of the significance of this strategy when he informs the reader that "this little Prince ... [is] a third trump-card in the Hohenzollern game" (*Works* 12: 21).

In these initial chapters, by positioning him within his family circle, Carlyle is deliberately portraying Frederick to his readers as a fellow mortal. Unusually, however, the volume does not begin with Frederick's arrival on the world's stage, but with a portrait of him as an old man roughly "fourscore years ago" (1). Indeed,

all of Chapter I is given over to a detailed description of Frederick in the last years of his life. Frederick's birth is covered in Chapter II, with Chapters III to V devoted to his immediate ancestors. At this stage, after the preliminaries have been dealt with, the reader expects Carlyle to launch into an account of Frederick's history. Carlyle, however, confounds expectations by immediately taking the reader back to the year 928 and the life of Henry the Fowler, before spending the next two hundred and sixty pages—the bulk of Volume I—outlining Frederick's ancestry. Small wonder that Harrison complained that these passages from *Frederick* were “a welter of dull garbage” (*Studies* 47). When Carlyle finally revisits Frederick's birth, he acknowledges the fact that, to date, this volume has been a “long voyage round the world” (*Works* 12: 315). From this point onwards, the volumes progress in temporal sequence until Frederick's death in 1786, an event which is covered at the end of the final volume.

I would argue that, in these opening chapters, Carlyle is adopting a narrative structure which involves circularity and repetition, both of which are oral devices, to raise Frederick's profile and thus stimulate his readers' interest in him from the outset. By beginning the volume near the end of Frederick's life, Carlyle closes the temporal distance between Frederick and his readers. After all, it is not beyond the bounds of possibility that “fourscore years ago” could have been within living memory of some of Carlyle's readers, and probably only one generation removed from the majority of them. Carlyle then offers a circular pattern which consists of the repetition of the sequence of birth, life history and death. In the first instance, this involves Frederick's birth, followed by the life histories and deaths of his ancestors.

The second occurrence again features Frederick's birth, followed by his personal life history and death. What Carlyle achieves by this method is that Frederick's eventual 'rebirth' is given additional emphasis and importance. Through the repetition of these sequences of birth, life and death, Carlyle lets his readers know that he is in the process of telling a story. The 'double birth' is an early indication of the importance that Carlyle plans to assign to Frederick. Emphasising Frederick's favourable qualities in all his guises was a key feature of Carlyle's rhetorical strategy throughout *Frederick*.

Carlyle confirms the oral nature of his epic in the opening sentence of Volume I by beginning this in classic storytelling mode:

About fourscore years ago, there used to be seen sauntering on the terraces of Sans Souci, for a short time in the afternoon, or you might have met him elsewhere at an earlier hour, riding or driving in a rapid business manner on the open roads or through the scraggy woods and avenues of that intricate amphibious Potsdam region, a highly interesting lean little old man, of alert though slightly stooping figure; whose name among strangers was King *Friedrich the Second*, or Frederick the Great of Prussia, and at home among the common people, who much loved and esteemed him, was *Vater Fritz*,—Father Fred,—a name of familiarity which had not bred contempt in that instance. (*Works* 12: 1)

The tone throughout this lengthy sentence is informal. Informality is a key element of oral performance, where the speaker is attempting to foster an air of camaraderie with his audience. In addition, the phrase, "About fourscore years ago", is clearly a variation on the familiar words, "Once upon a time", which are found at the start of most traditional stories. The sentence ends with a reference to another well-known saying, "Familiarity breeds contempt", reworked here to Frederick's advantage. Ong notes:

In a primary oral culture, to solve effectively the problem of retaining and retrieving carefully articulated thought, you have to do your thinking in mnemonic patterns, shaped for ready oral recurrence Formulas help implement rhythmic discourse and also act as mnemonic aids in their own right, as set expressions circulating through the mouths and ears of all. 'Red in the morning, the sailor's warning; red in the night, the sailor's delight.' (34-35)

Carlyle is implementing a known oral device here, allowing his refashioned proverb to act as a mnemonic aid which will firmly establish a complimentary portrait of Frederick in the minds of his readers.⁸ In the opening paragraph of *Frederick*, Carlyle goes on to mention Frederick's boots "which may be brushed (and, I hope, kept soft with an underhand suspicion of oil), but are not permitted to be blackened or varnished; Day and Martin with their soot-pots forbidden to approach" (*Works* 12: 2). This reference to a well-known London blacking manufacturer is a signal to readers that Carlyle is familiar with and shares their day-to-day concerns. As Benjamin notes, "A man listening to a story is in the company of the storyteller; even a man reading one shares this companionship" (99). Carlyle's light-hearted, casual tone is intended to endear him further to his readers and encourage them to enjoy his company, to excise from their memories any notion of him as a distant, authoritarian sage.

As part of this strategy, Carlyle offers his readers a sympathetic portrayal of Frederick in order to elicit their empathy with and sympathy for this "lean little old man" who is "sauntering on the terraces" (*Works* 12: 1). He stresses that not only

⁸ Carlyle's success in this endeavour is indicated by an enthusiastic review of Volumes I and II of *Frederick* in the December 1858 edition of the *Gentleman's Magazine*. The reviewer described Carlyle's "representation of his hero" in this passage as "faithful as a photograph, and as finely executed as a portrait by Vandyke The finished picture, with the clear and strong expression which the author gives to it, fixes in the reader's mind a favourable impression of the great King" ("Frederick the Great" 571).

was Frederick known “among strangers” as “King *Friedrich the Second*, or Frederick the Great of Prussia”, but that he was also “at home among the common people” (1). Indeed, Carlyle claims that Frederick was so “much loved and esteemed” by them that he was given the familiar and friendly epithet of “Father Fred” (1). By assigning these names to Frederick at the very beginning of his epic, Carlyle is employing an oral technique specifically designed to highlight Frederick’s role as a figure of note. Ong comments on the significance of this type of figure in an oral environment:

Oral memory works effectively with ‘heavy’ characters, persons whose deeds are monumental, memorable and commonly public. Thus the noetic economy of its nature generates outsize figures, that is, heroic figures, not for romantic reasons or reflectively didactic reasons but for much more basic reasons: to organize experience in some sort of permanently memorable form. Colorless personalities cannot survive oral mnemonics. To assure weight and memorability, heroic figures tend to be type figures: wise Nestor, furious Achilles, clever Odysseus. (69)

For Frederick to strike a chord with his readers and earn himself a place in their collective oral memory, Carlyle had to ensure that the king was never perceived by them to be a “Colorless personalit[y]”.

Even at this early stage of his epic, Carlyle had begun the process of depicting Frederick in the terms described in the previous chapter of this thesis: as a quasi-divine king, a heroic military leader and a compassionate, gracious individual. Carlyle recalls Frederick’s well-known appellation of “Frederick the Great”, and notes that he “is a King every inch of him, though without the trappings of a King” (*Works* 12: 1). Through the repetition of the word, “King”, Carlyle emphasises Frederick’s sovereignty. He then adds to Frederick’s regal qualities by informing the reader that the king possesses “no sceptre but one like Agamemnon’s, a walking-

stick cut from the woods” (1).⁹ Carlyle’s invitation to his readers to make a favourable comparison between the King of Prussia and Agamemnon adds a mythical, semi-divine quality to Carlyle’s portrayal of Frederick. Although Carlyle later suggests that Frederick “is not of godlike physiognomy” and “by no means of Olympian height”, the underlying meaning is clear: despite these faults Frederick is to be perceived as a quasi-divine being (2). Carlyle goes on to remove any dubiety about the way in which he would like his readers to perceive Frederick when he specifically refers to him as the “last of the old Gods” (5).

The association of Frederick with Agamemnon in his role as commander of the Greek army marks the beginning of a passage where Carlyle depicts Frederick in military terms. The king is described as wearing, “an old military cocked-hat ... a mere soldier’s blue coat with red facings, coat likely to be old, and sure to have a good deal of Spanish snuff on the breast of it; rest of the apparel dim, unobtrusive in colour or cut” (1-2). Carlyle’s repeated use of the adjective “old” and his description of Frederick’s uniform as “dim” and “unobtrusive” are not only allusions to the king’s long and illustrious military career. The implication is that, although Frederick’s days as an active soldier may be over, he still feels very much at ease in this familiar role. Carlyle is informing his readers that he intends to portray Frederick as a complex individual: a king, a military commander, and a fellow human being. He encourages his readers to have empathy with and admiration for Frederick as part of an overall strategy of stimulating and maintaining their interest sufficiently in order that they continue reading his epic. In tandem with this, Carlyle determined

⁹ Carlyle’s readers would have been familiar with this allusion to the legendary King of Mycenae who had led the Greeks against Achilles during the Trojan War, an event made famous in Homer’s *Iliad*.

that his own voice would be ever present in the text, addressing and directing his readers.

In order to allow his voice to become a constant feature within the text, Carlyle had to use language which was recognisably oral in structure. It has already been noted that the first chapter from *Frederick* begins in the form of a story. In addition, the first sentence of this chapter is lengthy and highly descriptive. Carlyle is intent on preventing his readers' attention from wandering off, and the complexity of the opening sentence is specifically designed to keep their interest. Complex sentences, as Ong notes, are typical of "Oral cultures" which

encourage fluency, fulsomeness, volubility. Rhetoricians were to call this copia [sic] Concern with copia [sic] remains intense in western culture so long as the culture sustains massive oral residue – which is roughly until the age of Romanticism or even beyond. Thomas Babington Macaulay (1800-59) is one of the many fulsome early Victorians whose pleonastic written compositions still read much as an exuberant, orally composed oration would sound. (40-41)

Carlyle can quite rightly be regarded as one of those early Victorians who wrote in this fulsome style. His prose style throughout *Frederick* is pleonastic in the extreme, and often sounds like "an exuberant, orally composed oration". In the opening sentence of *Frederick*, Carlyle also introduces an element of suspense when he notes that Frederick is "a highly interesting lean little old man": readers have to continue reading in order to find out what makes Frederick so interesting, and why, "among the common people", he was so "much loved and esteemed" (*Works* 12: 1). This was surely an unexpected description of a king about whom Macaulay had recently written: "By the public, the King of Prussia was considered as a politician destitute alike of morality and decency, insatiably rapacious, and shamelessly false" (257).

Suspense is one of the key elements of oral performance. As E.M. Forster has pointed out, storytelling can be traced “back to neolithic times” where the audience was “only kept awake by suspense” (41-42). If this faltered or failed the speaker’s audience “either fell asleep or killed him” (42). The generation of suspense is an oft-used tactic by Carlyle in *Frederick* in order to prevent his audience from losing interest in his history. Another advantage to be gained from the use of suspense was that it stimulated the reader’s imagination. Readers would inevitably try to formulate their own answers to the questions of why Frederick was “highly interesting” and why he was so well loved by the “common folk”, thus becoming more involved in the story. During his coverage of the first campaign of the Seven Years’ War, an event which appears near the beginning of Volume VI of *Frederick*, Carlyle comments on his problems as an editor and makes specific remarks about the process of encouraging readers to use their imagination. In this passage, he describes Frederick’s predicament immediately prior to the outbreak of the Seven Years’ War:

Friedrich’s situation, in those fatally questionable months, and for many past (especially from January 16th to July),—readers must imagine it, for there is no description possible Friedrich’s situation is not unimaginable, when (as can now be done by candid inquirers who will take trouble enough) the one or two internal facts of it are disengaged from the roaring ocean of clamorous delusions Lies do fall silent; truth waits to be recognised, not always in vain. No reader ever will conceive the strangling perplexity of that situation, now so remote and extinct to us. All I can do is, to set-down what features of it have become indisputable; and leave them as detached trceries, as fractions of an outline, to coalesce into something of image where they can. (*Works* 17: 31-32)

In the excerpt above, the phrase, “readers must imagine it”, can almost be interpreted as a command. Carlyle is actively exhorting his readers to become involved, to “take

trouble enough” to use their imagination, where the reward for their pains will be to arrive at their version of the facts of “Friedrich’s situation”.

Ong has commented on the need for writers to “set up a role in which absent and often unknown readers can cast themselves”, referring to this fictionalization of the reader as “the underside of literary history” (100-101). He stresses that attempts by writers to encourage readers to use their imagination was hardly a new concept:

Early writing provides the reader with conspicuous help for situating himself imaginatively. It presents philosophical material in dialogues, such as those of Plato’s Socrates, which the reader can imagine himself overhearing. Or episodes are to be imagined as told to a live audience on successive days. Later, in the Middle Ages, writing will present philosophical and theological texts in objection-and-response form, so that the reader can imagine an oral disputation. Boccaccio and Chaucer will provide the reader with fictional groups of men and women telling stories to one another, that is, a ‘frame story’, so that the reader can pretend to be one of the listening company. (101)

As noted at the beginning of this chapter, *Frederick*, like Scott’s *Redgauntlet*, consists of a patchwork of “different textual media” (Fielding 104). This multi-layered format allows Carlyle’s reader “help for situating himself imaginatively”, in a manner similar to that described by Ong. Carlyle often provides passages of dialogue between different characters for the reader to “imagine himself overhearing”. He also gives excerpts from a variety of letters to and from Frederick and other individuals, as well as passages from personal diaries, which allow the reader to imagine that he or she is reading these personally. In addition, sections of dialogue and diary excerpts are often embedded within letters and the reader is exposed to intertwined strands of narrative which have to be unravelled in order to make sense of the text. An example of these multiple narrative strands appears in a letter written by a Madame de Staël. Carlyle uses this letter to describe “A visit by

Voltaire and his divine Emilie” to the Palace of Sceaux, near Paris, in August 1747 (*Works* 16: 213). Carlyle’s introduction to this letter reveals his purpose. He describes it as having been written by “one of those rare creatures, a seeing Witness, who can make others see and believe” (213). The ability to make his readers “see and believe” and allow them to become imaginatively involved in his story was a key component of Carlyle’s oral strategy.

In this instance, sections of Madame de Staël’s letter are set down as a diary of events: “*Sceaux, Tuesday 15th August 1747. * * Madame du Châtelet and Voltaire, who had announced themselves as for today, and whom nobody had heard of otherwise, made their appearance yesternight, near midnight; like two Spectres, with an odour of embalmment about them, as if just out of their tombs*” (214). The result of this multi-layering is that the reader can imagine he or she is reading, not only Madame de Staël’s letter, but also her diary at first-hand: the reader becomes intimately involved in the text. Furthermore, in this diary excerpt, the reader is being given a glimpse of some “richly enjoyed gossip” concerning Voltaire and his mistress, which heightens the sense of intimacy.¹⁰ Carlyle is attempting to foster, between himself and his readers, the same kind of camaraderie which exists in an oral performance between the speaker and the members of his audience. However, for Carlyle to truly succeed in his attempt to mimic orality, this camaraderie also had to exist between readers. As Ong notes,

the spoken word forms human beings into close-knit groups. When a speaker is addressing an audience, the members of the audience normally become a unity, with themselves and with the speaker Writing and print isolate.

¹⁰ John Ruskin made this remark about *Frederick* in *Praeterita: The Autobiography of John Ruskin*. In a comment about Carlyle, Ruskin states, “the book he makes bitterest moan over, Friedrich, bears the outward aspect of richly enjoyed gossip” (336).

There is no collective noun or concept for readers corresponding to ‘audience’. The collective ‘readership’ ... is a far-gone abstraction. To think of readers as a united group, we have to fall back on calling them an ‘audience’, as though they were in fact listeners. (73)

By offering his readers a shared topic of interest, in this instance, the snippet of gossip concerning Voltaire and Emilie, Carlyle hopes to create a listenership which will be “a unity, with themselves and with the speaker”.

In his coverage of “a short run to Holland”, a journey which was undertaken by Frederick in 1755, Carlyle embeds passages of dialogue within a letter (*Works* 16: 406). He begins by interrupting the narrative with a phrase from one of Frederick’s letters in which the king informed his sister, Wilhelmina that he had been travelling incognito: “‘I gave myself out for a Musician of the King of Poland’” (407). The letter is followed by excerpts from a second letter, written by “a young Swiss” named Henri de Catt, who had “stept into the very boat where Friedrich was” (407). De Catt’s letter is interspersed with sections of dialogue which had taken place between Frederick, still in disguise, and himself during their voyage. De Catt writes:

‘What form of Government do you reckon the best?’ inquired he, among other things. ‘The monarchic, if the King is just and enlightened.’—‘Very well,’ answered he; ‘but where will you find Kings of that sort?’ ‘Were you ever in Germany?’ he now asked me. ‘No; but I should like to make that journey: I am very curious to see the Prussian States, and their King, of whom one hears so much.’ And now I began to launch-out on Friedrich’s actions; but he interrupted me rapidly with the words: ‘Nothing more of Kings, Monsieur! What have we to do with them? We will spend the rest of our voyage on more agreeable and cheering objects.’ (408)

The introduction of this dialogue within de Catt’s letter not only gives the reader the impression that he is reading the letter at first-hand but it also allows him to “‘imagine himself overhearing” Frederick and de Catt’s private conversation in a manner similar to that outlined by Ong (101). De Catt concludes his letter with the words, “‘I

then told him my name, and we parted””, after which Carlyle adds, “Parted to meet again; and live together for about twenty years” (*Works* 16: 409). Immediately after this sentence, Carlyle informs his readers, “Of this honest Henri de Catt, whom the King liked on this Interview, and sent for soon after, and at length got as ‘*Lecteur du Roi*,’ we shall hear again” (409). In this passage, Carlyle uses two separate oral techniques, redundancy and suspense. Ong maintains that, in an oral situation “There is nothing to backloop into outside the mind, for the oral utterance has vanished as soon as it is uttered Redundancy, repetition of the just-said, keeps both speaker and hearer surely on the track” (39-40). Carlyle employs redundancy when he uses the word “parted” as the final word in one sentence and the first word in the sentence immediately following. He introduces an element of suspense when he says that Frederick and de Catt will “meet again, and live together for about twenty years” (*Works* 16: 409). Carlyle then immediately adds to the suspense, at the same time repeating himself by reiterating his previous point, when he informs readers that they “shall hear again” of “this honest Henri de Catt” (409). Carlyle is casting himself in the role of an oral storyteller and his readers in the role of a listening audience which is, in Swinburne’s words, “ravenous with expectation” for his next utterance (1: 115).

Carlyle uses what he refers to as “*Tourist’s Note*” material extensively throughout *Frederick*, in which he casts quite different roles for his readers and himself. He gives a description of the countryside at Adelsdorf in the format of these “Notes”:

‘It is a high-lying irregularly hilly Country; hilly, not mountainous. Various streams rise out of it that have a long course ... three Valleys cross it, three Rivers with their Valleys: Bober, Queiss, Neisse This is Neisse *Third*, we say; not the Neisse of Neisse City, which we used to know at the north base of the Giant Mountains, nor the Roaring Neisse, which we have seen at Hohenfriedberg; but a third On which, near the head of it, there is a fine

old spinning, linen-weaving Town called Zittau,—where, to make it memorable, one Tourist has read, on the Townhouse, an Inscription worth repeating: “*Bene facere et male audire regium est, To do good and have evil said of you, is a kingly thing*”. (*Works* 16: 166)

This highly descriptive passage has the same function as Madame de Staël’s “seeing Witness” in that it makes Carlyle’s readers “see and believe” the area that is being depicted. Carlyle makes this point explicitly when he refers to the Latin inscription on the townhouse in Zittau, telling readers that this “makes[s] it memorable”. By repeating the word “we” several times, Carlyle also takes pains to include the reader. As noted in chapter one of this thesis, these “*Tourist’s Notes*”, with their lengthy descriptions of various regions of Germany, entice the reader to believe that he or she is a tourist being led through the country with Carlyle as their guide. As the excerpt above demonstrates, they also allow Carlyle to encourage his readers to become increasingly imaginatively involved in the landscape which is being delineated.

A further indication of his intention to produce an oral story is Carlyle’s title for the first chapter of his epic, “PROEM: FRIEDRICH’S HISTORY FROM THE DISTANCE WE ARE AT” (12: 1). The phrase, “FROM THE DISTANCE WE ARE AT”, has important connotations. By specifically stating that Frederick’s history will be told from the standpoint of where Carlyle and his readers find themselves now, Carlyle is aligning himself with these readers and creating a sense of fellowship. They will explore “FRIEDRICH’S HISTORY” together. Shortly afterwards in the same chapter, Carlyle reveals that he intends his readers to become imaginatively involved in Frederick’s history when he conjures up an image of the king as, “this Figure, whom we see by the mind’s eye” (4). As noted earlier, by beginning this volume near the end of Frederick’s life, Carlyle closed the temporal gap between Frederick and his readers.

Furthermore, in the first sentence, he ‘speaks’ to his readers, when he mentions Frederick “sauntering on the terraces of Sans Souci”, informing them, “you might have met him” (1). He then puts forward several key questions and invites them to join him in providing answers: “We are to try for some Historical Conception of this Man and King; some answer to the questions, ‘What was he, then? Whence, how? And what did he achieve and suffer in the world?’” (4). Carlyle is involved in establishing a dialogue with his readers, where he poses questions and encourages them to provide solutions.

In the excerpt below, as part of his strategy of encouraging his readers to become involved in Frederick’s history, Carlyle offers an imagined reader response to questions which he himself has posed before providing his own answers. In a damning critique of the eighteenth century, Carlyle declares:

that Century is quite confiscate, fallen bankrupt ... it lies massed up in our minds as a disastrous wrecked inanity, not useful to dwell upon ‘And yet it is the Century of our own Grandfathers?’ cries the reader. Yes, reader! truly To forget it quite is not yet possible, nor would be profitable. What to do with it, and its forgotten fooleries and ‘Histories,’ worthy only of forgetting?—Well: so much of it as by nature *adheres*; what of it cannot be disengaged from our Hero and his operations: approximately so much, and no more! Let that be our bargain in regard to it. (9-10)

Offering an imaginary dialogue is strikingly similar to the technique, described by Ong above, which was used by early writers to give the reader “conspicuous help for situating himself imaginatively” (101). Here, instead of the reader overhearing “philosophical material” in the form of dialogue, he is effectively eavesdropping on himself. Addressing the reader directly or indirectly is a technique which Carlyle uses throughout *Frederick*. The purpose of this is to hold the reader’s attention and allow Carlyle’s voice to be ever present in the text. Carlyle clearly illustrates this

intended *modus operandi* when he ends Chapter I with a direct address and invitation to his reader: “And so we will end these precludings, and proceed upon our Problem, courteous reader” (*Works* 12: 20).

In keeping with his strategy of establishing a dialogue with his readers and establishing his voice as a constant presence in the text, Carlyle mimics the way that a speaker would behave in an oral situation and modulates his tone of voice to suit the occasion. In these initial chapters, for example, in the sentence above where Carlyle is addressing his “courteous reader”, he is ‘speaking’ in a calm, polite voice. During his coverage of Frederick’s many battles his tone is often more urgent and strident. One example of this is his tendency to issue commands or diktats to his readers. These range from Carlyle urging the reader to “Think only of one fact” to the more aggressive and direct command, “Forward, then!” (18: 310, 301). The challenge for Carlyle was to convey the changes in tone and intonations of a speaking voice as accurately as possible in print. According to Ong, this would not be an easy task:

In a text even the words that are there lack their full phonetic qualities. In oral speech, a word must have one or another intonation or tone of voice – lively, excited, quiet, incensed, resigned, or whatever. It is impossible to speak a word orally without any intonation. In a text punctuation can signal tone minimally: a question mark or a comma, for example, generally calls for the voice to be raised a bit. (100)

Ong’s emphasis on the lack of “full phonetic qualities” of written words and the minimal impact that punctuation has in signalling tone, highlights the difficulties faced by Carlyle. He solved the problem by addressing the reader directly and repeatedly, using informal language to suggest that he was inviting the reader to join him in his journey through Frederick’s history.

A passage describing Frederick's mansion at Reinsberg is peppered throughout with asides to the reader: "Alas, reader, no", "Let the reader take it with him" and "It would but weary the reader to describe this Crown-Prince Mansion" (*Works* 14: 163). In addition, in this excerpt there are multiple instances where Carlyle uses "us", "our" and "we": "Much is admirable to us as we study Reinsberg", "To our wondering thought" and "But we cannot dwell on this consideration" (163). Carlyle also personalises this account by including his own thoughts and opinions at random intervals. Describing the area surrounding Reinsberg and the river which "gives name to the little place" he opines, "The waters, I think, are drab-coloured, not peat-brown The little Town is very old; but, till the Crown-Prince settled there, had no peculiar vitality in it. I think there are now some potteries, glass-manufactories Last accounts I got were, of talk there had risen of planting an extensive *Normal-School* there" (161-162). Carlyle's repeated use of the phrase "I think" in this excerpt is part of his strategy of encouraging a sense of fellowship with his reader. By admitting that he does not have all the answers, Carlyle is deliberating transforming the public's perception of him as a remote, authoritarian figure into that of an empathic fellow mortal.

As noted earlier in this chapter, Carlyle also uses casual, familiar language in order to reinforce this transformation. When this informal tone of voice is combined with Carlyle's casual asides it produces a powerful effect on the reader. In his description of the mansion itself, Carlyle notes that it is

Beyond doubt, a dignified, substantial pile of stonework; all of good proportions General height is about forty feet; two stories of ample

proportions: the Towers overlooking them are sixty feet in height. Extent of outer frontage, if you go all round, and omit the Colonnade, will be five hundred feet and more: this, with the rearward face, is a thousand feet of room frontage:—fancy the extent of lodging space. (164)

Carlyle's combined oral techniques are designed to encourage the reader to believe that he is part of the tale which is being unfolded. In the reader's imagination, he has gone "all round" the outer frontage and can easily "fancy the extent of lodging space" outlined by Carlyle. In these sections of his epic which dealt with Frederick's peacetime activities, where the tenor of the text was altogether more subdued, Carlyle could not rely on the excitement of Frederick's exploits in battle to maintain the reader's attention. Successfully appealing to the imagination of his readers in this manner became a key component of Carlyle's oral strategy. In his review of Volumes I and II of *Frederick* in the December 1858 issue of *Fraser's Magazine*, George Henry Lewes commended this aspect of Carlyle's style: "The places and the people stand before us. He has *seen* them himself, with bodily or mental eye distinctly seen them; and because he sees, we see" (635).

Carlyle was aware that his oral strategy would also fail if his readers were to lose interest in Frederick, an event which would most likely occur when he was not being portrayed as a heroic military commander. In order to avoid this, he offers alternative portraits of Frederick as a craftsman, preacher, philosopher, writer and musician. In a telling passage, Carlyle compares Frederick's relationship with his father to that of an apprentice and his master:

The Crown-Prince, by his judicious obedient procedures in these Four Years at Ruppin, at a distance from Papa, has, as it were, completed his *Apprenticeship*; and ... may be said to have delivered his *Proof-Essay* with a distinguished success. He is now out of his Apprenticeship; entitled to take-up his Indentures, whenever need shall be. The rugged old Master cannot but

declare him competent, qualified to try his own hand without supervision ... it is a blessedly successful Apprenticeship! (*Works* 14: 158)

In this excerpt, Carlyle offers a portrait of Frederick as a skilled manual worker or craftsman.¹¹ The importance which Benjamin attaches to the storyteller being “rooted in the people” was echoed by Carlyle in his *Reminiscences*, in which he placed great value on the worthiness of manual labour and the craftsman’s ability to create a solid, permanent structure: “A noble craft it is that of a mason: a good Building will last longer than most Books, than one Book of a million” (28). Carlyle is acting as a “great storyteller” by “fashion[ing] the raw material” of his own experience and mapping this onto Frederick’s relationship with his father. By portraying Frederick as an “Apprentice” who is indentured to his “Master,” a role which overlays the son-father relationship, Carlyle appeals directly to his readers by presenting Frederick as both an able craftsman and a dutiful son, roles with which they could readily associate.

Ong notes the importance of “Narrative originality” in an oral performance (41). He emphasises the fact that this originality “lodges not in making up new stories but in managing a particular interaction with this audience at this time – at every telling the story has to be introduced uniquely into a unique situation, for in oral cultures an audience must be brought to respond, often vigorously” (41-42). By presenting these portraits of Frederick as an able craftsman and an obedient son, Carlyle displays “Narrative originality” and adopts the oral techniques described by Ong in order to

¹¹ Benjamin saw an important link between the roles of storyteller and craftsman: “A great storyteller will always be rooted in the people, primarily in a milieu of craftsmen” (100). He continued, “one can ... ask oneself whether the relationship of the storyteller to his material, human life, is not in itself a craftsman’s relationship, whether it is not his very task to fashion the raw material of experience, his own and that of others, in a solid, useful, and unique way” (107).

elicit a response from his readers. In addition, by showing Frederick's success as an "Apprentice", Carlyle is using another oral strategy, the propensity to focus on winners as opposed to losers. According to Ong, "the genealogies of winners tend to survive (and to be improved), those of losers tend to vanish (or to be recast)" (66). In this relatively small matter of completing "a blessedly successful Apprenticeship", Carlyle ensures that, even in times of peace, Frederick is perceived to be a winner (*Works* 14: 158).

During the pacific periods of Frederick's reign, Carlyle found it necessary to adopt various oral techniques to keep the reader's attention, including constantly speaking to the reader in a calm, encouraging tone of voice and offering many flattering and sympathetic portraits of the Prussian monarch. In his depiction of Frederick as a military commander, however, Carlyle could, to some extent, rely on the excitement inherent in the depiction of battle scenes to prevent his readers' attention from wavering, thus changes in his oral style were almost inevitable. He embarks on his coverage of the 1759 Battle of Kunersdorf in the same oral storytelling fashion with which he began *Frederick*. In the first paragraph he introduces an element of suspense: "Sunday July 29th, at Frankfurt-on-Oder divine worship was broken-in upon, and the poor City thrown into consternation, by actual advent, or as good as advent, of the Russians" (18: 58-59). As he moves on to cover the battle itself, Carlyle allows the narrative to slip between tenses, describing how the Prussian army

advanced, unwavering, all the faster—, speed one's only safety. They poured into the Russian gunners and musketry battalions one volley of choicest quality, which had a shaking effect; then, with level bayonets, plunge on the batteries: which are all empty before we can leap into them; artillerymen, musketeer battalions, all on wing; general whirlpool spreading. And so, in ten minutes, the Mühlberg and its guns are ours. (74)

This movement from the past to the present tense for the action sequences affords Carlyle the opportunity to occupy two distinct roles. His position shifts from that of an omniscient storyteller who is recounting past events for his readers to that of vicarious participant—with those readers—in the events which are being unfolded.

A more dramatic example of this participation can be found during his depiction of an earlier conflict, the Battle of Leuthen, which took place in December 1757. After describing Frederick's success in this battle, Carlyle highlights an encounter between the king and the "Landlord of the poor Tavern at Saara" (17: 322). He asks his readers for their "consent" because, he tells them, the "Dialogue ... is dullish", before presenting them with a lengthy transcript of this conversation (322). The dialogue concludes with:

King. '... you are an honest man:—probably a Protestant?'
Landlord. 'Joa, joa, Ihr Majestät, I am of your Majesty's creed!'

Crack-crack! At this point the Dialogue is cut short by sudden musket-shots from the woody fields to right; crackle of about twelve shots in all; which hurt nothing but some horse's feet,—had been aimed at the light, and too low. (324)

The onomatopoeic "Crack-crack" of these "sudden musket-shots" interrupts the physical text at the same time as they "cut short" the conversation. The reader can see the dislocating effect of the shots on the page, as well as virtually hearing the sound of these shots as they are fired. This dramatic technique of Carlyle's is all the more effective because the reader has been lulled into a state of complacency following the battle by the ensuing "Dullish" dialogue. The dislocated text plus the 'sound' of the shots, in tandem with clipped prose and the use of the present tense, lends a tone of urgency to the narrative. Carlyle uses these oral techniques to

overcome the written word's inability to convey the intonations that exist in oral speech. By employing a variety of oral devices, Carlyle places the reader directly at the heart of the action alongside Frederick and himself. In his persona as a storyteller, Carlyle encourages his readers to become increasingly imaginatively involved in Frederick's history. At the same time, as a means of endearing the king to his readers Carlyle provides portraits of Frederick in various complimentary guises. Furthermore, the persistent interjection of his own voice into the text offers Carlyle access to the power inherent in "vocalized print" and gives him the ability to 'speak' to each reader as if he were addressing him or her personally. However, to achieve his aim of transforming his readers into an 'audience', a unified readership who he hoped would be more receptive to his teachings, it was necessary for Carlyle to modify his oral strategy. Chapter three examines the ways in which he focused on two specific aspects of orality, music and rhythm in order to engender a sense of unity amongst his readers.

Chapter 3

The “speaking of man to men”: Creating a unified readership¹

“Put wisdom in the head of the world, the world will fight its battle victoriously,
and be the best world man can make it.”²

This chapter explores specific aspects of Carlyle’s oral strategy, examining the ways in which he used music and rhythm throughout *Frederick* as a means of creating a unified readership. In order to enhance the shared auditory experience of his readers, Carlyle took full advantage of the Victorians’ pre-occupation with music and the prevailing belief that music could be a civilizing and unifying influence. In a recent article on Carlyle and “Musical Morality”, Cynthia Ellen Patton noted, “a faith in music as a civilizing force took root in Great Britain after the first mass singing classes of the 1830s Articles on the importance of music, contemporary and historical, in national and individual life appear throughout the runs of the great Victorian journals of opinion” (51).³ Carlyle appears to have believed in the contemporary notion of “music as a civilizing force”, certainly on a personal level, quite early in the period. Writing to Leigh Hunt on 29th October 1833, he confessed, “a little music is invaluable to me; better than sermons; winnows all the bitter dust out of me, and for moments makes me a good man” (*CL* 7: 30). According to Patton, “Far from being a merely feminine or trivial pursuit, to Carlyle, as to his

¹ In “The Hero as Man of Letters”, Carlyle stressed the “importance [which] lay in the speaking of man to men” (*Works* 5: 159).

² (*Works* 5: 168).

³ See Patton’s article “‘For Moments a Good Man’: Thomas Carlyle and Musical Morality”, *Carlyle Studies Annual* 17, Normal, Illinois: Illinois State University, 1997, 51-59.

contemporaries, music possessed the power to alter the listener's and performer's characters for good—or when misused, as Carlyle was eager to note, for evil" (51).⁴

The effective conveyance of the sounds of warfare, including field music, was a key part of Carlyle's oral strategy. Shortly after describing Frederick's victory at the battle of Leuthen, Carlyle portrays the reaction of the Prussian troops to the sound of distant gunfire:

The Prussian Host at Saara, hearing these noises, took to its arms again; and marched after the King. Thick darkness; silence; tramp, tramp:—a Prussian grenadier broke-out, with solemn tenor voice again, into Church-Music; a known Church-Hymn, of the homely *Te-Deum* kind; in which five-and-twenty thousand other voices, and all the regimental bands, soon join. (*Works* 17: 325)

In this passage, Carlyle succinctly conveys the sound of the soldiers' feet breaking the silence as the troops march stoically after their king. Readers can imagine that they are marching along in unison. Ong has observed that "sound incorporates. Whereas sight situates the observer outside what he views, at a distance, sound pours into the hearer By contrast with vision, the dissecting sense, sound is thus a unifying sense. A typical visual ideal is clarity and distinctness, a taking apart The auditory ideal, by contrast, is harmony, a putting together" (71). Carlyle hoped that by exposing them to the "crackle" of gunfire and the "tramp, tramp" of the soldiers' marching, readers would not only become increasingly imaginatively

⁴ As Patton does not elaborate on her suggestion that Carlyle regarded the misuse of music as a potentially demonic power, it is impossible to determine how she arrived at this conclusion. However, I would suggest that Patton is overstating the case. She is, after all, describing Carlyle's distaste for the theatricalities of operatic performance, where he felt that the role of music had become degraded and demoted. In his essay, "The Opera", which he had written following a visit to the London Opera in the Haymarket, Carlyle declared, "Music is well said to be the speech of angels; in fact, nothing among the utterances allowed to man is felt to be so divine" (*Works* 29: 397). He then went on to complain mournfully, "The waste that is made in music is probably among the saddest of all our squanderings of God's gifts" (398). This essay was first published in its entirety in the Christmas 1851 edition of *The Keepsake*.

involved in the text but they would also become united due to their shared auditory experience. The assertion from the *Athenaeum's* reviewer in 1862 that Carlyle's "style, when he follows the army, marches with it, echoes its guns, reflects its bayonet gleams, is in harmony with its wildest music" indicates that, in this reviewer's opinion, Carlyle has been successful in this aspect of his orality (*"History of Friedrich"* 585).

Carlyle had faith in music's ability to transform, not just himself, but each individual into "a good man". In "The Hero as Poet" he outlined this belief: "The meaning of Song goes deep. Who is there that, in logical words, can express the effect music has on us? A kind of inarticulate unfathomable speech, which leads us to the edge of the Infinite, and lets us for moments gaze into that!" (*Works* 5: 83). Patton's suggestion, therefore, that music could be capable of transforming an individual into an "evil" character seems to be completely at odds with Carlyle's own claims for himself and his fellow mortals of music's powers of redemption. Carlyle was of the opinion that the power inherent in music proper could also be found in poetry and even in common speech: "For my own part, I find considerable meaning in the old vulgar distinction of Poetry being *metrical*, having music in it, being a Song" (83). He then goes on to make a specific connection between song and speech:

Nay all speech, even the commonest speech, has something of song in it: not a parish in the world but has its parish-accent; the rhythm or *tune* to which the people there *sing* what they have to say! Accent is a kind of chanting; all men have accent of their own,—though they only *notice* that of others. Observe too how all passionate language does of itself become musical,—with a finer music than the mere accent; the speech of a man even in zealous anger becomes a chant, a song. All deep things are Song. It seems somehow the very central essence of us, Song; as if all the rest were but wrappages and hulls! The primal element of us; of us, and of all things. (83)

Carlyle's assertion that speech in any form was a type of singing or chanting which was the "primal element" of all men demonstrated his conviction that an oral performance was one means by which a man's innermost passions could be transmitted to the rest of the world.

In the light of Carlyle's remarks in the excerpt above, it is interesting to note a perceived musicality in his own speech. In his reminiscences of the Carlyles which were published in 1881, Henry Larkin insisted that "Both Carlyle and Mrs. Carlyle had singularly expressive voices, and yet singularly different from each other, like the many tones of a powerful organ and the perfect modulations of a mellow flute" (52).⁵ Writing in her journal on 27th February 1844, Lady Eastlake also remarked on this aspect of Carlyle's speech: "He spoke broad Scotch, but his intonation was measured and musical, and his words came out sing-song, as if he were repeating them by heart" (116). In addition to observing the musicality of Carlyle's spoken words, Eastlake's suggestion that he appeared to be reciting these words "by heart" implies that his speech was far from spontaneous and that he chose and uttered his words with care, a trait which he carried over into his written work. In response to a debate concerning his written style, Carlyle willingly gave credit to his parents: "the most important part by far was that of Nature, you would perhaps say, had you ever heard my Father speak, or very often heard my Mother & her inborn melodies of heart and of voice!" (Althaus 59). Carlyle's acknowledgement of the importance that his father's speaking voice and the "inborn melodies" of his mother had on his style illustrates his awareness of the significance, not just of voice, but of musicality in his

⁵ Henry Larkin, 1820-1899, worked as an unpaid assistant on *Frederick*, helping Carlyle with maps and the index, amongst other duties.

written work. His upbringing in an oral environment was crucial in shaping this awareness.

As mentioned earlier in this thesis, it would be simplistic to suggest that Carlyle merely wrote in the same manner as he spoke. Setting down his lectures in print was a complex process which entailed much more effort than simply transcribing his lecture notes *verbatim*. Evidence suggests that the transition from the spoken to the written word was a reciprocal process for Carlyle. Harrison recalled a visit to the Carlyles' house during which Carlyle

rolled forth Latter-Day Pamphlets by the hour together in the very words, with all the nicknames, expletives, and ebullient tropes that were so familiar to us in print, with the full voice, the Dumfries burr, and the kindling eye which all his friends recall. It seemed to me the first time that I sat at his fireside and listened to him that it was an illusion Could printed essay and spoken words be so absolutely the same? (*Memories* 99-100)

Harrison's assertion that Carlyle's oral performance was identical to his written work is probably inaccurate, even if Carlyle himself had believed or protested that this was true.⁶ In addition, Harrison notes that Carlyle spoke continuously for several hours, an event which, by all contemporary accounts, was not an unusual occurrence for him. Both of these remarks are significant in that they shed light on Carlyle's methods. Harrison's reaction to Carlyle's performance suggests that, even if the written and oral performances were not identical, Carlyle had been successful in incorporating oral techniques into the *Pamphlets*, a process which allowed him to perform an accurate, and lengthy oral rendition of his written work. In order to speak for hours, Carlyle would be aided, as discussed in the previous chapter, by his use of

⁶ See Ong's remarks on the results of research carried out on singers who believe that they sing the same song "line for line and word for word any time" (60) in his chapter, "Some psychodynamics of orality" under the sub-heading, "Oral Memorization" (57-67).

specific oral devices, including repetition and rhythm. This type of oral performance was, in effect, a kind of chanting, a melodic recital which was no doubt enhanced by the fact that it was being delivered in Carlyle's resounding voice with its "Dumfries burr". During this recital, Carlyle was putting into action his own observation that "all passionate language does of itself become musical,—with a finer music than the mere accent; the speech of a man even in zealous anger becomes a chant, a song" (*Works* 5: 83).

Carlyle's remark that men "only notice" the accent of others gives the impression that he deliberately held on to his own distinctive accent in order to make his words more memorable.⁷ Both Harrison and Reid place great emphasis on the effects that were produced by the sound of Carlyle's voice. In particular, Reid's likening of this to "the blast of a trumpet" reveals the powerful musicality of Carlyle's oral performance. In *Frederick*, Carlyle uses music in the same measured and deliberate way in order to provoke a similar reaction from his readers: encouraging them to become increasingly imaginatively involved in his history. In addition, throughout his epic Carlyle repeatedly associates Frederick with music as a means of portraying him as a cultured and creative individual. Carlyle makes this link from the outset, opining that Frederick's history "will become a perfected Melodious Truth ... to mankind" (*Works* 12: 20). Not content with this over-arching description, Carlyle then makes a more pointed association when he refers to Frederick's decision to use

⁷ This technique apparently had the desired effect not only on Harrison, but also on Sir Thomas Wemyss Reid. In a letter to Mrs Charles Fox, written on September 6th 1847, Reid spoke of the "mental effect" that he had experienced as a result of "Carlyle's companionship", informing her that "sometimes his words, not so much by their purport as by their tone and spirit, sounded through me like the blast of a trumpet, stirring up all my powers to the battle of life" (*Life of The Right Honourable William Edward Forster* 212). This text will hereafter be referred to as *Forster*.

the name “*Fédéric* (with a very singular use of euphony)” as “his sole designation” (23). Carlyle then devotes an entire chapter to a description of Frederick as a child, highlighting an incident where Frederick is depicted “strutting about, and assiduously beating a little drum” (371). He claims that the subsequent portrait made of this scene “may be taken as Friedrich’s first appearance on the stage of the world; and welcomed accordingly” as a definite record of this important event (373-374). For Carlyle, however, of equal importance was the fact that the portrait demonstrated, at an early age, Frederick’s affinity for music.

In Volume III of *Frederick*, Carlyle returns to Frederick’s musicality when he informs his readers, “In Music we find him particularly rich” (14: 166). He then describes how, as part of his building programme at Reinsberg, Frederick had created a “Music-Saloon” whose highly decorated ceiling far surpassed that of any other in the mansion: “Black Night, making off, with all her sickly dews, at one end of the ceiling; and at the other end, the Steeds of Phœbus bursting forth, and the glittering shafts of Day,—with Cupids, Love-goddesses, War-gods, not omitting Bacchus and his vines, all getting beautifully awake in consequence. A very fine room indeed” (166). These classical allusions not only reinforce Frederick’s status as a cultured, civilized king, but their appearance in the elaborate ceiling of the Music-Saloon is an early indication of the role of music as a leitmotif throughout *Frederick* for these positive and peaceable attributes. Carlyle often refers to Frederick’s prowess as a flautist, both as a player and as a composer: “Daily, at a fixed hour of the afternoon, there is concert held The Prince has a fine sensibility to Music: does himself, with thrilling adagios on the flute, join in these harmonious acts” (166-

167). On the following page, Carlyle uses the word “harmonious” in a different context, referring to the way in which Frederick’s Court functioned “in harmonious free dignity” (168). The initial reading of “harmonious” to describe Frederick’s “thrilling adagios” leads readers to believe that Carlyle is using this description to portray the king solely in musical terms. However, Carlyle’s rapid repetition of this word and his assigning to it an altogether different meaning has the effect of sending the reader back to the previous page to reinterpret Frederick’s flute-playing as a collectively peaceable, as well as a tuneful, activity.

As *Frederick* progresses, the leitmotif of music as a civilizing force for Frederick and his immediate circle evolves from functioning at a purely personal level to operating on a much larger scale. In “The Opera”, Carlyle had remarked on the importance of music for “Serious nations”, asserting that “all nations that can still listen to the mandate of Nature, have prized song and music as the highest; as a vehicle for worship, for prophecy, and for whatsoever in them was divine” (*Works* 29: 397). A decade earlier in “The Hero as Poet”, Carlyle had expressed his fears for the future of the English nation due the dispersal of large sections of the populace as a result of emigration:

England, before long, this Island of ours, will hold but a small fraction of the English: in America, in New Holland, east and west to the very Antipodes, there will be a Saxondom covering great spaces of the Globe. And now, what is it that can keep all these together into virtually one Nation, so that they do not fall-out and fight, but live at peace, in brotherlike intercourse, helping one another? This is justly regarded as the greatest practical problem, the thing all manner of sovereignties and governments are here to accomplish: what is it that will accomplish this? (5: 113-114)

Carlyle’s concerns about the English diaspora are centred on the de-unification of the nation, which, he believed, would result in the loss of a sense of national identity. In

the excerpt from which this quotation is taken, Carlyle had been discussing the merits of Shakespeare, and he answered the question, “what is it that can keep all these together into virtually one Nation”, by putting forward the figure of Shakespeare as a solution: “Here, I say, is an English King, whom no time or chance, Parliament or combination of Parliaments, can dethrone! Yes, truly, it is a great thing for a Nation that it get an articulate voice; that it produce a man who will speak-forth melodiously what the heart of it means!” (114). Carlyle’s belief that music and voice had the potential to be used as a national unifying force was put into action in *Frederick*, using both musicality and his own “articulate voice”.

An early illustration of music’s power of unification can be seen in *Frederick* prior to the battle of Mollwitz in 1741. As the Prussian army marches towards the town in columns, Carlyle tells his readers that the soldiers “burst into field-music; take to deploying themselves into line. There is solemn wheeling, shooting-out to right and left, done with spotless precision: once in line,—in two lines, ‘each three men deep,’ lines many yards apart,—they will advance on Mollwitz; still solemnly, field-music guiding, and banners spread” (15: 121). Carlyle’s assertion that the Prussian troops “burst into field-music” implies that the soldiers took up their instruments and began playing virtually at the same moment. When he states that these troops were being directed in their field manoeuvres by their own music, he emphasises the effectiveness of music as an organising and unifying force: the “spotless precision” of the deployment reinforces this claim. Carlyle continues with this theme, portraying the Prussian columns “advanc[ing] again with music sounding” up until the very moment of engagement with the Austrian army when “the sound of drums

and clarionets is drowned in universal artillery-thunder”, mirroring the moment when the unity of the Prussian army’s ranks is broken (123, 124).

In this sentence, Carlyle includes different kinds of sound, allowing the music of the instruments to be superseded by the thunderous noise of the artillery. This interweaving of different sounds is an oft-used technique throughout *Frederick*. After reading Volumes V and VI of *Frederick*, Neuberg wrote to Carlyle on 6th April 1865 exclaiming, “The Passage from ‘Kolin’ to ‘Rossbach’ and ‘Leuthen’; with the ‘Lamentation Psalms’, and dear Wilhelmina’s soft wailings and shrill cries for help, between the clash of arms, and the booming of cannon, – makes a grand epic ‘Chapter’” (Ms. 553.278. NLS). These comments concentrate solely on the aural qualities in this chapter, which clearly illustrates that, for Neuberg at least, Carlyle’s technique of using different sounds, including music, as part of his overall oral strategy has been a success. Indeed, Neuberg’s remarks are remarkably similar to those made by Reid after hearing Carlyle speak, when he declared that Carlyle’s words, “by their tone and spirit, sounded through me like the blast of a trumpet” (*Forster* 212). That spoken and written discourse could produce a similar, almost visceral response from both of these men, and that they should describe this effect in aural terms is a further demonstration of Carlyle’s achievement in introducing musicality into his work. A close reading of those passages of *Frederick* which Neuberg describes reveals that Carlyle portrays music in three very distinct ways specifically in order to reinforce the three facets of Frederick’s image that were outlined earlier in this thesis: fellow mortal, heroic military commander and quasi-divine king. In order to bolster Frederick’s image as a monarch, Carlyle provides

excerpts from the first and last of Frederick's Lamentation-Psalms. These were written by Frederick in the autumn of 1757 after his defeat at the Battle of Kolin, at a time when he felt "the whole world rise round him, like a delirious Sorcerer's-Sabbath, intent to hurl the mountains on him" (*Works* 17: 241).⁸

Although Carlyle states that he "must give some specimens, at any rate", what appears are merely snippets of Frederick's work, written in French, which have been translated by Carlyle and are accompanied by his running commentary (240). Most of the psalms are written in rhyming couplets. Carlyle comments on this aspect of the work, suggesting that it "lyrically sings aloud, or declaims in rhyme ... [Frederick's] surrounding woes and atrocities" (243). Carlyle is providing readers with an example of his belief that "all passionate language does of itself become musical" and that Frederick, in the midst of his tribulations, is singing forth his "central essence" (5: 83). What emerges from Carlyle's use of these psalms is the importance that he assigns to Frederick's decision to write them, rather than their actual content. Furthermore, Carlyle demonstrates his intention of using extracts from these psalms to enhance Frederick's status as god-like ruler when, on one occasion, he follows the king's words with, "—Husht, my little Titan!" (17: 245).⁹ Carlyle goes on to claim that the Lamentation-Psalms could bear the title of "The Koran of Friedrich", suggesting that they are "Confessions ... in the most emphatic sense" and likening Frederick to Mahomet, who, he declares, "wrote the Koran in this manner" (241). He

⁸ Carlyle's admission that some of these pieces "are not of first-rate goodness" and that they "[s]hould have been burnt" strongly suggests that he has been selective in Frederick's favour, omitting those pieces which did not show the king's musical talents in an altogether complimentary light (*Works* 17: 240).

⁹ The unusually affectionate tone of this address also allows readers a rare glimpse of Carlyle's paternalistic stance towards Frederick.

reinforces and extends the comparison between Frederick and a divine being when he states, “Heroes, in their affliction, Mahomet and David, have solaced themselves by snatches of Psalms, by Suras, bursts of Utterance rising into Song;—and if Friedrich, on far other conditions, did the like, what has History to say of blame to him?” (241). Carlyle’s comparison of the Lamentation-Psalms with the Suras of the Koran and the sacred songs of the Book of Psalms in the Old Testament is a deliberate strategy designed to use Frederick’s musical “bursts of Utterance” as a means of enhancing his god-like qualities.

In his coverage of Frederick’s exploits as commander of the Prussian army, Carlyle had already emphasised his astute leadership abilities. He ratifies Frederick’s status by depicting him as a leader who is in touch with the men under his command. Carlyle achieves this through his depiction of acts of collective singing by Frederick’s troops. As noted earlier, Neuberger’s and Reid’s remarks suggest that they both felt inspired by the sound of Carlyle’s words. In *Frederick*, Carlyle demonstrates his awareness of music’s inspirational as well as unifying qualities. Carlyle had perhaps been persuaded of the inspirational qualities of written musicality by Dante’s epic poem *The Divine Comedy*, which he believed was “in all senses, genuinely a Song. In the very sound of it there is a *canto fermo*; it proceeds as by a chant. The language, his simple *terza rima*, doubtless helped him in this. One reads along naturally with a sort of *lilt*” (5: 91). In certain passages of *Frederick*, in particular during those battle scenes where he describes Frederick’s troops indulging in the communal singing of hymns, Carlyle encourages his own readers to become inspired by this act of collective singing.

Prior to the battle of Leuthen, Carlyle provides an excerpt from a hymn in German and English, an act which allows the reader to see the hymn's rhythm. Furthermore, he refers to this as "a known Church-Hymn, of the homely *Te-Deum* kind" (17: 325). This implies that readers would already be familiar with the hymn in question, and would be able to conjure it up readily in their imagination. Ong confirms the feasibility of Carlyle's method when he stresses that words should not be treated as signs. He suggests that "What the reader is seeing on this page are not real words but coded symbols whereby a properly informed human being can evoke in his or her consciousness real words, in actual or imagined sound" (74). As Carlyle's readers looked at the words of the hymn on the page, they would be able to evoke the sound of these words and the tune of the familiar hymn in their consciousness. The end result would be that readers would imaginatively join in the act of singing together with the Prussian soldiers. The unifying qualities inherent in collective singing may have become apparent to Carlyle through his involvement in the translation of Martin Luther's most well-known hymn, "Ein' feste Burg ist unser Gott" ("Strong Tower and Refuge is our God"). Carlyle was clearly an admirer of Luther's. Lady Eastlake, who held an altogether different opinion of the German theologian, commented on a meeting with Carlyle where he "talked of Popery, Luther, &c., quite in the 'Hero Worship' style; only we quarrelled about Luther, whom he defined as a 'nice man,' and I said he had nothing nice about him" (116). One of the attractions which Luther may have held for Carlyle could be the emphasis that he placed on the importance of congregational singing as part of the practice of worship, and his pivotal role in restoring this activity. The unity which the act of collective singing was able to

generate within a church congregation could also be found on a much larger scale, at a national level. Benedict Anderson has labelled the type of collective singing which is inspired by love of one's country as "unisonality". The singing of National Anthems, Anderson argues, becomes a communal activity:

No matter how banal the words and mediocre the tunes, there is in this singing an experience of simultaneity. At precisely such moments, people wholly unknown to each other utter the same verses to the same melody. The image: unisonance. Singing the Marseillaise, Waltzing Matilda, and Indonesia Raya provide occasions for unisonality, for the echoed physical realization of the imagined community How selfless this unisonance feels! If we are aware that others are singing these songs precisely when and as we are, we have no idea who they might be, or even where, out of earshot, they are singing. Nothing connects us all but imagined sound. (145)

In the passage from *Frederick* which was quoted earlier in which the Prussian army is depicted marching towards Leuthen, the troops are singing a hymn and not a national anthem. Nevertheless, Anderson's principles still hold true. The soldiers are performing together in an act which celebrates their own "imagined community", that is, as the combined force of the mighty Prussian army. Given that Carlyle tells us there were "five-and-twenty thousand other voices" singing, the connection, for these troops and the reader, would truly be based on "imagined sound".

The hymn which was sung by the Prussian force at Leuthen was neither "banal" nor "mediocre" but a song of praise: "Now thank God, one and all,/With heart, with voice, with hands-a,/Who wonders great hath done/To us and to all lands-a." (*Works* 17: 325). There also exists an earlier instance of spontaneous collective singing where the tone of the hymn is neither mediocre nor thankful. On this occasion, the "many-voiced melody of a Church Hymn" is overheard by Frederick (311). Again, Carlyle provides an excerpt from this hymn in German and English:

‘Grant that with zeal and skill, this day, I do
 What me to do be behoves, what thou command’st me to;
 Grant that I do it sharp, at point of moment fit,
 And when I do it, grant me good success in it.’ (312)

When Frederick is asked “‘Shall we order that to cease, your Majesty?’”, the king replies “‘By no means’” (312). Carlyle then repeats this utterance from Frederick and follows it with an address to one of the officers under his command, “‘With men like these, don’t you think I shall have victory this day!’” (312). The tone in both the hymn and Frederick’s statement is one not of praise but of triumph. According to Ong, this is a common occurrence in oral cultures, which he suggests “encourage triumphalism” (49). Carlyle is specifically using this passage of dialogue between Frederick and one of his officers to demonstrate to his readers the power inherent in unity.

In addition to appropriating music to bolster Frederick’s regal and martial personae, Carlyle adopts a similar strategy to enhance Frederick’s role as a fellow mortal. On this occasion, however, Carlyle instigates a minor departure from his previous portrayals of Frederick as a gracious and compassionate individual. In contrast to the aftermath of the battle of Kolin, when Frederick penned his Lamentation-Psalms in a mood of defeat and despair, after his decisive victory at Rossbach he produces a composition of a decidedly different nature. This is described as “the famed *Congé de l’Armée des Cercles et des Tonneliers*; a short metrical Piece; called by Editors the most profane, most indecent, most etc.; and printed with asterisk veils thrown over the worst passages” (*Works* 17: 281). According to Carlyle, Frederick has caused offence because he “sings the charms of the rearward part of certain men” (282). Whilst Carlyle admits that this work is a “most cynical, profane affair” he

gives it credit for “being altogether theoretic, scientific” and remarks that it “sings with gusto the glow of beauty you find in that unexpected quarter,—while *kicking* it deservedly and with enthusiasm” (282). It is significant that Carlyle uses the word “sings” twice in rapid succession to describe Frederick’s *modus operandi* in this “metrical Piece”, reminding us of Carlyle’s assertion that he found “considerable meaning in the old vulgar distinction of Poetry being *metrical*, having music in it, being a Song” (5: 83). Carlyle is using this metrical composition to allow readers a glimpse of Frederick revelling in the glow of victory. He allows Frederick’s gracious, polite, public façade to slip momentarily and reveal the king behaving in a manner similar to that of any other individual who finds himself in victorious circumstances: gloating triumphantly.

Carlyle’s tone when he describes this work is one of qualified approval. Yet there is an earlier instance where Frederick’s creative outpourings are met with complete disapprobation. Shortly after his accession to the throne, Frederick penned a lengthy poem to his friend, Voltaire. This poem, large sections of which are reproduced in *Frederick*, is described by Carlyle as “a jingling lean scraggy Piece” and “Sad doggerel”, a term which he repeats several times (14: 330, 334). I would argue that this is a deliberate ploy by Carlyle. After all, if he truly believed that Frederick’s work was “doggerel”, one wonders why he included so much of it in the text. Again, Carlyle is allowing readers to see past Frederick’s public persona and recognise that the individual underneath is as human and fallible as they are. These glimpses of Frederick can also be considered to be snippets of “richly enjoyed gossip” (Ruskin 336). The idea that a king could indulge in writing “profane” poetry, and the scandal

that this provoked, would surely have the effect of inciting the interest of Carlyle's readers. Carlyle uses Frederick's own compositions, the Lamentation-Psalms and his poetry to enhance the regal and more human aspects of Frederick's character. He highlights Frederick's approval of the communal singing of hymns in which his troops indulge to confirm his role as an astute military commander. That Carlyle chose to use music in a variety of ways to reinforce these three aspects of Frederick's character demonstrates the importance that he attached to music's communicative and evocative powers.¹⁰ In her article on Carlyle, Patton suggests that he preferred listening to music in the privacy of his own home rather than at a public performance: "Carlyle's letters provide ample evidence that, in his mind, music's most enduring influence was ... a subtle and private one" (56). She deduces from these letters that the only music that Carlyle valued "was the music he associated with some personally valuable text or some personal pleasure, including the pleasure of memory" (56). Restricting her appraisal of Carlyle's complex relationship with music in this manner is to do him an injustice. Carlyle's wide-ranging use of different kinds of musicality in *Frederick* indicates that he regarded music as a

¹⁰ Given Carlyle's utilisation of music in "The Passage from 'Kolin' to 'Rossbach' and 'Leuthen'", it is not surprising to note that Neuberger highlighted the aural qualities of this section in his letter. That he should single out "dear Wilhelmina's soft wailings and shrill cries for help" is, however, an unexpected move, and one which suggests that Carlyle has delineated Wilhelmina in a powerful and memorable way (Ms. 553.278. NLS). Immediately after Frederick's Lamentation-Psalms, Carlyle produces the content of several letters from Wilhelmina to Voltaire and Frederick, as well as a selection of their replies. On October 15th 1757, Wilhelmina wrote an emotional letter to her brother, fearing for his life: "Death and a thousand torments could not equal the frightful state I am in. There run reports that make me shudder. Some say you are wounded; others, dangerously ill In the name of God, bid somebody write me one word" (*Works* 17: 256). Carlyle describes this letter in musical terms: "What a shrill, penetrating tone, like the wildly-weeping voice of Rachel; tragical, painful, gone quite to falsetto and above pitch; but with a melody in its dissonance like the singing of the stars. My poor, shrill Wilhelmina!—" (257). His decision to portray Wilhelmina's despair in these mournful, melodic terms is another manifestation of his strategy of using music throughout *Frederick* to produce a range of effects. The juxtaposition of Wilhelmina's "soft wailings and shrill cries for help" with "the clash of arms, and the booming of cannon" produced the effect on Neuberger which Carlyle was aiming for: it made for an exciting and memorable piece of work (Ms. 553.278. NLS).

powerful and evocative instrument when wielded correctly. He puts into practice his declaration that, “all passionate language does of itself become musical All deep things are Song” (*Works* 5: 83).

Carlyle use of hymns in *Frederick* to inspire and unite has already been noted. However, these hymns served a dual purpose. In addition to encouraging unity amongst his readers through the act of imaginatively singing these hymns, Carlyle used their rhythmic prose as part of a wider oral strategy designed to help his readers absorb and recall the content of his epic. The hymns, with their rhyming words and regular cadences, are one obvious example of Carlyle’s use of rhythm. He also generates a sense of rhythm by repeating words, a technique which, as we have seen, he uses throughout these volumes. In his introduction to the Battle of Kunersdorf, Carlyle repeats the words “volcano” and “volcanic” three times in quick succession:

Half-past eleven, everything being ready on the Walck Hill, Friedrich’s batteries opened there, in a sudden and volcanic way. Volcanically answered by the Russians, as soon as possible; who have 72 guns on this Mühlberg, and are nothing loath. Upon whom Finck’s battery is opening from the north, withal: Friedrich has 60 cannon hereabouts ... all playing diligently on the head and south shoulder of this Mühlberg: while Finck’s battery opens on the north shoulder (could he but get near enough). Volcanic to a degree all these After above half an hour of this, Friedrich orders storm of the Mühlberg. (18: 73)

Ong points out that “Not everyone in a large audience understands every word a speaker utters, if only because of acoustical problems. It is advantageous for the speaker to say the same thing, or equivalently the same thing, two or three times” (40). Carlyle regularly adopts the oral strategy of saying “the same thing, two or three times” in order that his readers can more readily absorb his message.

We have already noted Carlyle's use of terms such as "Crack-crack" and "tramp, tramp" to generate sound, however, these words also contain a strong rhythmic quality. Rhythm and repetition are crucial to the success of an oral performance. As Ong makes clear, "rhythm aids recall" (34). He remarks:

In a primary oral culture, to solve effectively the problem of retaining and retrieving carefully articulated thought, you have to do your thinking in mnemonic patterns, shaped for ready oral recurrence. Your thought must come into being in heavily rhythmic, balanced patterns, in repetitions or antitheses, in alliterations and assonances, in epithetic and other formulaic expressions, in standard thematic settings (the assembly, the meal, the duel, the hero's 'helper', and so on), in proverbs which are constantly heard by everyone, so that they come to mind readily. (34)

Ong is describing the techniques that an individual living in an oral culture would use to help him recall his own thought processes. Nevertheless, his comments concerning the importance of rhythm for recall are equally valid when considering the challenges involved in encouraging listeners and readers to remember a story that is being told. Ong's remarks concerning the use of alliterations to aid recall are also applicable to Carlyle's methods in *Frederick*. At Kunersdorf, Carlyle describes the "Soft sloping ground, with Russians simmering ahead of you" and uses the phrase, "their solid ranks rustle everywhere", to capture the moment that the defeated Prussian army breaks ranks prior to fleeing the battlefield (*Works* 18: 75, 79-80). Carlyle's employment of alliterative phrases allows the reader to virtually hear the "simmering" and "rustling" of the opposing forces. In his depiction of warfare, Carlyle's orality comes to the fore. He employs the oral techniques which have been outlined above—changes of tense, suspense, repetition of words and phrases, sound as a unifying sense and rhythmic prose—to ensure that the reader continues to be imaginatively involved in his telling of Frederick's story.

The suggestion that Carlyle is actively creating a piece of oral work is borne out by a detailed investigation of a page of *Frederick* manuscript which is housed along with other Carlyle papers in the Beinecke Library at Yale University. This work-in-progress document covers the battle of Kunersdorf and gives a rare insight into Carlyle's *modus operandi*. In the following passage, he divides the second sentence into two and deletes the word "but". The original reads,

There once more rose frightful struggle, desperate attempt by the foredone Prussians to retake that Height. Lasted fifteen minutes, line to line not fifty yards asunder; such musketry, our last cartridges withal, ardent Prussian parties trying storm up; but few ever getting to the top, none even standing there alive one minute. (31)

In the revised edition this becomes,

There once more rose frightful struggle, desperate attempt by the foredone Prussians to retake that Height. Lasted fifteen minutes, line to line not fifty yards asunder; such musketry, our last cartridges withal. *Ardent* Prussian parties trying to storm up; *few* ever getting to the top, none even standing there alive one minute. (*my emphasis*) (31)

By placing the adjective "Ardent" at the beginning of the sentence, Carlyle highlights this characteristic of the Prussian army for his readers. This, coupled with the removal of the word "but", emphasises the bald fact that "few" of these zealous Prussian troops reached the summit alive. In addition, this alteration gives the sentence an immediacy which it previously lacked, enabling it to mirror the sense of urgency experienced by these soldiers.

Carlyle then deletes the following sentence, "Loudon, deciding that there was now no Prussian Cavalry orders out his own along the Elibruch to take us on flank" and replaces it with, "Loudon, waiting behind the Spitzberg, dashes forward, towards the Kuhgrund and our Left Flank" (31). The revised version is much more animated and

dynamic than the original. Carlyle makes a further change in the following excerpt by replacing certain key words. In the original we read, “all our guns got jammed; and had to be left, 165 of them by tale, and the whole of the Russian 180 that were once in our hands” (31). This becomes, “all our guns got jammed; and had to be left, 165 of them *of various calibre*, and the whole of the Russian 180 that were once in our hands” (*my emphasis*) (31). By inserting words which belong to a military lexicon, Carlyle removes the vagueness of the original version, making the sentence less anecdotal and more like the account of “a seeing Witness, who can make others see and believe” (*Works* 16: 213). Finally, Carlyle divides this lengthy passage to create two paragraphs which produces three manageable sections that are easier for readers to digest. However, it is the way in which Carlyle divides the final section of this manuscript that is significant. In the original draft, Carlyle describes the flight of the Prussian army following their defeat:

Had the chace [sic] been vigorous, this Prussian army had been heard of no more. But beyond the Mühlberg there was little or no pursuit; through the wood the Army, all in chaos, but without molestation otherwise, made for its Oder Bridges by the way it had arrived. Friedrich was among the last to quit the ground. He seemed stupefied by the excess of his emotions; in no heart to go; uncertain whether he would go at all. (31)

In the revised version, Carlyle begins a new paragraph with the words, “Friedrich was among the last to quit the ground”. This is also how the passage appears in the final published work (*Works* 18: 80). By means of these subtle changes, Carlyle moves the emphasis away from the fleeing Prussians and firmly on to the figure of Frederick who is courageously maintaining his position. In his revision of this material, Carlyle uses oral techniques to render the battle sequences more immediate and dynamic as a means of offering the reader “conspicuous help for situating himself imaginatively” (Ong 101). In addition, he emphasises the Prussian army’s

courage and Frederick's heroism in particular, to ensure that the king remains one of those "'heavy' characters ... whose deeds are monumental [and] memorable" (69).

Carlyle's technique of emphasising Frederick's qualities runs throughout these volumes. It has already been noted that, in the absence of battlefield situations, Carlyle highlights Frederick's more pacific attributes: Frederick is never allowed to become one of those "Colorless personalities" in whom the reader loses interest (69). The figure of Frederick is so crucial to Carlyle's oral strategy that he devotes a significant portion of Volume VI—almost one fifth in total—to covering Frederick's final years, which include his illness and eventual death. Carlyle does not allow his hero to die until two pages before the end of this volume, at which point the epic rapidly concludes. He then executes a master stroke with the addition of an appendix at the end of these volumes in 1868. This is entitled, "A Day with Friedrich", and consists mainly of twenty pages of dialogue, interspersed with Carlyle's comments, that took place between Frederick and one of his bailiffs on July 23rd 1779. In earlier editions of *Frederick*, although the appendix is missing, Carlyle still refers to it in his chapter, "Friedrich's Last Years". He informs the reader that the "Bailiff in question" recorded the conversation "with forensic, almost with religious exactitude" which makes for "rather heavy reading" and that the reader is fortunate that "want of room has excluded it, on the present occasion!" (*Works* 19: 254-255).¹¹ Carlyle is perhaps being disingenuous in his remarks. At the same time that he insists that the

¹¹ An example of this dialogue reads as follows: "*King* (looking round on the harvest-fields). 'Hear you, now: how are you content with the harvest?'—*Ich*. 'Very well, your Majesty.' —*King*. 'Very well? And to me they said, Very ill!' —*Ich*. 'Your Majesty, the winter-crop was somewhat frost-nipt; but the summer-crop in return is so abundant it will richly make up for the winter-crop.' His Majesty now looked round upon the fields, shock standing upon shock. —*King*. 'It is a good harvest, you are right; shock stands close by shock here!'" (313).

Bailiff's account makes for "rather heavy reading", he introduces the oral elements of suspense and intrigue by mentioning the fact that such a document exists in the first place. There is little doubt that "want of room" and time may have influenced his decision, however, the fact that Carlyle refers to this particular passage at all indicates the importance that he placed on it.

Carlyle is engaged in a degree of oral trickery here. He whets his readers' appetites and assigns to this conversation a heightened sense of importance when he tells them that it is being "excluded ... on the present occasion". The explanation for these tactics is Carlyle's determination not to let his epic finish with Frederick's ill health and death. Instead of leaving his readers with a negative image of Frederick as a sick and dying old man, Carlyle provided them with a positive and uplifting final portrait of him: "Friedrich is now 67 years old; has reigned 39 ... the '*Alte Fritz*,' still brisk and wiry, has been and is an unweariedly busy man" (305). As noted earlier, Carlyle used a similar tactic at the start of Volume I, where Frederick experienced a 'rebirth'. The oral devices of circularity and repetition which he employed in his opening chapters are repeated here. Once again, Carlyle's narrative involves the sequence of birth, life history and death. However, in this final instance, there is one significant difference: there is no death. The lasting image of Frederick at the end of these volumes is of a living, breathing, speaking monarch who is carrying out his royal duties, as always, to the best of his abilities. Carlyle's final comments at the end of the appendix, indeed, the end of his epic, reveal his purpose: "And so ends the *Day with Friedrich the Great*; very flat, but I daresay very *true*:—a Daguerreotype

of one of his Days” (321). Carlyle uses this snapshot of Frederick to reaffirm his position, despite his demise, at the head of the triadic structure.

The various oral techniques which Carlyle employs throughout *Frederick* are an example of the “Narrative originality” outlined earlier by Ong. Carlyle was all too aware of the need to bring his “audience . . . to respond, often vigorously” to the story that he was unfolding, and he adapted his oral style to cater to the demands of different situations, whether these were times of peace or periods of warfare (Ong 42). There are moments in *Frederick*, in particular as Carlyle nears the end of these volumes, where he adopts a decidedly different tone from those that have already been described. It has already been noted that Carlyle was conscious of the importance of allowing his voice to run as a thread throughout this piece of work, constantly addressing his readers. By the time he comes to Frederick’s final conflict, the Battle of Torgau which took place in November 1760, Carlyle allows signs of looked-for relief from his onerous task to appear, “Torgau was Daun’s last Battle: Daun’s last Battle; and, what is more to the joy of readers and their Editor here, was Friedrich’s last,—so that the remaining Two Campaigns may fairly be condensed to an extreme degree; and a few Chapters more will deliver us altogether from this painful element!—” (*Works* 18: 323).

Despite his obvious desire to be finished with this project, Carlyle is still actively using oral techniques in this passage, including word repetition and reader inclusion, to ensure that his readers stay with “their Editor” through to the final volume.

Carlyle reiterates these sentiments a few pages later. However, in this instance, as well as anticipated relief, the tone also hints at a sense of profound weariness:

we are henceforth, thank Heaven, permitted and even bound to be brief. Hardly above two Battles more from him, if even two:—and mostly the wearied Reader’s imagination left to conceive for itself those intricate strategies, and endless manœuvrings on the Diemel and the Dill, on the Ohm River and the Schwalm and the Lippe, or wherever they may be, with small help from a wearied Editor!— (330)

Carlyle appears to be distancing himself from his readers when he remarks that the imagination of his readers must be “left to conceive for itself ... with small help from a wearied Editor!”. Nevertheless, this passage demonstrates that Carlyle believed that, at this stage of his epic, his oral strategy of encouraging his readers to become imaginatively involved in his story has been a success. This belief has given him the confidence to detach himself from his readers, allowing them to use their own imaginations to picture the continuing “intricate strategies, and endless manœuvrings” of the final two conflicts. As part of this orality, Carlyle used the leitmotif of music throughout *Frederick* as a civilizing force at both a personal and national level to test the limits of his own question, “Who ... can express the effect music has on us?” (5: 83). Through appropriating acts of collective singing as tropes of inspiration and unification, he successfully integrated music and rhythm as key components of his overall oral strategy aimed at creating a unified readership. Throughout *Frederick* readers have been courted and cajoled, occasionally coerced and bullied by Carlyle, but their perceived ability to now “respond ... vigorously” with minimal interference from “their Editor” confirms the success of Carlyle’s orality.

Chapter 4

Populating the Past: Carlyle's Research Methods

“The seeing eye! It is this that discloses the inner harmony of things; what Nature meant, what musical idea Nature has wrapped-up in these often rough embodiments.”¹

In his 1838 essay, “Sir Walter Scott”, Carlyle commended Scott’s work, opining:

these Historical Novels have taught all men this truth ... that the bygone ages of the world were actually filled by living men, not by protocols, state-papers, controversies and abstractions of men ... but men, in buff or other coats and breeches, with colour in their cheeks, with passions in their stomach, and the idioms, features and vitalities of very men. (*Works* 29: 77-78)

Carlyle’s stress on the importance of representing history through the actions of “living men” informed his work on *Frederick*. His desire to present “the bygone ages of the world” to readers through the key figure of Frederick the Great was the cornerstone of his research. Carlyle began researching *Frederick* in earnest in late 1851. Writing on October 29th of that year to von Ense in response to an earlier query, Carlyle informed him that he was still debating over whether or not to proceed with a history of Frederick:

What my next task is to be? That is the question! If I were a born Prussian, I believe I should forthwith attempt some Picture of Friedrich the Great, the *last* real king that we have had in Europe,—a long way till the *next*, I fear, and nothing but sordid loud anarchy *till* the next. But I am English, admonished towards England;—and Friedrich, too, is sure enough to *be* known in time without aid of mine.— And so I remain in suspense; have however got Preus's [sic] big Book and decide to *read* that again very soon. (*CL* 26: 221).

A letter to Lady Ashburton on November 14th reveals that Carlyle had been true to his word: “In late days I have taken to reading a most heavy but minute and accurate

¹ From “The Hero as Poet” (*Works* 5: 105).

German History of Frederic [sic] the Great; a task I have had before me these several years” (229-230).²

The following year Carlyle sent several letters to Neuberg asking for his help in obtaining research material. On February 2nd 1852 he wrote, “As you are in the Prussian dominions, I will give you the chance of asking any good hand there may be, a question or two about Books” (27: 27). Although he had already collected, in addition to the Preuss volumes, “Friedrich's own” work, as well as material by “Archenholz, Jomini, Lloyd [and] Tempelhof”, apparently these had not wholly satisfied Carlyle’s requirements (27). He left Neuberg in no doubt of his needs:

I very greatly want some *human* details about the inward structure and condition of Fr.'s *Army* in those terrible years; not finding hitherto, except in Archenholz here and there, almost anything to satisfy my wonder on that head. Private personal *memoirs* by actual soldiers of *Fk wd* be a grand acquisition to me: pray ask if there are such in print, or if there is any other resource for me, failing that or along with that.

Secondly, How best can I get well acquainted with the Silesian-Bohemian Country and the scenes of all those high feats of arms? Is *Kölbe's* a good Book, or what better is there? Quincy Adams (late *Presidt* of the U.S.) wrote the best volume I have yet seen, in his young days,—really *shewing* one here and there that curious Rubezahl Mountain country,—only it is very brief and slight, and quite misses the greater part. Is there not some volume of Büsching's *Erdbeschreibung* [geography] that treats expressly about Germany at large, and is to be had separate? That *wd* be a most hopeful acquisition to me These are the two points I am interested upon. To *see*, inside and out, the Soldiers of *Frk* (if I could), and to inform myself about the scene where he danced his great Pyrrhic Dance in this world. (27-28)

Three months later, on May 31st, Carlyle was still searching for information on these “two points”, complaining to Neuberg:

I am much in want of some small German, or especially Prussian Namenskatalog, Biog. Dicty of Official persons, & other authentic easily

² The work that Carlyle is referring to is Johann D.E Preuss’s *Friedrich der Grosse, eine Lebensgeschichte*, 5 vols. Berlin, 1832-1834, which will hereafter be referred to as *eine Lebensgeschichte*.

consultable Prosopography to tell me *Who's who*. So many different Schwerins, Anhalts, swarms of Württemberg Princes, Margraves of Baireuth, and Anspach, without even a clear date stuck to any of them On the whole, it is very clear, if this continue I shall have to go to Germany, especially to Berlin, Rheinsberg, Ruppin and the Riesengebirge. (129-130)³

By July 1852, however, Carlyle appeared to be making progress in his search for material which would reveal the “*human details*” which he sought. He informed Neuberg that he was “getting clear benefit” from his last consignment of books, singling out Büsching for particular praise and referring to his work as “the faithfullest *anatomical preparation* of the character of *Fk*” (171). Throughout this chapter, I will argue that Carlyle uses these “*human details*” as a means of organising and representing historical data.

Further letters from Carlyle which were written in July and November 1852 reveal that Neuberg had responded satisfactorily to Carlyle’s requests for material. On July 6th, Carlyle informed him, “Everything was delivered here in perfect order, your seal signature and pack thread still in their places; a most welcome cheap cargo of Books, which will be very useful to me, and ought to teach me thankfulness to you for many a day to come” (154).⁴ On July 17th, Carlyle told Neuberg that he was “well stored with material now” (171). He reiterated these sentiments in his letter of November 5th when he confirmed receipt of another “considerable square Box ... full of Books” which had been dispatched to him from Hamburg: “For the rest, I have not at present the least notion of ever writing upon *Friedrich*; so far as the eye of imagination can reach I do not even see the possibility of such a thing. But here are the materials; a

³ At this stage, in his attempt to familiarise himself, via these texts, with the landscape where Frederick “danced his great Pyrrhic Dance” Carlyle appeared to be unsuccessful, a circumstance which prompted his decision to visit Germany in September and October of that year.

⁴ The full text of this letter gives the titles of these books as well as Carlyle’s opinion of several of the authors.

long wish, at any rate, is gratified” (348).⁵ That Neuberg was impressed by the scale and thoroughness of Carlyle’s research is made evident in a letter he penned to von Ense on June 25th 1852:

You will know that Carlyle is up to his ears in reading and studying all about Frederick the Great. It is droll and admirable with what voraciousness he devours everything relating to the subject, and with what powers of digestion he assimilates the contents. He is also talking about a visit to Germany in the near future, an extended stay even, for the same purpose, and it is likely that presently you will have to give all sorts of information regarding Berlin’s summer heat and winter cold. (156)

Carlyle’s voracious appetite for information was still very much in evidence three years later. In a letter dated July 28th 1855, he requested Neuberg to verify specific points on his behalf, directing him to various named sources to retrieve this information. Referring to the “Campagnes du Roi”, Carlyle wrote, “I wish you would look in the Museum Catalogue, King’s Library *first*; and, if possible, get me the ticket for this Book” (30: 13).⁶ He followed this request with, “*Secondly*, I want an examination of the English Newspapers in reference to the Battle of *Dettingen*; very cursory examination, with an eye (as usual) to *human* details” (13).⁷

⁵ Carlyle was still attempting to gratify his “long wish” almost three years later. Writing to his brother, John on August 28th 1855, Carlyle included a list of books to be purchased on his behalf during John’s forthcoming trip to Germany. Carlyle preferred to own personal copies of his research material because of his desire to have “A copy that could be *written* upon” (CL 30: 47).

⁶ Over the next decade, Carlyle persistently wrote to Neuberg with research queries. A letter dated November 10th 1864 begins with the plea, “Dear Neuberg, —Help me now, if you ever did!” (*Carlyle Collection* Ms. 553.271 NLS).

⁷ During this period Carlyle was also researching the ‘Jenkins’ ear’ incident. He ended his letter to Neuberg by presenting him with his draft of this event and asking him to confirm the date, giving Neuberg pointers to the relevant sources: “6/8 March, 1739 Was this the day when Jenkins actually *presented* his ears to the admiration of mankind,—ears cut off him, in his own ship, by those bloody Spaniards, in 1731 (full account in those old Newspapers of June 1731; or copied (?) in Salmon’s *Chronological Historian* (2 small 8vo’s, London 1748) ii, 246); but now for the first time offered in *ipso corpore* [bodily form] (preserved in salt all this while)?” (CL 30: 14-15). By November 1855, Carlyle announced that he was satisfied with the material that had been unearthed and showed his gratitude for Neuberg’s industry on his behalf: “This will do for Jenkins’s ear ... thanks for your arduous search in this matter” (105). The text to which Carlyle was referring is William Coxe’s three volume work, *Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole* published in 1798. Yet, in the next sentence of this letter, Carlyle asked Neuberg to carry out more research on this subject, “If (when next at the Museum) you will give me the *place* (reference) in Coxe; and (if you easily can) the *do* in *Pope* ... the business will be complete” (105). Although Carlyle couched his request in conciliatory language,

Neuberg's thankless work as an unpaid researcher on *Frederick* has been well documented.⁸ Nevertheless, there are grounds for believing that he was given much more responsibility by Carlyle than has previously been recognised. Writing to him on October 10th 1855, Carlyle referred to the "last mass of Fk Papers" which Neuberg had been given to review (79-80):

I wish you would now cut a passage thro' them, so soon as you handily can,—above all things, *annihilate* about $\frac{3}{4}$ of them, and let me have the remaining $\frac{1}{4}$. I long infinitely to settle some resolution as to those winged masses; and the first step is to *see* what I have In that last Batch you have got, I can remember little except descriptions about Gundling, the Tobacco Parliament (whh perhaps are worth something), and endless descriptions and *repetitions* about Kaiser Karl VI and his labours in the *Pragmatic-Sanction* Diplomacies. I think there was a thought in me as to that latter business; but it is nowhere expressed well, and is 4 or 5 times expressed *ill*: to annihilate all of these except the one *best*, and extricate that into legibility, would be a great service done. (80)

While it is impossible to determine exactly what these "Fk Papers" were, it seems a reasonable supposition, given that Carlyle was still deep in his research and had not yet begun the process of writing, that these papers were primary source material. Furthermore, by his own admission that he could "remember little but descriptions", it would appear that Carlyle had only given these papers a cursory glance. The revelation, in this instance at least, that Carlyle gave Neuberg permission to "*annihilate* about $\frac{3}{4}$ of them" raises the distinct possibility that Neuberg was given far more editorial responsibility than was previously believed. Carlyle's confession that his "first step" was to be able to "*see*" the material before he could proceed, implies that he was somewhat overwhelmed by the papers in their original state. This

there is no doubt that he was resolved to send Neuberg back to the library to retrieve yet more information despite his recent acknowledgment of Neuberg's "arduous" work on his behalf.

⁸ Richard A. E. Brooks, for example, who notes "the large part which Joseph Neuberg played in assisting Carlyle in writing *Frederick the Great*, work for which the self-effacing Neuberg did not receive even so much as a footnote of recognition in that history" (xxii).

letter demonstrates that he trusted Neuberg's judgment in editing the source material and presenting it to him in a more easily digestible format. More importantly, it reveals the rather startling fact that, on some occasions, Carlyle may have been working, not from primary source material, but from edited and potentially much reduced versions of the original documents.

Regardless of the provenance of his source material, Carlyle's letters to Neuberg demonstrate his careful attention to detail, a trait which helps to explain the large amount of research which he undertook prior to writing his history of Frederick. Despite reading Preuss's "minute and accurate German History of Frederic [sic] the Great" as early as 1851, it was not until 1856 that Carlyle began to produce his first drafts of *Frederick* (26: 229-230). During a visit to Annan in the autumn of 1856, Carlyle admitted to Neuberg; "I have brought some Papers with me; and occasionally try to do a bit of work, getting Fk's 'Introduction' worked thro' the shoreless lake of *Reichshistorie* [Empire history],—not with much effect hitherto" (31: 172). Carlyle's initial citation of Köhler's *Reichshistorie* occurs near the beginning of Volume I of *Frederick*, at the point where he launches into a lengthy account of Frederick's ancestry: "'A.D. 928, Henry the Fowler, marching across the frozen bogs, took BRANNIBOR, a chief fortress of the Wends'" (*Works* 12: 57). Carlyle's letter to Neuberg indicates that by August 1856, he was at the very early stages of writing *Frederick* and was still finding his way through the "shoreless lake" of his research materials, with apparently little success.

In his account of Carlyle's second trip to Germany in 1858, Richard A. E. Brooks is fulsome in his praise of the thoroughness and accuracy of the research which Carlyle undertook for the twelve battles that are dealt with in Brooks' book. He singles out Carlyle's handling of the battle of Kolin on June 18th 1757 for particular commendation:

Carlyle's treatment of the Battle of Kolin is proof of his conscientiousness as a historian in carefully examining and testing the terrain and the sources. It is proof of his integrity as a historian that he consulted the most authoritative of the older sources (Tempelhof), the most thorough of the latest (Kutzen), and those who helped to bring about a different evaluation of the battle (Retzow and Berenhorst). Evading the constant temptation to be partial, he wrought an account which has clear organization, thorough mastery of the facts, and a power of narration that, without marring the account for a military reader, holds the interest of the general reader too. (179)

Whilst I concur with Brooks' statement that Carlyle consulted a variety of sources during the course of his research, I am forced to disagree with his assessment of Carlyle's abilities. In this chapter I will reveal that, on one occasion at least, far from "carefully examining and testing the terrain and the sources", Carlyle gives readers a highly detailed description of an area which he himself had visited only very briefly, although leading them to believe that he is furnishing them with his own first-hand account. Furthermore, I intend to demonstrate that when it came to his handling of various sources, Carlyle was not above editing or omitting material which, although relevant to his history, he deemed to be inappropriate. I aim to dispute Brooks' claim that Carlyle was engaged in, "Evading the constant temptation to be partial". While all historians, out of necessity, are selective in their choice of source material, I will demonstrate that Carlyle's handling of his research data and his editorial decisions were primarily driven by a consistent bias in favour of Frederick.

From the initial volumes of *Frederick* onwards, Carlyle uses his research material to focus on individuals, and Frederick in particular, in order to provide an account which would allow his readers to experience Frederick's history through the actions of the players involved. In this sense, Carlyle's approach to writing *Frederick* compares favourably with Hayden White's definition of "Monumental history" which White suggests "seeks not the old but the manifestly great, the heroic, and holds it up as an example of man's creative power to change or transform his world" (68). In *Frederick*, it is the figure of Frederick himself that Carlyle holds up as an example of "the manifestly great, the heroic". In chapter two of this thesis, I noted that one of Carlyle's first acts in the opening sentence of Volume I is a physical description of Frederick who he declares is "a highly interesting lean little old man, of alert though slightly stooping figure" (*Works* 12: 1). He then enhances this description by offering a well-drawn portrait of Frederick who is depicted wearing

no crown but an old military cocked-hat,—generally old, or trampled and kneaded into absolute *softness*, if new ... and for royal robes, a mere soldier's blue coat with red facings, coat likely to be old, and sure to have a good deal of Spanish snuff on the breast of it; rest of the apparel dim, unobtrusive in colour or cut, ending in high over-knee military boots. (1-2)

Providing portraits or vignettes is a technique that Carlyle uses throughout his epic in order to emphasise the humanity, not only of Frederick, but also of several other major players during this period. In his appraisal of Carlyle's approach to writing history, White makes the following important point: "Human life in its individual incarnations was a supreme value for him; and the task of the historian, therefore, was not simply to celebrate the historical process itself ... but rather to give human life an awareness of its potentially heroic nature" (147).

As a means of generating an awareness of Frederick's heroism for contemporary readers, Carlyle carefully selected and edited his research material in order to foster their perception of Frederick as a warrior king. In the excerpt above, in the process of overtly contrasting Frederick's military and regal appearances, Carlyle succeeds in illuminating both of these attributes and this combined description emphasises Frederick's "heroic nature". The importance that Carlyle placed on obtaining accurate physical descriptions of Frederick is borne out by a document which is housed in the Beinecke Rare Books and Manuscripts Library at Yale University. This material is in Carlyle's own hand and contains information which he derived from a selection of letters written by Baron Bielfeld to various recipients.⁹ In this instance, Carlyle appropriates a passage from a letter which describes Frederick's initiation into the Freemasons in July 1738, while he was still Crown Prince. Carlyle's notes focus primarily on Bielfeld's detailed account of Frederick's appearance:

'He is not high of stature, and God *w*d not have chosen him to reign in King Joach's plans: but considering the grandeur and beauty of his genius' (*omit* word or two). 'His features are charming; his air sprightly; a noble carriage; he might at once fit up for Schendrau if he cared. A Parisien petit-maitre might find singularities in his hair-dressing, but his hair itself is a beautiful brown, hangs down well adjusted to the air of his face, carelessly in locks. His large blue eyes have in them at once something of severe and of sweet and gracious I was surprised to find him look so young.' (Beinecke Ms)

This material is reworked by Carlyle to create the following passage:

Bielfeld could not enough admire the demeanour of this Prince, his clearness, sense, quiet brilliancy; and how he was so 'intrepid,' and 'possessed himself so gracefully in the most critical instants.' Extremely genial air, and so young, looks younger even than his years: handsome to a degree, though of short stature. Physiognomy, features, quite charming; fine auburn hair (*beau*

⁹ *Lettres Familiales et autres de Monsieur le Baron de Bielfeld à la Hague 1763* in Frederick W. Hilles Manuscript Collection. MSS Vault Hilles. Carlyle Manuscripts, Box 23. Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University, New Haven.

brun), a negligent plenty of it; ‘his large blue eyes have something at once severe, sweet and gracious.’ Eligible Mason indeed. (*Works* 14: 228)

Carlyle manipulates this source material to present a flattering and detailed portrait of Frederick.

However, Carlyle’s account differs from Bielfeld’s letter in certain key areas. Carlyle follows his own advice to “omit [a] word or two” and removes any material that does not compliment Frederick. Thus we find that he excludes Bielfeld’s suggestion that, in King Joachim’s era, Frederick would not have been chosen as a monarch because he was “not high in stature”. Although Carlyle refers to Frederick’s “short stature”, he ensures that this negative comment no longer appears prominently at the beginning of his description but is situated at the end of a sentence and is immediately preceded by several complimentary remarks. Two of these comments appear to be inventions of Carlyle: at no point in his letter does Bielfeld describe Frederick as “genial” or “handsome to a degree”. Furthermore, the material which Carlyle offers as quotations are complete fabrications. Frederick is never described as “intrepid”, nor does Bielfeld ever remark that he “possessed himself so gracefully in the most critical instants.” It is worth noting, however, that Carlyle’s third quotation in this excerpt is transcribed practically *verbatim*: “his large blue eyes have something at once severe, sweet and gracious”. The reason for this is clear. Bielfeld’s original sentence is complimentary enough as it stands and requires minimal interference from Carlyle. In addition to assigning fictitious comments to Bielfeld and editing out remarks which he deemed to be unflattering, Carlyle provides a French translation of the phrase “auburn hair (*beau brun*)”. As Bielfeld’s letter was written entirely in German this sudden introduction of French

seems rather incongruous. I can only surmise that Carlyle may have been influenced by various sources which repeatedly describe Frederick dressing in the French manner and that he introduced this phrase because it gave Frederick a certain fashionable quality.

More importantly, Carlyle changes the overall tone and content of the original letter. Although Bielfeld's comments are primarily concerned with a physical description of Frederick, he uses language that at times possesses a degree of affectation. For example, in his description of Frederick's hair, Bielfeld suggested that "A Parisien petit-maitre might find singularities in his hair-dressing, but his hair itself is a beautiful brown, hangs down well adjusted to the air of his face, carelessly in locks" (Beinecke Ms). This rather poetic language did not sit well with Carlyle's plan of portraying Frederick as a warrior king. In Carlyle's hands, Bielfeld's poetic diction is replaced by solid reporting and Bielfeld's purely physical description of the Crown Prince is transformed by Carlyle into a portrayal which also includes Frederick's mental attributes. Carlyle begins the passage by remarking on Bielfeld's admiration of Frederick's character: "Bielfeld could not enough admire the demeanour of this Prince, his clearness, sense, quiet brilliancy; and how he was so 'intrepid,' and 'possessed himself so gracefully in the most critical instants'" (*Works* 14: 228). Yet these attributes are never referred to in Bielfeld's letter.¹⁰ Carlyle deliberately manipulates his source material and creates what he considers to be a complimentary yet measured portrait of Frederick for his readers to 'see'.

¹⁰ Nor have I found these comments in any other Bielfeld material that I have traced.

In a previous chapter, I stressed the importance that Carlyle attached to portraiture as a means of illuminating the character of a given individual and I remarked on the way in which he urged any student who was engaged in historical research to “never rest till he have made out, if possible, what the man’s natural face was like” (29: 405). Carlyle had experienced at first-hand the frustrations that could arise from a lack of suitable research material. In a letter written on June 25th 1852 to Ralph Waldo Emerson near the start of this project, he deplored the “immense quantity of shot rubbish” he had unearthed concerning Frederick, complaining bitterly, “I do not even yet *see* him clearly; and to try making others see him—?” (CL 27: 153). Writing to Lady Ashburton on October 1st of that year during his visit to Germany, Carlyle repeated this sentiment:

I find a grand statue of the Old Fritz (really excellent) riding in the chief street, surrounded with Marshals and Generals of note; I have seen two of his Battlefields, Lobositz in Bohemia, scene of his first victory, and Cunersdorf [sic] of his worst defeat: but to get any real *sight* of the man and his existence, especially while men are helping me by talk &c to do it, is beyond measure difficult. (310)

Carlyle’s approach to written history and his insistence on getting “real *sight*” of the people and places that he considered to be crucial to his work had perhaps been influenced by his father’s “bold glowing style” of conversation (*Reminiscences* 6). He described James Carlyle’s method of oral delivery as conveying “the most perfect picture, definite, clear not in ambitious *colours* but in full *white* sunlight Nothing did I ever hear him undertake to render visible, which did not become almost ocularly so” (6). In each of the numerous portraits which Carlyle produces in *Frederick*, I would suggest that he is attempting to draw “the most perfect picture” for his readers, in order to “render visible” the contents of these portraits in their imaginations.

As a means of ensuring that the portraits and historical material which he provided would be as accurate and reliable as possible, Carlyle placed great emphasis on the importance of incorporating eye-witness accounts into his narrative. For Carlyle, the testimony of a “seeing Witness” was given precedence over any other historical evidence. One of his primary sources for the battle of Kunersdorf was Johann Ludwig Kriele, whose account Carlyle uses because, he informs the reader, this “happens to be ocular testimony” (*Works* 18: 59).¹¹ Kriele’s material is presented in quotation marks in a typeface that is smaller than the surrounding text, which gives the initial impression that this material is a direct translation by Carlyle from Kriele’s native German. What follows is Carlyle’s heavily edited version of Kriele’s narrative interspersed with Carlyle’s running commentary. Carlyle, however, does more than merely edit Kriele’s testimony; he transforms Kriele’s third person, past-tense narrative into an altogether different account from that originally offered. Carlyle’s narrative shifts constantly between third and first person narration as well as between past and present tenses. He exaggerates events for dramatic effect and includes sections of dialogue which are solely the product of his imagination. However, his most radical departure from Kriele’s material is his decision to focus on one or two individuals and relate the events that are unfolding through their actions and perceptions. The reader’s view of the Russian assault on Frankfurt is related almost entirely through the actions of four separate individuals or groups of individuals: Major Arnim, Mrs Thielicke, the Town Magistrates and the Russian army.

¹¹ The Battle of Kunersdorf took place on August 12th 1759 and was the scene of one of Frederick’s worst defeats. Carlyle is effusive in his praise of Kriele who he refers to in a footnote as “an excellent intelligent man; has compiled in brief form, with an elaborate Chart too, a clear account of everything, in the Battle and before and after it.” (*Works* 18: 59)

Carlyle foregrounds one of these individuals, a Major Arnim, in the paragraph immediately preceding his version of Kriele's narrative. Carlyle describes him as "a Veteran of those parts" who, with his militia provides "the only defence of Frankfurt" and who is depicted responding to the Russian demand for "instant admission" to the city. (59). Carlyle then offers his account of Kriele's text:

'Arnim, taking survey of the Russian Party, values it, or what he can see of it, at 1,000' (they really were 6,000); 'keeps his Drawbridge up; and answers stoutly enough, "No." Upon which, from the Oder-Dam, there flies-off one fiery grenado; one and no more,—which alighted in the house of "Mrs Thielicke, a Baker's Widow, who was standing at the door";—killed poor Mrs Thielicke, blew the house considerably to wreck, but did not set fire to it. Arnim, all the Magistrates entreating him for the love of Heaven to leave them, is secretly shoving-off his two cannon to the Northern Gate; and in fact is making his packages with full speed: "Push for Cüstrin," thinks Arnim, "and save selves and cannon, since no good is to be done here!"' (59)

This opening paragraph of Carlyle's coverage of the battle of Kunersdorf gives examples of several of the techniques outlined in the opening sections of this chapter. The narrative shifts from the present to the past tense, on one occasion within the same sentence: "'keeps his Drawbridge up ... there flies-off one fiery grenado; one and no more,—which alighted in the house of ...'". Carlyle presents a short dialogue in the form of Arnim's negative response to the Russian's demand to be allowed to enter the city gates and a longer inner dialogue which reveals Arnim's supposedly private thoughts on the matter, both of which are fictitious.

Carlyle's decision to begin Kriele's account by focusing on Major Arnim is revealing. This tactic, coupled with his earlier foregrounding of the Major, is a clear demonstration of Carlyle's strategy of allowing his readers to 'see' events through the eyes of certain individuals. Carlyle's use of the present tense and his fabrication

of passages of dialogue between various parties have the combined effect of making the action more immediate and of involving the reader in the events which are being described. After the Russians have fired a second grenade at the city, Carlyle presents the following exchange of words between the Russian envoy, Major Arnim and the Town Magistrates:

“Your obstinate Town can be bombarded, then,—cannot it?” observed the Russian Messenger.—“Give us Free Withdrawal!” proposes Arnim. “No; you to be Prisoners of War; Town at Czarish Majesty’s discretion.” “Never,” answers Arnim (to the outward ear), “Go; oh for the love of Heaven, go!” cry all Official people.’ (60)

This dialogue is completely fabricated by Carlyle who changes Kriele’s account from a factual, historical report of a past event into a racy, exciting and human tale which appears to the reader to be happening in real time. Furthermore, Carlyle’s assault on his readers is a two-pronged attack. In his essay “On History”, Carlyle had noted the importance of introducing different perspectives into a given narrative, declaring, “The old story of Sir Walter Raleigh’s looking from his prison-window, on some street tumult, which afterwards three witnesses reported in three different ways, himself differing from them all, is still a true lesson for us” (27: 87). At the same time that he allows them to experience events from an eye-witness perspective, Carlyle also presents his readers with a succession of portraits which allows them to view the scene that he is describing from entirely different angles.

Carlyle quickly follows his portrait of Major Arnim ““taking survey of the Russian Party”” from within the city walls with a vignette concerning the unfortunate Mrs Thielicke. The portrait of Mrs Thielicke standing in the doorway of her home seconds before the first Russian grenade explodes is an example of double framing

by Carlyle, a technique which lends extra emphasis to the scene that he is depicting. In this instance, by focusing the reader's attention on the demise of Mrs Thielicke, he highlights the brutality of the Russians. The town musician is the subject of Carlyle's next portrait. His image is captured when a Russian grenade "lighted "near the Ober Kirche, in the chimney of the Town Musikus" ... [which] brought the chimney crashing down on him" (18: 60). Carlyle then offers a portrait of Arnim fleeing the city "taking the Town-keys in his pocket, and leaving the Drawbridge up" which is immediately followed by a juxtaposed image of "The terrified Magistrates, finding their Keys gone and the conflagrative Russians at their gates" (60). All of these scenes are shown in quick succession, producing an effect that could be considered almost cinematic in its execution.

The most revealing of Carlyle's portraits, however, are those which have Frederick as their subject. One of Carlyle's primary aims during his trip to Germany in 1852 was to get sight of "likenesses of Frk and his Generals and Intimates" (CL 27: 325). As he explained in a letter to Lord Ashburton on October 7th of that year, this ambition had been thwarted:

I have not been successful at all: indeed nobody *can* succeed, for the Portraits do not exist anywhere as a collection, but are scattered over the whole country ... *one* Portrait of Frk as a young man, five or six times repeated with insignificant variations, by a contemporary called *Pesne*: that is literally all that I can recollect of truly superior quality that refers to him in these long galleries. (325)

This situation changed during the time that Carlyle spent in Berlin. Three weeks after writing this letter, Carlyle informed Neuberger that Lord Ashburton had "decided on getting a copy of that Portrait of Fk by Graff, of which you heard so much from me in Berlin ... this little work I shall regard as a small conquest for England if we

once had it” (339). Carlyle’s description of this acquisition as a “conquest” clearly illustrates the importance that he attached to obtaining a suitable portrait of Frederick which would illuminate the king’s character for him and aid him in conveying this information to his readers.

Carlyle offers his first portrait of Frederick on the day before the battle of Kunersdorf, describing Frederick “reconnoitering; hither, thither, over the Heights of Trettin” (*Works* 18: 65). Carlyle then provides what he refers to as “(our one Anecdote)” concerning the king, placing the details of this incident within quotation marks:

‘The day being still hot, he suffers considerably from thirst ... in that arid tract: at last a Peasant does bring him, direct from the fountain, a jug of pure cold water; whom, lucky man, the King rewarded with a thaler; and not only so, but, the man being intelligent of the localities, took with him to answer questions.’ (65)

In this vignette of Frederick and the peasant, Carlyle manages to convey several different images with one stroke. He reinforces Frederick’s regal status by situating the king astride his horse with his needs being attended to by one of his vassals. By mentioning that fact that the water was collected “direct from the fountain”, Carlyle emphasises the peasant’s eagerness to please his king. This phrase implies that the peasant is not merely carrying out an expected act of homage or servitude but that he feels a degree of loyalty, if not affection, for Frederick. Carlyle also stresses Frederick’s gratitude and generosity by informing his readers that he rewarded the peasant for his trouble: the phrase “lucky man” suggesting that this event was a rare occurrence. In this portrait, Carlyle depicts Frederick in a way that will elicit feelings of empathy from his readers. Whilst being careful to remind them

of Frederick's regal status, Carlyle encourages readers to identify with Frederick as a fellow human being who, despite intense physical discomfort, is capable of acting in a compassionate manner towards one of his subjects. Carlyle is even more keenly aware of the need to bolster Frederick's image in the immediate aftermath of this battle, and of the necessity of deflecting attention away from the king's resounding defeat at the hands of the combined Russian and Austrian armies.

Following Frederick's humiliation at Kunersdorf, Carlyle reports the king's desperate cry to the captain of his Ziethen Hussars, "*Prittwitz, ich bin verloren* (Prittwitz, I am lost)!" (80). This image of Frederick, "stupefied by the excess of his emotions", clearly had a profound and lasting effect on Carlyle (80). In his first major publication, *Sartor Resartus*, which was published in 1833, Carlyle referred to this battle and, even at this early stage of his career, demonstrated his intention of rehabilitating Frederick's tarnished image. In Book II of Chapter I, Carlyle describes a character named Andreas, who "had been grenadier Sergeant, and even regimental Schoolmaster under Frederick the Great" (63). Andreas habitually recounted tales of his military exploits, talking to "neighbours that would listen about the Victory of Rossbach; and how Fritz the Only (*der Einzige*) had once with his own royal lips spoken to him ... '*Das nenn' ich mir einen König*, There is what I call a King,' would Andreas exclaim: 'but the smoke of Kunersdorf was still smarting his eyes.'" (64) In this passage, although Carlyle alludes to the defeat of the Prussians at Kunersdorf, he ensures that readers are left with a positive image of Frederick, an image which is made more potent as it is transmitted through the medium of one of the king's former officers.

Carlyle adopts a similar strategy in *Frederick*. Shortly after Frederick has reluctantly left the field of battle (Carlyle insists that the king “was among the last to quit the ground”) the narrative switches to a vignette where Frederick arrives at Cetscher to find “nothing but huts full of poor wounded men” including “two poor Lieutenants, who were lying on the floor, as he entered this hut” (*Works* 18: 80, 81). Although, as Carlyle informs us, this information can be found, “in all the Anecdote-Books”, he specifically cites a passage from Kriele’s work in this instance, describing this as a “pretty Anecdote, with names and particulars” (82, 81). It is possible that Carlyle’s decision to use Kriele may have been influenced by the fact that Kriele’s account of this incident is very complimentary towards Frederick. Kriele begins his anecdote with a footnote in which he declares that “the following touching scene” which he is about to describe is taken from “a beautiful article about the memorable monarch’s noble, sensitive way of thinking” (“Nachfolgende rührende Scene ... ist ein zu schöner Beitrag von der edlen gefühlvollen Denkart des unvergeßlichen Monarchen”) (166). He then outlines the king’s actions on finding these two officers who were “lying on the ground in their blood” (“auf der Erde in ihrem Blute lagen”), having been denied any medical attention due to the severity of their wounds (167). Kriele states that “the king” immediately issued an order for “great care to be taken over these worthy people” (“der König ... befahl, für diese braven Leute alle Sorgfalt zu verwenden”) (167-168).

In response to the doctor’s protestation that the injured men were beyond help, the king “grasped ... [one] young warrior by the hand and showed it to the doctor with

the words: ‘Here he only saw the men had no fever: with such young blood and lively hearts Nature tends to do wonders all the time’” (“Der König faßte die jungen Krieger bei der Hand und zeigte sie dem Arzte mit den Worten: „Hier sehe er nur, die Leute haben noch kein Fieber, bei solchem jungen Blute und frischem Herzen pflegt die Natur allezeit Wunder zu thun.“”) (168). Kriele notes that the officers eventually recovered and resumed their military service “by means of the care of this great king” (“durch die Fürsorge des größten Königs”) (168). He ends his account by revealing that the two officers “served up until the Peace, then they were recognised as invalids and on explicit royal order received good provision in Prussia as well-served officers” (“bis zum Frieden dienten, da sie dann für invalide erkannt und auf ausdrücklichen Königl. Befehl als wohlgediente Offiziere in Preußen gute Versorgungen erhielten”) (168).

Although Carlyle’s version of this incident follows Kriele’s closely, it is a much more succinct account. Like Kriele, Carlyle introduces excerpts of dialogue between Frederick and the wounded men into his narrative:

‘*Ach Kinder*, Alas, children, you are badly wounded, then?’ ‘*Ja*, your Majesty: but how goes the Battle?’ (Answer evasive on this point): ‘Are you bandaged, though? Have you been let blood?’ ‘*Nein*, *Euer Majestät*, *kein Teufel will uns verbinden* (Not a devil of them would bandage us)!’ Upon which there is a Surgeon instantly brought; reprimanded for neglect: ‘Desperate, say you? These are young fellows; feel that hand, and that; no fever there: Nature in such cases does wonders!’ Upon which the leech had to perform his function; and the poor young fellows were saved,—and did new fighting, and got new wounds, and had Pensions when the War ended. (*Works* 18: 81-82)

In this shortened version, Carlyle selects only those passages of dialogue which he considers necessary to enhance his portrait of Frederick as a caring and compassionate king. However, it is the material which he leaves out which reveals

Carlyle's methods. He chooses not to focus on the "explicit royal order" which secured the officers "good provision in Prussia as well-served officers" (Kriele 168) but merely states that the officers received "Pensions when the War ended" (*Works* 18: 82). This is a deliberate strategy by Carlyle to omit overtly obsequious language and allow Frederick's actions to speak for themselves. Carlyle's description of Frederick's response to the soldiers' query about the battle's progress as "evasive" is an oblique reference to the emotional turmoil that the king was experiencing. By privileging the king's concern for his subjects over his own personal crisis, and through focusing on his humanity and sense of justice, Carlyle specifically uses this anecdote to deflect attention away from Frederick's perceived failings as a military commander in the aftermath of Kunersdorf. With a similar aim in mind, Carlyle elects to end this chapter by presenting readers, not with a final portrait of Frederick in despair, as they might have expected, but with a moving tribute to one Major Christian Ewald von Kleist, the 'Poet of the Spring'.

Carlyle is quick to remind readers of Kleist's credentials as a poet as well as a military man, describing him as a "valiant, punctual Soldier, and with a turn for Literature as well; who wrote really pleasant fine things, new at that time and rapturously welcome, though too much in the sentimental vein for the times which have followed" (84). He then describes how Kleist, in the heat of the battle, had been

'assisting, with zeal, at the taking of three other batteries, regardless of twelve contusions, which he gradually got. At the third battery, he was farther badly hurt on the left arm and the right. Took his Colonel's place nevertheless, whom he now saw fall; led the regiment *muthig* forward on the fourth battery.¹² A case-shot smashed his right leg to pieces; he fell from his horse

¹² *muthig* ("courageously").

... sank, exclaiming “*Kinder*, My children, don’t forsake your King!” and fainted there.’ (85)

Kleist is being portrayed by Carlyle as a model of Prussian soldiery, fighting for his king and taking command of his troops despite being severely injured. In these juxtaposed images of Kleist as a “valiant ... Soldier ... who wrote really pleasant fine things”, Carlyle invites comparisons between the Major and Frederick. This technique allows Carlyle the means of indirectly expressing his continued admiration for Frederick and his military tactics, despite the king’s recent heavy defeat.

Kleist demonstrates his loyalty to Frederick through his exhortation, “*Kinder*, My children, don’t forsake your King!”. Carlyle allows Frederick to mirror this act of reverence on Kleist’s subsequent death: ““King Friedrich had Kleist’s Portrait hung in the Garrison Kirche. Freemason Lodge, in 1788, set-up a monument to him,—which still stands on the Frankfurt pavement, and is now in sadly ruinous state” (86). Earlier in his narrative, Carlyle produced an example of double framing in his description of Mrs Thielicke as she stood in her doorway. This technique is repeated here, with Carlyle framing Frederick as he gifts a portrait of Major Kleist to the garrison church. As noted earlier, Carlyle employs this double framing specifically to fix the attention of his readers on the scene that he is portraying. It is significant that Carlyle chooses this vignette to not only mark the end of his use of Kriele’s material but also to signal the imminent close of this chapter. Carlyle is ensuring that readers are left not with a portrait of Frederick in despair after Kunersdorf: instead, he provides them with “the most perfect picture” of a compassionate and gracious monarch (*Reminiscences* 6).

While there is no doubt that Carlyle edited Kriele's material extensively to create his own personalised account of the battle, and that portraiture was one of many different techniques that he employed, the question arises of whether or not Carlyle abused his editorial powers and created an account which fundamentally changed the nature of Kriele's original work. Although Carlyle's version covers the same events as Kriele's, he alters both the chronology and the content of some of these incidents with surprising results. In Kriele's version, the Russian army does not fire on the city until their third summons has been rejected by Major Arnim. Carlyle maintains that the Russians fire immediately after Arnim's rejection of their first summons. Furthermore, Kriele records that Arnim demanded free withdrawal before any firing commenced, which was refused by the Russians, whereas Carlyle states that Arnim's demand was only issued after a second grenade had damaged the city. In Kriele's account, the Russians break down the locked city gates and force their way into Frankfurt by dint of sheer force. Carlyle insists that "The terrified Magistrates, finding their Keys gone, and the conflagrative Russians at their gates, got blacksmiths on the instant; smote down, by chisel and mallet, the locked Drawbridge, smote open the Gates: "Enter, O gracious Sirs; and may Czarish Majesty have mercy on us!"'" (*Works* 18: 60). Carlyle appears reluctant to give the Russian army credit for possessing the military strength to carry out such a vigorous act. He is, however, more eager to acknowledge the Russians behaving in a cruel and inhumane manner towards their prisoners.

Carlyle claims that, finding themselves unable to pay the substantial ransom demanded by the Russians, the "Magistrates were locked in Russian ward, at one

time, for almost a week; sat in the blazing sun; if you try for the shade of a tree, the sentry handles arms upon you;—and were like to die” (61). Kriele’s account also mentions that the Russians treated the Magistrates harshly, stating that they “allowed them to languish ... for 5 days and nights, they would not even allow them to look for shade in the trees from the burning heat of the sun” (“liefs sie dann ... 5 Tage und Nächte schmachten; es wurde ihnen nicht einmahl erlaubt, bei der brennendsten Sonnenhitze den Schatten eines Baums zu suchen”) (12). Unlike Carlyle, Kriele neither mentions that the Magistrates were in danger of being physically assaulted by the sentry nor makes the suggestion that they “were like to die”. Carlyle deliberately exaggerates the situation both for dramatic effect and to emphasise the Russians’ brutality. Although the examples outlined above are minor deviations from Kriele’s account, Carlyle’s alterations in both the chronology of events and the reporting of incidents have the combined effect of demonstrating a marked bias against the Russians. In an 1994 article on Carlyle’s style, Ian Campbell maintained that recent critics such as Jerry Dibble and George Levine shared the view that “Carlyle is not, through style, analysing or transmitting exact meaning, so much as modifying the reader’s attitude towards new material or old material transformed by new treatment” (19).¹³ In his coverage of this episode, by giving a “new treatment” to Kriele’s “old material” and assigning the role of brutal aggressors to the Russians, Carlyle is actively engaged in the process of “modifying the reader’s attitude” in the manner described by Campbell.

¹³ Campbell’s article, “Carlyle: Style and Sense” appeared in the *Carlyle Studies Annual* 14, 1994. Campbell is referring to Dibble’s *The Pythia’s Drunken Song: Thomas Carlyle’s “Sartor Resartus” and the Style Problem in German Idealist Philosophy*. The Hague, 1978 and Levine’s “The Use and Abuse of Carlylese.” *The Art of Victorian Prose*. Eds. George Levine and William Madden, New York: Oxford University Press, 1968.

It could be argued that Carlyle's flexing of his editorial powers to make these fairly trivial amendments are of no great significance as they do not fundamentally alter the meaning of the original work. However, Carlyle also introduces material which results in more decisive deviations from Kriele's narrative. One of Frederick's most famous utterances is recorded at the finale of this conflict. As noted earlier in this chapter, Carlyle remarks that on seeing "The pillar of the State, the Prussian Army itself, gone to chaos in this manner", Frederick "seemed stupefied by the excess of his emotions; in no haste to go; uncertain whether he would go at all Wild swarms of Cossacks approached the place, '*Prittwitz, ich bin verloren* (Prittwitz, I am lost)!' remarked he" (*Works* 18: 80). In his footnotes, Carlyle cites various authors for this incident, including Kriele and Tempelhof.¹⁴ Yet Frederick's cry of despair is reported in none of these accounts. My research has revealed that the only text which reports these words is Johann Wilhelm von Archenholtz's *Geschichte des siebenjährigen Krieges in Deutschland vom Jahr 1756 bis 1763*, a text which Carlyle does not use for this particular conflict. Given Carlyle's well-documented insistence on accuracy, this rather basic error seems incongruous. At this stage of the proceedings, after working doggedly on *Frederick* for many years, Carlyle can perhaps be forgiven for making the occasional mistake. In a letter to Richard Monckton Milnes on December 29th 1863, Carlyle outlined the progress of the most recent volumes of his "unfortunate history", announcing, "the fourth is coming out so soon as the engraver (Wilhelmina's portrait) has done. The sixth volume—a poor

¹⁴ Georg Friedrich von Tempelhof, 1737 – 1807. Extracts from Tempelhof's *Geschichte des siebenjährigen Krieges in Deutschland zwischen dem Könige von Preussen und der Kaiserin Königin mit ihren Allirten* [sic] are in Appendix C.

thing—is partly ready in the rough. The fifth and it cannot be out within eight months or ten” adding the confession, “Alas! I ... am getting weary” (Reid *Milnes* 113-114). Four months later, in April 1864, this weariness has been superseded by an almost violent compulsion, tinged with an underlying sense of fear. Writing to his brother, John, Carlyle confessed, “my need of getting done with the intolerable Book is ... intense! The prospect of fronting *another winter* like the last 3 or more, with it, makes me tremble” (*Carlyle Collection* Ms. 526.15. NLS). While this profound weariness, combined with his strong desire to finish *Frederick*, may have led Carlyle to make mistakes, he does not deserve censure for the minor errors which have been outlined in this chapter. Fabrication of material and falsehoods, however, cannot be so readily excused.

Immediately before Frederick quits the field of battle and utters his desperate cry to Prittwitz, Carlyle portrays the king calling out, “*N’y a-t-il donc pas un bougre de boulet qui puisse m’atteindre* (Is there not one b— of a ball that can reach me, then)?” (*Works* 18: 80). After extensive research, I have been unable to trace this exclamation by Frederick, leading me to surmise that this quotation is purely an invention of Carlyle’s, fuelled by his desire to portray Frederick’s bravery and defiance in the face of defeat. Not only does Carlyle apparently introduce fabricated material, he also repeatedly massages his sources in Frederick’s favour. In his depiction of Frederick gifting Kleist’s portrait to the garrison church, Carlyle is eager to emphasise the king’s compassion for the ‘Poet of the Spring’. Carlyle fails to mention that Kleist’s portrait was only one of a group of paintings donated to the church. Kriele alludes to this, stating that Kleist’s picture was hung “in the garrison

church at Berlin among the other great heroes of his time” (“unter den andern großen Helden seiner Zeit”) (43). Like Carlyle, Kriele credits Frederick with instigating this event, remarking that he issued the order for this installation. However, in *eine Lebensgeschichte*, Preuss gives an entirely different version of events.

In a footnote to his coverage of this incident, Preuss states that it was the famous painter and etcher Bernhard Rode who “dedicated in 1759 to the garrison church in Berlin ‘with the approval of the king’ paintings of Schwerin, Winterfield, Keith—and Kleist;” (“widmete 1759 auch der Garnisonkirche in Berlin „mit Genehmigung des Königs” Denkgemälde auf Schwerin, Winterfeldt, Keith—und Kleist”) (218). Preuss confirms Kriele’s statement that Kleist’s portrait was only one of several donated to the church. More importantly, the phrasing which Preuss uses implies that the agency for gifting these portraits lay not with Frederick but with Rode. Preuss’s version of events detracts from the importance which Carlyle places on Frederick’s role in this event. According to Preuss, the king was not responsible for instigating this gift to the church and Kleist’s portrait was not accorded the special status attributed to it by Carlyle as the sole object of this donation. That Carlyle read Preuss’s work is incontestable. As early as February 1852, in a letter to Neuberg requesting additional books, he informed him that “Preuss's Books (accurate flat-footed Preuss) I have long known” (*CL* 27: 27). Yet Carlyle either did not read this work thoroughly or he deliberately chose to be selective in his use of the material. Although Carlyle is not being untruthful in his account, his omission of certain key facts gives his version a subtle but consistent bias in Frederick’s favour.

In his portrayal of Frederick as he tended the wounded officers at Cetscher, Carlyle demonstrates this predilection in a much more striking manner. Earlier in this chapter it was revealed that Kriele had footnoted this episode as “a beautiful article about the memorable monarch’s noble, sensitive way of thinking” (166). On reading further, it emerges that there is a specific purpose behind Kriele’s decision to emphasise Frederick’s more virtuous characteristics. Kriele is eager to point out that he is citing Frederick’s conduct here in order to refute thoroughly certain rumours concerning the king, spread by those individuals with “a dreadful cast of mind” (“die grausame Gesinnung”) who claimed “that he allowed orders to be given in the military hospitals, to leave the badly wounded, those who could not be cured fit for service, to die, in order to save the running costs for [the] mutilated and cripples” (“dafs er Befehle in den Lazarethen habe geben lassen, diejenigen schwer Verwundeten sterben zu lassen, die nicht mehr zum Dienst tauglich geheilt werden könnten, um die Unterhaltungskosten für Verstümmelte und Krüppel zu ersparen”) (166). Significantly, in his version, Carlyle makes no mention of these rumours: quite the opposite, in fact, signalling his intentions by introducing this vignette as “a pretty Anecdote” from Kriele (*Works* 18: 81).

Carlyle’s deliberate omission of this derogatory material has striking parallels with his behaviour during his research for *Frederick*. The Houghton Library at Harvard University houses a large selection of the original texts which Carlyle used in the course of his investigations, including an English translation of book of military instructions written by Frederick.¹⁵ Carlyle expressed his delight on reading this

¹⁵ *Military instructions, written by the King of Prussia, for the generals of his army; being his Majesty’s own commentaries on his former campaigns; together with short instructions for the use of*

work, scribbling, “Excellt Book, this, by Fk” on the title page.¹⁶ In one notable passage, Frederick issued the following instructions to his generals: “When the affair is entirely over, and the enemy have no prospect of assistance, you may then collect as many prisoners as you conveniently can, otherwise prisoners are so very troublesome, that it seems more advisable to put them to the sword, unless you have a mind to spare the officers” (*Military instructions* 198-199). Despite the fact that Carlyle highlighted this paragraph by both marking a line beside it and drawing a hand with its index finger pointing to the text, he chooses never to use, or even allude to these instructions in *Frederick*. Carlyle rejects any descriptions which portray Frederick behaving in what his readers might have perceived to be a heartless and cruel manner, despite potentially mitigating circumstances. The massaging of source material and deliberate omissions on Carlyle’s part clearly demonstrate that he is using his position as editor to be selective in his use of sources, deliberately excluding material which reflects badly on Frederick. This may be considered to be an acceptable tactic. After all, historians by their very nature are editors of material to which they have to apply various methods of sifting and selection. However, there is one notable instance where Carlyle oversteps the mark by providing his readers with information which is completely false.

Carlyle does not provide a citation for the “one Anecdote” which he describes as his source material for the incident where Frederick is offered “a jug of pure cold water”

his light troops; illustrated with copper-plates; translated by an Officer. London: Printed for T. Becket and P.A. De Hondt, in the Strand, 1762. Hereafter referred to as *Military instructions*.

¹⁶ This sentiment is repeated in a letter to Alexander Gilchrist on November 28th 1855. Carlyle refers to this work as “a conspicuously excellent Piece” and remarks “Were I Commander in Chief I would study that Book to the last fibre of meaning in it; and make all my Officers, down to the lowest Corporal who had sense in his head, read it and again read it” (*CL* 30: 124).

by an obliging peasant (*Works* 18: 65). This information can only be traced in Kriele's account: neither Tempelhof nor Archenholtz mention the event.¹⁷ Carlyle's version of events, however, contains a significant extra element which does not exist in Kriele's work. Carlyle departs from Kriele's account after he notes that the peasant has been "rewarded with a thaler" by the king, declaring, "and not only so, but, the man being intelligent of the localities, [he] took with him to answer questions." (65). This additional piece of information turns out to be a crucially important factor in Carlyle's subsequent coverage of the battle, as he attempts to shift the blame for the defeat away from Frederick. As the king explores the terrain looking for a suitable place for his men and artillery to cross, he consults the peasant, asking him initially about a piece of ground known as the *Elsbruch* or Alder Waste: "Watery, scrubby; no passage there, thinks Friedrich; which his Peasant with water-jug confirms" (68). The peasant then undergoes further questioning, which, Carlyle is eager to inform his readers, the king conducts "with strictness" (68):

'From the Red Grange yonder, where General Loudon is, if you wished to get over to the *Hohle Grund*, or to the Judenberg, would you cross that Hen-Floss?' 'It is not crossable, your Majesty; one has to go round quite westward by the Dam.' 'What, from Rothe Vorwerk to Big Hollow, no passage, say you; no crossing?' 'None, your Majesty,' insists the Peasant;—who is not aware that the Russians have made one of firm trestles and logs, and use it daily for highway there; an error of some interest to Friedrich within the next twenty-four hours! (68-69)

The passage of dialogue between Frederick and the peasant is solely the product of Carlyle's imagination. By foregrounding the king's "strictness" in his questioning of the peasant and then providing an example of his persistent inquiries in the dialogue which follows, Carlyle is attempting to absolve Frederick from responsibility for the ensuing defeat. As the reader has already been told that the peasant is "intelligent of

¹⁷ Although Preuss also covers this episode, he cites Kriele as his source. It seems reasonable to conclude, therefore, that Carlyle's "one Anecdote" is from Kriele's text.

the localities”, when he then “insists” that his information is correct, the blame for this mistake is laid squarely at his door, regardless of the fact that the peasant himself was unaware of the recent activities of the Russians.

Carlyle underlines Frederick’s lack of responsibility when he states categorically, “Friedrich himself does not know this bit of ground” (69). He then introduces a second individual with knowledge “of the localities” in order to reinforce his case. Although the king’s encounter with Major Linden is not presented in the form of a dialogue, it mirrors the exchange between Frederick and the peasant: “Friedrich makes minute questioning” of the Major who “answers confidently; has been over all this tract a hundred times; ‘but knows it only as a hunter,’ says Tempelhof, ‘not as a soldier,’ which he ought to have done” (69). Carlyle brings in this criticism of Linden on the part of Tempelhof, who was a soldier on the ground during this battle, to sanction his own estimation of the Major’s fallibility. He then ratifies this opinion by making a robust statement about Linden’s culpability, “His answers are supposed to have misled Friedrich on various points, and done him essential damage” (69). It is clear that Carlyle is using the peasant’s erroneous assessment of the terrain, an error which is verified by Major Linden, in an attempt to excuse Frederick’s failure at Kunersdorf. The fact that Carlyle goes to the extreme of creating a false account of this peasant’s involvement demonstrates the importance he attached to maintaining Frederick’s image. Significantly, after this episode, the peasant is never referred to again, having outlived his usefulness as a rhetorical device for Carlyle.

Carlyle's fabrication of this conversation between Frederick and the peasant is not the only occasion where he is guilty of committing a fundamental error in the course of his research. He used Kriele's work extensively for Kunersdorf, believing him to be "an excellent intelligent man" who produced "a clear account of everything, in the Battle and before and after it" (59). Yet my research has shown that a serious flaw exists in Carlyle's assessment of both the author and his material. I have discovered that Kriele was only six years old when this battle was fought in 1759. His book, therefore, which was published in 1801, is either drawn from his own memory or the memories of other actors in this war. Given Kriele's very young age, there is a question mark over whether or not he himself actually witnessed many of the incidents which he describes. Even if he did, his youth must surely have influenced his perspective of these events. Furthermore, the lengthy delay between witnessing these incidents and recalling them over four decades later must have resulted in deviations from his original impressions. Either way, it is clear that Kriele no longer falls neatly into the category of a "seeing Witness" so favoured by Carlyle. The possibility exists that Carlyle was so intent on using this material that questions concerning the age or credentials of the author did not arise.

In one of his earlier volumes of *Frederick*, Carlyle's reaction to work of a very similar nature had already set a precedent. The letters written by Bielfeld which were mentioned earlier in this chapter received scathing condemnation from Carlyle on his discovery that they had never "gone through a terrestrial Post-office" (14: 231-232).

Carlyle indignantly declared that the letters were

an afterthought, composed from vague memory and imagination ... a sorrowful ghost-like '*Travels of Anacharsis*,' instead of living words by an

eye-witness! Not to be cited ‘freely’ at all, but sparingly and under conditions. They abound in small errors, in misdates, mistakes; small fictions even, and impossible pretensions:—foolish mortal, to write down his bit of knowledge in that form! (232)

Carlyle’s disparaging description of Belfield’s material having been “composed from vague memory and imagination” could equally be applied to Kriele’s text, given its long gestation period. It is worth remembering that Carlyle was working on the Bielfeld letters in 1857 and 1858 when he was conducting research on a much earlier volume of *Frederick*, several years before he began investigating Kriele’s work. It could be argued that Carlyle’s rigorous research methods were not as enthusiastically applied as he worked on the later volumes of his epic, possibly as a result of the weariness which he was admitted he was experiencing during the latter stages of the project.¹⁸

It seems clear that Carlyle either did not take enough care when he researched Kriele’s account, or that he deliberately chose to ignore the “small fiction” of this particular “foolish mortal” because he believed that this material would prove to be crucially important for his own coverage of Kunersdorf. It is also apparent that Carlyle, on occasion, was prepared to deviate from the stated facts for the sake of maintaining the integrity of his own account. For all that, in the main, he does remain true to the facts in Kriele’s work. Carlyle edits the material and presents it in his own innovative way, creating his own “fiction”, which has the intended effect of “modifying the reader’s attitude towards ... old material transformed by new

¹⁸ Carlyle gives some sense of the intense pressure he felt under to complete his epic when he wrote to Richard Monckton Miles on August 11th 1864 declaring, “As to myself, night and day, every moment of my time ... is religiously devoted to getting that frightful millstone of a book shot off the neck of me in some not dishonest way” (Reid *Milnes* 127-128).

treatment” (Campbell 19). He focuses on the individuals involved in the conflict which allows him to portray events from an eye-witness point of view and lends his account a degree of humanity which Kriele’s lacks.

Although Carlyle used Kriele’s work extensively throughout his chapter on the battle of Kunersdorf, he also incorporated material from several other sources. As stated earlier, Carlyle produces a quotation from Tempelhof in the middle of a passage for which Kriele has been his primary source. In this instance, Carlyle brings in Tempelhof because of his military credentials; he fought on the Prussian side in the battle itself. Tempelhof, therefore, not only fits into the category of a “seeing Witness” but has the additional benefit of having witnessed events as a soldier “ought to have done” with an awareness and understanding of military manoeuvres and tactics. Carlyle uses Tempelhof only sparingly and generally as a means of sanctioning Frederick’s decisions, commenting on the efficiency of the Prussian army or being critical of the opposing forces. He also uses Tempelhof to criticize the enemy’s weaponry, ““The Russian guns were ill-pointed; the Russian batteries wrong-built”” and then compliment his own comrades, describing how they advanced on the Mühlberg ““with a precision and coherency ... which even on the parade-ground would have deserved praises”” (*Works* 18: 73, 74). When Tempelhof reaches the top of the Mühlberg following a direct order from the king, Carlyle notes, ““never did Tempelhof see a finer chance for artillery than there. Soft sloping ground, with Russians simmering ahead of you, all the way down to Kunersdorf”” (75). Carlyle’s stress on the fact that this ascent was carried out “by the King’s order”

coupled with his description of Tempelhof's unqualified praise on reaching the summit is intended to emphasise Frederick's military acumen (75).

However, Carlyle's most significant use of Tempelhof's material occurs when he employs the soldier's testimony to justify Frederick's actions at a crucial point in the battle, actions for which the king has been roundly criticized by other commentators:

At this stage, it appears, Finck and many Generals, Seidlitz among the others, were of opinion that, in present circumstances, with troops so tired, and the enemy nearly certain to draw-off, if permitted, here had been enough for one day, and that there ought to be pause till tomorrow. Friedrich knew well the need of rest; but Friedrich, impatient of things half-done, especially of Russians half-beaten, would not listen to this proposal; which was reckoned upon him as a grave and tragic fault, all the rest of his life; though favourable judges, who were on the ground, Tempelhof for one, are willing to prove that pausing here,—at the point we had really got to, a little beyond the Kuhgrund, namely; and not a couple of miles westward, at the foot of the Jew Hill, where vague rumour puts us,—was not feasible or reasonable. (77)

It is apparent from this extract that Carlyle places great importance on the fact that Tempelhof was “on the ground” during this event and that, as a serving soldier, he agreed with Frederick's decision for the Prussian army not to pause here but to press on with the attack.

Tempelhof's support is partially based on the fact that the Prussian army, contrary to widely held reports, had not been successful in driving the enemy as far back as the Judenberg. Carlyle uses Tempelhof's account to dispute this “vague rumour” regarding the Prussian troop positions. Tempelhof himself asserts that criticism of Frederick's tactics “is based for the most part on the wrong presupposition that the enemy would already have been driven back to the Judenberg, and on this would have taken its last position” (“gründet sich grösstentheils auf die falsche

Voraussetzung, dass der Feind schon bis an die Judenberge wäre zurückgetrieben gewesen, und auf diesen seine letzte Stellung genommen hätte”) (223). This was not the case, according to Tempelhof, who maintains that “the left wing and the middle of the royal army had not come farther than a few hundred steps opposite Kunersdorf, the right wing stood in a large disorderly heap behind the Kuhgrund” (“der linke Flügel und die Mitte der königlichen Armee waren nicht weiter als einige hundert Schritt jenseit Kunersdorf gekommen, der rechte Flügel stand in dicken unordentlichen Haufen hinter dem Kuhgrund”) (224). Carlyle uses this refutation of Prussian troop deployments to his advantage to justify Frederick’s subsequent decision to press on with his attack.

In the extract above, Carlyle adopts a tone of studied moderation. Tempelhof, however, outlines his support for the king’s actions in much more emphatic language, opining that Frederick

saw victory before him, the biggest difficulties overcome, and the enemy in the biggest disorder. And now the king should halt at once! should abandon all prospect of the most complete victory! should halt his worthy troops who came running with fast steps and brought themselves surely in order to land a stroke, in the middle of their runs, and thereby in front of their eyes give a public confession, that he is afraid of the enemy? (“sah den Sieg vor sich hergehn, die grössten Schwierigkeiten überwunden, und den Feind in der grössten Unordnung. Und nun sollte der König mit einem male Halt machen! sollte alle Aussichten auf den vollständigsten Sieg fahren lassen! sollte seine braven Truppen, die mit schnellen Schritten herbei eilten und sich recht zum Schlagen herandrängten, mitten in ihrem Laufe aufhalten, und dadurch vor ihren Augen ein öffentliches Geständniss ablegen, dass er sich vor dem Feinde fürchte?”) (225)

By deliberately toning down the fervour of Tempelhof’s testimony, Carlyle’s account acquires an air of gravitas and authority which the former lacks, which in turn imbues it with a sense of credibility. When he describes Tempelhof as “a favourable

judge” and then proceeds to outline this military man’s belief that “pausing here ... was not feasible or reasonable” Carlyle uses moderate as well as scientific language to make the case for Tempelhof’s—and his own— support for Frederick’s actions in a considered and thoughtful manner (*Works* 18: 77). Throughout this chapter, Carlyle consistently omits those passages from Tempelhof where he allows his passions to run high in praise of Frederick. Thus, nowhere do we find phrases such as, “The king himself led the battalion into the fire” (“Der König führte die Bataillone selbst ins Feuer”) (Tempelhof 220). Carlyle is more subtle in his praise of Frederick, choosing to privilege the king’s actions rather than use direct flattery. On another occasion, however, Carlyle uses Tempelhof’s words practically *verbatim*. Tempelhof bemoans the behaviour of the Prussian army as it retreats in disarray, “I have never seen the Prussian army in such a state” (“Nie habe ich die preussische Armee in einem solchen Zustand gesehn”) (222). Carlyle alters this phrase, removing Tempelhof’s agency and transforming it into the passive statement, “no Prussian Army was ever seen in such a state” (*Works* 18: 80). Although this is a minor amendment it produces a fundamental change in meaning. The removal of agency allows Carlyle to transform this phrase from Tempelhof’s personally expressed opinion into a generally accepted world view, a view designed to carry more weight with his readers. The reworked phrase implies that it was the behaviour of the Prussian army that contributed, at least partially, to their defeat and deflects attention away from any perceived deficiency in Frederick’s leadership.

As well as reworking specific passages from Tempelhof in Frederick’s favour, Carlyle omits material which hints at any flaws in the king’s ability to command his

troops. Towards the end of the conflict, Frederick issued a vital order to his cavalry, led by Prince Eugen of Württemberg, to attack the enemy infantry. Tempelhof outlines the scene thus: “In this critical moment the king sent an order to the cavalry that they should go up after the right wing, and try to bring in the hostile infantry” (“In diesem kritischen Zeitpunkt schickte der König Befehl an die Kavallerie, dass sie nach dem rechten Flügel herauf gehn, und suchen sollte, in die feindliche Infanterie einzubringen”) (221). Tempelhof then describes how Württemberg led the charge forward only to discover that, “When he looked around, he found he was alone; the whole cavalry had allowed themselves to be scared off by the hostile fire, and had stayed behind” (“Da er sich umsah, fand er sich allein; die ganze Kavallerie hatte sich durch das feindliche Feuer abschrecken lassen, und war zurück geblieben”) (221). The cavalry’s outright disobedience to a direct order from their king and military commander is presented altogether differently by Carlyle. Although he states that “Eugen, ‘looking round, finds his men all gone,’ and has to gallop the other way, gets wounded to boot”, Carlyle leaves his readers to imagine for themselves the circumstances surrounding this event (*Works* 18: 79). He makes no mention of the fact that the cavalry in its entirety had disobeyed a direct order. His use of the phrase, “finds his men all gone”, implies that these troops had followed Württemberg in the first place, when it is apparent from Tempelhof’s account that this was not the case and that the cavalry *en masse* had not moved but had “stayed behind”, having “allowed themselves to be scared off by the hostile fire”.

There exists another eye-witness report of this incident which portrays events in an altogether different light. This is Frederick’s personal account of the 1759

campaign.¹⁹ In the king's version of events it appears that Württemberg did not attack the enemy as a result of a direct order from Frederick but took matters into his own hands. Frederick complains that "The prince of Württemberg, however, impatient at the inaction of the cavalry, made an ill-timed charge on the Russian infantry", an act that triggered a series of attacks and counter-attacks which resulted in the eventual defeat of the Prussians (*Posthumous* 30). Carlyle owned a copy of this work by Frederick and it is reasonable to assume that he read it during the course of his research. Indeed, in his chapter on Kunersdorf, Carlyle appears to make a direct reference to this book. He describes how the Russians "were in great agitation" on hearing the news that "Friedrich was across at Göritz, and coming on them from the north side, not from Frankfurt by the Reppen Highway" with the result that "'They inverted their front' (say all the Books but Friedrich's own)" (*Works* 18: 69, 70). Yet Carlyle chooses to ignore the fact that, according to Frederick, Württemberg acted unilaterally: highlighting an act of disobedience on the part of one of Frederick's commanders would not have reflected well on the king's ability to control and command his troops. Furthermore, it would have introduced an air of disharmony that would have run contrary to the overall picture that Carlyle wished to convey.

I would also argue that Carlyle's selectivity in his use of Tempelhof's account may have been driven by rather more prosaic concerns. Whereas Kriele's book is written in Roman script, the Tempelhof material is in a typeface known in German as *Fraktur* and is extremely difficult to read. There is some dubiety over Carlyle's ability to read and fully understand German, especially during the years when he was

¹⁹ "Chapter X. The Campaign of 1759." *Posthumous works of Frederic II King of Prussia*. Vol. 3. London: printed for G.G.J. and J. Robinson, 1789, 1-57. Hereafter referred to as *Posthumous*.

working on *Frederick*. In a letter written to Jane on August 1st 1857, during the early days of his work on *Frederick*, Carlyle informed her that “Varnhagen von Ense, the other night, sent a pretty little Book Biography of a German Countess ... and it is really pleasant reading. Very easy German too” (CL 33: 3). It would appear that Carlyle considered that the book’s “easy German” was a bonus. On 24th October 1865, after finally completing *Frederick*, Carlyle wrote to Meta Wellmer on receiving the “Jean-Paul Autographs”, maintaining that he had to get these “copied into roman hand (his *cursive-schrift* being too abstruse for me)” (*Carlyle (Thomas) Essayist and Historian, twenty letters of (1865-79)* Acc. 9207. NLS). The German cursive script to which Carlyle is referring in this letter is only fractionally more difficult to decipher than *Fraktur*. Carlyle’s admission that he was obliged to have this cursive script “copied into roman hand” before he could read it, is an indication that he may have struggled to make sense of the kind of typeface used by Tempelhof. Coupled with the possibility that Carlyle’s ability to read German may have become degraded with the passage of time, it seems reasonable to conclude that both of these factors must have influenced his selectivity of Tempelhof’s account.

These two elements could also explain Carlyle’s failure to include a crucial piece of information which contravenes his *modus operandi* of using eye-witness accounts wherever possible. Tempelhof confesses, “Although I was present myself at the battle, nevertheless, I have only just examined the region last summer” (“Ob ich gleich bei der Schlacht selbst gegenwärtig gewesen, so habe ich doch noch erst im vorigen Sommer die Gegend genau untersucht”) (225). Tempelhof’s report of the battle of Kunersdorf was published in 1787, therefore we can estimate that “last

summer” would have been 1786 or thereabouts, a full twenty-seven years after the conflict took place. As remarked on earlier with Bielfeld’s letters and Kriele’s book, Tempelhof’s account is not the first-hand contemporary report that it claims to be. Describing his recent visit Tempelhof declares, “I also do not find the smallest reason that could have prevented the king from continuing the attack farther” (“da finde ich auch nicht die geringste Ursach, die den König hätte abhalten können”) (225). Although his material has not been “composed from vague memory and imagination”, there is little doubt that Tempelhof’s leisurely examination of the area almost thirty years on would have been an altogether different affair from his experience in the heat of battle, and that this circumstance, in tandem with the benefit of hindsight, must have influenced his perception of events (*Works* 14: 232). There are several possible reasons why Carlyle chose to omit this important information. The construction that Tempelhof uses to begin the sentence, “Ob ich gleich” (“Although I”), is an archaic one that may have been obsolete even in Carlyle’s time, with the result that he may have misunderstood and therefore glossed over this section. Furthermore, the sentence appears towards the end of Tempelhof’s piece and after his coverage of the battle itself, therefore Carlyle may not have attempted to translate this section, believing that he had already retrieved the information that he needed for his chapter. Or, Carlyle may have read the sentence and chose to ignore it precisely because he realised that it would compromise Tempelhof’s status as a reliable “seeing Witness”. Regardless of the reasons why, it is clear that Carlyle was selective in his use of Tempelhof’s account, only bringing in his material at certain key points in his narrative where he believed that Tempelhof’s position as a soldier

“on the ground” would help him to refute Frederick’s perceived errors of judgement and subsequently justify his own support for Frederick’s actions.

Carlyle opted to use first-hand accounts wherever possible for his coverage of the battle of Kunersdorf, adapting his source material to bring past events and the individuals who took part in them vividly back to life, “with colour in their cheeks, with passions in their stomach” (*Works* 29: 78). Yet his agenda of eulogizing Frederick at all costs impacted on the way in which Carlyle selected his data and presented his account of the battle, leading to his credentials as a reliable historian being questioned. In addition to using the accounts of Kriele and Tempelhof for this battle, Carlyle also had access to other forms of media. This additional material, consisting of detailed notes from a recent trip to the Kunersdorf area as well as a selection of Frederick’s personal letters which were penned to various correspondents during the conflict, conformed to Carlyle’s ethos of using eye-witness accounts wherever possible. In the following chapter, an in-depth investigation of Carlyle’s handling of this new material is carried out and his role as editor comes under further scrutiny.

Chapter 5

Carlyle as an editor: Processing the “raw-material” of history

“the Prussian Dryasdust ... has made of Friedrich’s History a wide-spread, inorganic, trackless matter; dismal to your mind, and barren as a continent of Brandenburg sand! Enough, he could do no other: I have striven to forgive him. Let the reader now forgive me; and think sometimes what probably my raw-material was!—”¹

The technique of interweaving material from different sources into his narrative is one that Carlyle uses throughout *Frederick*. As noted in the previous chapter, in order to bring the past back to life through the actions of the players involved, Carlyle preferred to use eye-witness accounts where they existed, for example in the first-hand reports of the battle of Kunersdorf provided by Kriele and Tempelhof. However, it was Carlyle’s propensity to select and present this source material in ways that consistently reflected well on Frederick which raised questions about his methods as a historian. This chapter focuses on two additional primary sources used by Carlyle for this battle: material in the form of a “*Tourist’s Note*” which reads as a travel guide to the area where the struggle took place and a series of letters penned by Frederick himself in the days surrounding the conflict. Carlyle was aware that the three-way relationship between himself, Frederick and the reader would fail if Frederick were to be revealed as a less than heroic figure. Through a thorough investigation of Carlyle’s handling of his “*Tourist’s Note*” material and Frederick’s correspondence, I aim to demonstrate that, in his efforts to cement Frederick’s

¹ Carlyle’s address to his readers in the Proem of Volume I of *Frederick* (*Works* 12: 11)

position at the apex of the triadic structure Carlyle's editing of his source data evolved into a form of censorship which had a negative impact on his credentials as a historian.

In his attempt to create a detailed and realistic portrayal of the landscape of the Kunersdorf area, Carlyle adopted the same tactic of using a first-hand account by presenting his readers with what he refers to as a "*Tourist's Note*", which he inserts between two separate sections of the main narrative. Immediately after his portrayal of the incident in which Frederick insists that a peasant accompany him on his survey of the Kunersdorf area due to the latter's knowledge "of the localities", Carlyle remarks, "Readers too may desire to gain some knowledge of the important ground now under survey" (*Works* 18: 65). What follows is more than two pages of script in which the terrain is minutely described, beginning with, "'Frankfurt, a very ancient Town, not very beautiful,' says my Note, 'stands on an alluvium which has been ground-down from certain clay Hills on the left bank of Oder'" (66). Carlyle presents this script in a smaller typeface than that of the surrounding text and encloses it in single quotation marks. His direct reference to "my Note" suggests that he is reproducing this material from notes that he took during his visit to Germany in 1852, an assumption which is reinforced by Carlyle's citation of this material as, "*Tourist's Note (Autumn 1852)*" (68). The change in presentation style and font size indicates to readers that this section is to be treated differently from the main narrative. In effect, Carlyle is tapping into contemporary popular culture by presenting readers with travelogue material along the lines of the renowned *Murray's*

Handbooks for Travellers series. Yet an investigation of his visit to the Kunersdorf area in 1852 reveals that this “Note” has been fabricated by Carlyle.

Unlike his later journey to Germany, when Carlyle kept a day-by-day account of his trip in a journal which was subsequently published as *Journey to Germany, Autumn 1858*, Carlyle did not record the details of his 1852 visit. His letters home are the only written evidence, letters which reveal that Carlyle barely visited the area where the battle of Kunersdorf was fought. He described his journey through Germany in a letter to his brother, John, on October 3rd of that year:

Of Lobositz, Töplitz and the Bohemian Border Regions, still more of the “Saxon Switzerland,” I will say nothing at all,—tho’ this Lobositz adventure cost us 2 days beyond calculations, and some of the queerest experiences we had yet had in Germany. Zittau at length again connected us with *Railways*; we went thro’ Herrnhuth (4 hours there), thro’ Frankfurt on the Oder (1 day there, and on the field of Cunersdorf,—compared with which *Creca Moss* is as the Carse of Gowrie): finally to *Berlin* itself. (*CL* 27: 317-318)

In this letter, Carlyle specifically mentions the short time that he spent visiting Frankfurt on the Oder and the Kunersdorf battle site. His prolonged visit to Lobositz which he states, “cost us 2 days beyond calculations”, gives rise to the suggestion that this unexpectedly longer stay may have curtailed his subsequent visit to Kunersdorf. His comparison of the area where the battle took place to Creca Moss, a tract of solitary moorland which lies four miles north-east of Annan, close to Carlyle’s birthplace, hints that he was not impressed by the terrain of the area which he encountered, a claim that he had already made in a letter written to Jane two days earlier: “We came four-and twenty hours ago, latish last night, from Frankfurt on the Oder, from the field of Cunersdorf (a dreadful scraggy village, where Fritz recd his worst defeat) and various toils and *strapazen* [hardships]” (313). Towards the end of

his stay in Berlin, Carlyle reiterated his deep disappointment with the landscape in a letter to Lord Ashburton on October 7th:

It is now the seventh day that I am in Berlin: this day week, namely, we were at Frankfurt on the Oder, and the “blasted heath” of Cunersdorf where Frederic received his worst defeat from the Russians,—not even a blasted *heath* that Cunersdorf, for it is *sand* and will not carry heath, and several of the “hills” have been *blown away* since Fritz was there; certainly the wretchedest of all terrestrial Hamlets,—there we were last Thursday about this hour; and came to Berlin the same night. (323)

These letters clearly demonstrate Carlyle’s anger and frustration on finding a “blasted heath” in place of a former battlefield, which may account for the brevity of his visit. More importantly, Carlyle’s description of the area in his letters is as sparse and desolate as the site itself. Given the complete absence of a detailed outline of the terrain in these letters, Carlyle’s only written accounts, it is safe to conclude that he must have turned to other sources to produce the highly detailed description which appears in *Frederick*.

During the early stages of his research, at the beginning of February 1852, Carlyle had written to Neuberg with “a question or two about Books” (27). Carlyle hoped that Neuberg could acquire material on his behalf which would allow him to become “well acquainted with the Silesian-Bohemian Country and the scenes of all those high feats of arms” (27). One text in particular seemed to be of great interest. Carlyle made a specific request to Neuberg for a “volume of Büsching's *Erdbeschreibung* [geography] that treats expressly about Germany at large” opining “That wd be a most hopeful acquisition to me” (27-28). By the middle of the following month, Carlyle appeared to be making progress with the acquisition of books, particularly maps, “I am still tumbling about among Books about Fredk; getting German maps,

may a *Mapholder* (of my own invention), and a huge magnifying glass (the size almost of a small *brander*) for reading maps with, *whh* answers very well” (70). A letter to von Ense in early June indicated that Carlyle had enjoyed a degree of success in his endeavour to familiarise himself with “the Silesian-Bohemian Country”, “From Reymann’s *Kreiskarten*, and Stieler’s maps, joined to an invaluable old *Büsching* which has come to me, I get, or can get, fair help towards all manner of *topography*” (136). Despite this self-professed confidence regarding his progress, it would appear that Carlyle felt he needed more “fair help” than these books and maps could provide, which led him to approach Henry Larkin for assistance.

According to Larkin, when it came to dealing with maps, Carlyle found himself to be out of his depth, despite—or perhaps as a consequence of—having in his possession “battle-plans in confusing abundance ... one large book, or perhaps two books, some two feet square, expressly, and in strictest confidence, lent him by the Prussian Government” (42). Larkin describes a visit to Carlyle where he found him

in great tribulation of spirit about maps and battle-plans, which had become necessary to illustrate the *Frederick*, then seething and spluttering on the anvil at the fiercest white heat; and which maps and plans he had found himself quite unable to arrange. He had tried his hand at them, and had at last thrown them from him in utter loathing and despair; and now wistfully appealed to me to say ‘whether amongst my many faculties of help, even map-making might not possibly be one.’ (41)

In the end, Larkin agreed to assist Carlyle by taking on the bulk of the “map-making” for *Frederick*, although he prophesied correctly that “the whole thing would be as unconquerably intolerable to me, as it had already proved to himself” (41). Furthermore, Larkin was made acutely aware of the need for maintaining the highest degree of accuracy whilst carrying out this work: “If any one should think this an

easy task, with an eye like Carlyle's to scan it when done, I would like to see him try to do it" (42).

Carlyle had only to continue reading Kriele's work to discover that, in addition to giving a report of the battle itself he also provided an extensive description of the terrain and included two highly detailed maps at the end of his book.² Towards the conclusion of his "*Tourist's Note*" Carlyle refers to Kriele's description of the landscape:

'Eastward of Kunersdorf the ground has still some skin of peat, and sticks together: but westward, all that three miles, it is a mere tumult of sand-hills, tumbled about in every direction ... the features of the Battle quite blown away, and indecipherable in our time Kriele's Book (in 1801) still gives no hint of change: the *Kuhgrund*, which now has nothing but dry sand for the most industrious ruminant, is still a place of succulence and herbage in Kriele's time; "Deep Way," where "at one point two carts could not pass," was not yet blown out of existence, but still has "a Well in it" for Kriele; *Hohle Grund* (since called Loudon's Hollow), with the Jew Hill and Jew Churchyard beyond, seem tolerable-enough places to Kriele.' (*Works* 18: 67-68)

His direct reference to "Kriele's Book" leaves the reader with little doubt that Carlyle had not only read but was using Kriele's work for his "*Tourist's Note*" material. The question to be addressed, then, is why Carlyle makes the claim that this lengthy and detailed description has been drawn from his personal observations during his visit to Germany in 1852. The answer lies in the importance which Carlyle places on using eye-witness accounts in *Frederick* wherever possible. By providing this descriptive information in the form of a "*Tourist's Note*", Carlyle is placing himself in the role of a "seeing Witness", a literary technique which he believes will lend credibility to his account.

² Preuss and Tempelhof also provided brief descriptions of the area.

As this *“Tourist’s Note”* is a fabrication, the question of whether or not Carlyle was true to his sources leads us back to a comparison with Kriele’s material. Once more, my investigations reveal that Carlyle’s version differs from Kriele’s. In the excerpt above, Carlyle gives a direct quotation from Kriele claiming that the “Deep Way” is so narrow that “at one point two carts could not pass”. Kriele, however, offers a different description: “A narrow depression on this side, almost of the same length, only some hundred steps farther forward, is named Deep Way through which the small street leads to Frankfurt; it has very steep side walls, is so narrow at one place that only two carts could pass each other” (“Eine noch schmälere Vertiefung auf dieser Seite, fast von gleicher Länge, nur einige hundert Schritte weiter vorwärts, ist der so genannte Tiefe Weg, durch welchen die kleine Strasse nach Frankfurt führt; er hat sehr steile Seitenwände, ist so eng, dass sich nur an einer Stelle zwei Wagen ausweichen können”) (23-24). Kriele’s comment that “only two carts could pass each other” emerges in Carlyle’s account as “two carts could not pass”. This is either an error on Carlyle’s part or a deliberate manipulation of the source material for dramatic effect. If this is a genuine mistake, and one that has arisen due to Carlyle’s inaccurate translation of Kriele’s German, this reinforces the notion that Carlyle’s command of the German language was not as fluent as he would have people believe. As my investigation into Carlyle’s use of Tempelhof’s account revealed, this is not the first occasion where Carlyle’s translation has deviated from the original material. When it comes to his handling of Frederick’s letters, Carlyle’s powers of translation are once more brought under scrutiny.

Carlyle uses Frederick's correspondence extensively throughout *Frederick*. The king was a prolific letter writer and Carlyle presents a selection of his letters as Frederick's running commentary on events. Once again, this technique fits in well with Carlyle's ethos of using first-hand accounts where they existed. It does, however, make the question of why he chose not to use Frederick's personal account of the battle of Kunersdorf even more puzzling. Carlyle uses two primary sources for Frederick's correspondence, Preuss's *eine Lebensgeschichte* and Frederick's *Oeuvres de Frédéric le Grand*, a work edited by Preuss.³ Frederick's letters were written in both German and French, the majority being in French as this was the language he favoured. Although Preuss's work is in German, where he provides a letter from Frederick he reproduces this in the original language. Of the one military instruction and nine letters written by Frederick which Carlyle reproduces in his chapter on Kunersdorf, he cites Preuss only twice.

On the first occasion, Carlyle uses Preuss's work to present a letter which Frederick had written to Lieutenant-General von Schmettau on August 14th 1759 (*Works* 18: 83-84).⁴ Carlyle has no option but to use *eine Lebensgeschichte* for this letter as it is not present in the *Oeuvres*. The second and more significant instance where Carlyle cites Preuss occurs earlier in the chapter, on the day of the conflict itself, when the king, in despair following his defeat, dispatches a military instruction on August 12th in which he hands over command of his army to Lieutenant-General von Finck (83). Although identical versions of this instruction appear in German in both the *Oeuvres*

³ Hereafter referred to as *Oeuvres*. See Appendices A and B for reproductions of these letters.

⁴ This letter appears in the appendix or *Urkundenbuch* to *eine Lebensgeschichte*, vol. 2, p. 43-44.

and *eine Lebensgeschichte*, Carlyle chooses to cite the latter.⁵ It is perplexing to discover that, in this instance, Carlyle appears to break his own rule of selecting the account of a “seeing Witness” where it exists. These instructions to Finck do not appear until volume twenty-seven, part three, of the *Oeuvres*, which was published in 1856. Although this falls well within the period during which Carlyle was carrying out his research, a question mark remains over whether or not he actually read these later volumes. In the early days of his research, Carlyle was keen to read each volume of the *Oeuvres* as it was published, a fact which is made evident by his own letters on the subject. Writing to Rudolf and Karl Decker, the *Oeuvres*’ publishers, on December 27th 1852, Carlyle added the following hopeful postscript, “If Professor Preuss and your other people would conclude the New Edition of the *Oeuvres de Frederic*, with the due Indexes &c &c, it would be a great conquest for me!” (CL 27: 376-377).

Four years later, in a letter to his bookbinder, Robert Leighton, on July 14th 1856, Carlyle revealed that he had received these later volumes: “I have got the addit/ volume of *Oeuvres de Frédéric*; and will surrender it, if you send; but *wd* rather *read* first: wait therefore till you actually *do begin*,—say a week hence?” (31: 120). A mere eight days later, on July 22nd, Carlyle wrote to Leighton again informing him, “The vol. of *Oeuvres de Frédéric* is ... lying here for *you*, tied together,—3 parts,—“tome 27: 3 *parties*” (or some such lettering)” (133). The three parts of volume twenty-seven account for eight hundred and forty-two letters in total, written in French and German, with the instructions to Finck not appearing until near the end of

⁵ This letter is in *Oeuvres*, vol.27_3, p.227 and *eine Lebensgeschichte*, vol.1, p. 450 and vol. 2, p. 215.

the volume. Despite Carlyle's protestations that he "*wd rather read*" this material before handing it over to Leighton, there is the possibility that he simply did not have time to read all of the letters. This argument is strengthened by information gleaned from Carlyle's own correspondence. These reveal that, during this period he was making preparations to visit Scotland with Jane and was scheduled to leave Chelsea on July 23rd, the day after he had written to Leighton advising him to collect the *Oeuvres*. This proposed trip must have had an effect on the time that Carlyle could devote to research. Even if he did manage to read all three parts of volume twenty-seven in such a short space of time, the possibility exists that he may not have read and digested this material to the best of his abilities.

These two instances aside, the *Oeuvres* are Carlyle's primary source for Frederick's letters throughout this chapter and into the next. Carlyle's translations of the French and German material from Preuss's work are true to the original on both occasions. However, in a manner similar to his handling of Kriele's and Tempelhof's battle reports, Carlyle was not above selecting and editing his source material in Frederick's favour, excluding data which reflected badly on the king. My investigation of his selection criteria for these letters has produced interesting results. Even in the midst of battle, Frederick continued to write numerous letters, often producing several missives on the same day. Carlyle typically only ever presents one letter out of a number that were written on or about the same date and the letters which he chooses are often heavily edited. While it was not unreasonable for Carlyle to select particular letters from the large numbers available or to focus on specific sections from these letters, it is the material which he chooses to leave out which is

revealing. Carlyle cites the *Oeuvres* when he presents a letter from Frederick to Graf von Finckenstein on August 12th in which he describes the battle and its immediate aftermath: ““I attacked the Enemy this morning about eleven; we beat him back to the *Judenkirchof* (Jew Churchyard, ’—a mistake, but now of no moment), ‘near Frankfurt. All my troops came into action, and have done wonders’” (*Works* 18: 82).

This letter also appears, in full, in *eine Lebensgeschichte* on the page immediately following the instructions to Finck which, as stated, Carlyle incorporates into *Frederick*. Although he cites the *Oeuvres*, there can be little doubt that Carlyle also read this letter in Preuss’s work. Unlike Carlyle’s citation for the instructions to Finck, when he uses *eine Lebensgeschichte* rather than the *Oeuvres*, in this instance he reverts back to his *modus operandi* and cites Frederick directly. However, there are omissions to the version of this letter that Carlyle presents in *Frederick*. In the letter which appears in both the *Oeuvres* and *eine Lebensgeschichte*, Frederick’s statement, “All my troops ... have done wonders” is immediately qualified with, “but this cemetery has lost us a prodigious number of people. Our people put themselves in confusion; I rallied them three times; in the end, I thought to be taken myself, and I was obliged to leave the field of battle” (“mais ce cimetière nous a fait perdre un prodigieux monde. Nos gens se sont mis en confusion; je les ai ralliés trois fois ; à la fin, j’ai pensé être pris moi-même, et j’ai été obligé de céder le champ de bataille”) (*Oeuvres* 25 : 306, *eine Lebensgeschichte* 2 : 216). In *Frederick*, Carlyle removes this reference to Frederick’s troops being in a state of “confusion”; this would have signalled to his readers that the king had been unable to keep his troops under control. In addition, Carlyle replaces Frederick’s frank admission of, “I was obliged

to leave the field of battle” with, “we had to quit the Field”, a change which subtly shifts the agency away from the king and transforms his personal withdrawal into a retreat by the entire Prussian army (*Works* 18: 82).

Further examples of Carlyle’s willingness to edit and even censor Frederick’s work can be found in a series of six letters which were written by the king to his friend the Marquis D’Argens in the days following the battle. During this period, Frederick also wrote several letters to his brothers, Princes Henri and Ferdinand.⁶ Although these appear in the *Oeuvres*, Carlyle ignores them in favour of the king’s letters to D’Argens. He introduces these “Utterances to D’Argens” as “direct glimpses into the heavy-laden, indeed hag-ridden and nearly desperate inner man of Friedrich, during the first three weeks after his defeat at Kunersdorf” (92). It seems odd, then, given his stated intention to reveal the “desperate inner man of Friedrich” that Carlyle should exclude these letters to the king’s brothers, to whom, of all Frederick’s correspondents, one might have expected the king to unburden himself. The letters in question appear in a later volume of the *Oeuvres*, volume twenty-six, which was published in 1855. As noted earlier with Frederick’s instructions to Finck, the question of whether or not Carlyle actually read these final volumes is one that is difficult to prove or disprove. However, in this case, proof exists that Carlyle not only had access to volume twenty-six but that he had read one of Frederick’s later letters to Henri.⁷ Given that in his letter to Neuberg Carlyle clearly states that he had read Frederick’s 1777 letter to Henri, it seems reasonable to surmise that he must

⁶ Heinrich Friedrich Ludwig (1726-1802) and August Ferdinand (1730-1813).

⁷ In a letter to Neuberg in November 1854, referring to an incident which took place in June 1777 concerning “Hugh Elliot, English Minister at Berlin”, Carlyle notes that the event “is a famous little thing, and an undoubted (See *Oeuv de Frk* 26° 394 ‘Frk to Prince Henri’ 29 june 1777)” (*CL* 29: 181-182).

also have read Frederick's earlier letters to his brother, in particular those that were written at this critical juncture in Frederick's history.

There is a distinct possibility, therefore, that Carlyle read Frederick's letters to Ferdinand and Henri but rejected them because he deemed their content to be inappropriate, a theory which is based on the results of my investigation into Carlyle's handling of Frederick's letters to D'Argens. In the first of these six letters, written on August 16th, Carlyle introduces subtle modifications to Frederick's words.

In the original letter Frederick writes:

The Russian infantry has been almost completely destroyed I'm going to confront them and either have my throat slit or save the capital. I don't think that I'm being fickle ... I am very resolved, after this defeat, that if I am unsuccessful, to find a way out so that from now on I am no longer a pawn. (L'infanterie russe est presque totalement ruinée Je vais me mettre sur leur chemin, me faire égorger, ou sauver la capitale. Ce n'est pas, je pense, manquer de constance ... je suis très-résolu, après ce coup-ci, s'il me manque, de me faire une issue pour ne plus être désormais le jouet d'aucune sorte de hasard) (*Oeuvres* 19: 78-79)

In *Frederick* this becomes:

'The Russian infantry is almost totally destroyed ... I am pushing-on to throw myself across the enemy's road, and either perish or save the Capital. That is not what you' (you Berliners) 'will call a deficiency of resolution ... I am well resolved, after this stroke, if it fail, to open an outgate for myself' (that small glass tube which never quits me), 'and no longer be the sport of any chance.' (*Works* 18: 93)

Carlyle appears to be intent on removing language that might be considered to be base or controversial. He replaces the dramatic phrase, "have my throat slit" with the more subdued word, "perish" and he transforms Frederick's personal sentiment, "I don't think that I'm being fickle" with the more considered phrase, "That is not what you ... will call a deficiency of resolution". The overall tone of Carlyle's version is one of studied refinement. In addition, he completely omits the final part

of the letter in which Frederick urges D'Argens to "remember a friend who loves you and will think highly of you until the last breath" ("souvenez-vous d'un ami qui vous aime et estimera jusqu'au dernier soupir") (*Oeuvres* 19: 79). In his editing of these letters, Carlyle is consistent in his removal of any material which contains overtly emotional displays by Frederick, no doubt driven by his belief that readers might perceive these to be a sign of weakness in the king's character.⁸

This act of censorship by Carlyle goes some way to explain why he omits Frederick's letter to Henri on August 16th. In this missive, Frederick confesses to his own narrow escape from severe injury as well as admitting the extent to which his troops have been wounded in the recent conflict. More importantly, he reveals the "nearly desperate inner man" to which Carlyle alluded in his introduction to the D'Argens' letters:

A case which I had in my pocket protected my leg from the shot of a cartridge which crushed the case. We are all torn; there is almost no-one who does not have two or three shots in his clothes or hat Imagine, in this cruel crisis, all that my spirit suffers, and you will easily judge that the torment of the damned does not approach it. Happy the dead! They are shielded from the sorrows and from all the anxieties. ("Un étui que j'ai eu dans la poche m'a garanti la jambe d'un coup de cartouche qui a écrasé l'étui. Nous sommes tous déchirés; il n'y a presque personne qui n'ait deux ou trois coups de feu dans les habits ou dans le chapeau Représentez-vous, dans cette cruelle crise, tout ce que souffre mon esprit, et vous jugerez facilement que le tourment des damnés n'en approche pas. Heureux les morts ! ils sont à l'abri des chagrins et de toutes les inquiétudes.") (26: 199-200)

This letter clearly shows Frederick's vulnerability and emotional turmoil post-Kunersdorf. Carlyle's stated desire to reveal the king's "inner man" did not extend to portraying him in quite such desperate circumstances. In a similar vein, he

⁸ Carlyle ignores D'Argens' written response to this letter from Frederick, which also contains displays of strong emotion, such as "I die from pain not to be near you" ("Je meurs de douleur de ne pas être auprès de vous") (*Oeuvres* 19: 79).

reproduces a small excerpt from a letter to D'Argens on August 20th. However, Carlyle omits the greater part of this, again leaving out those sections where Frederick displays his emotions. Carlyle's readers are not made aware of the king's anguish when he tells D'Argens, "do not count on me living through the ruin and destruction of my homeland" ("ne comptez point que je survive à la ruine et à la désolation de ma patrie") or are informed of his determination, should the State fall, to "relinquish the burden of life, which is already heavy and bothersome" ("décharger du fardeau de la vie, qui déjà depuis longtemps me pèse et m'importune") (19: 82).⁹

As well as removing any strong emotional content from Frederick's letters, Carlyle also censors material that shows any baseness on Frederick's part. A letter from Frederick to Ferdinand which was written on August 19th, the day before the king penned his letter to D'Argens, is disregarded by Carlyle. This letter is significant as it is one of the few that I have discovered during my research which reveals the more crude side of Frederick's character. After ending this missive in his usual solicitous fashion, urging his brother to "Take care of your health, and never forget a brother who will love you until his last breath" ("Prenez soin de votre santé, et n'oubliez pas un frère qui vous aimera jusqu'au dernier soupir"), Frederick adds the following: "My compliments to the Duke of Würtemberg, to Seydlitz, to Weddell, and to all the honest people have fought well, and my curse to all the *coïons* without wounds who are with you" ("Mes compliments au duc de Würtemberg, à Seydlitz, à Weddell, à tous les honnêtes gens qui ont bien combattu, et ma malédiction à tous les coïons qui

⁹ Carlyle chooses to reveal Frederick's despair in a letter from the king to Finckenstein on 12th August. See page 169 for a fuller account of this missive.

se trouvent chez vous sans blessures”) (26: 542-543).¹⁰ The insult directed by Frederick towards his men in the final paragraph of his letter could be read as a sign of a robust sense of humour. However, his attitude appears rather startling because the tone of the letter up to that point has been one of calm acceptance of the position in which he now finds himself.

This is not the only occasion where Frederick displays a disparaging attitude towards his defeated troops. Writing to Ferdinand on September 5th, he begins this letter in an attitude of hopelessness and despair. His tone, however, quickly changes:

I am only a man ... I have suffered torture for three weeks. Our situation is less desperate than it was just a week ago; but I see myself surrounded by pitfalls and abysses. My task is very difficult, and, without some miracle, or the divine stupidity of my enemies, it will be impossible to end the campaign well. My compliments to all our wounded My situation is violent without end. There is no more honour in the troops; the *j...-f....* possessed almost all of them; they not know to which saint to dedicate themselves. Despite all that, I keep a good attitude with my *coïons*. (“Je ne suis qu’un homme ... j’ai souffert le martyre pendant trois semaines. Notre situation est moins désespérée qu’elle ne l’était il y a huit jours ; mais je me vois entouré d’écueils et d’abîmes. Ma tâche est très-difficile, et, à moins de quelque miracle, ou de la divine ânerie de mes ennemis, il sera impossible de bien finir la campagne. Mes compliments à tous nos blessés Ma situation est sans cesse violente. Il n’y a plus d’honneur dans les troupes ; le *j...-f....* les a possédés presque tous ; on ne sait à quel saint se vouer. Malgré tout cela, je fais bonne contenance avec mes coïons.”) (26: 543-544)¹¹

In this excerpt, Frederick reveals an derogatory attitude towards his men, describing them as having “no more honour” and being “possessed” by “le *j...-f....*”, a description which is apparently so offensive that the king will not commit this to paper. Furthermore, his earlier remark where he refers to his troops as “*coïons*” is repeated here. This insult is made worse by Frederick’s rather snide comment that he “keep[s] a good attitude” with his men, despite harbouring these contemptuous

¹⁰ The French word, “*coïon*” is now obsolete but in Frederick’s day was a base word for penis.

¹¹ After extensive research I have been unable to discover the meaning of “le *j...-f....*”.

feelings towards them. Even if we were to accept that Frederick was merely displaying an instance of black humour and was not showing any real malice towards his men, this letter portrays a side of Frederick that Carlyle would rather keep hidden from his readers.¹² While it is not easy to prove whether or not Carlyle read the letters in these later volumes of *Oeuvres*, it seems reasonable to extrapolate from the way in which he edits and censors Frederick's letters to D'Argens that Carlyle would not have allowed these letters to Henri and Ferdinand to appear in *Frederick*.

This conclusion is borne out by the discovery of two further examples where Carlyle appears to take liberties with his editorial position. Carlyle presents a letter from Frederick to D'Argens written on September 4th, where the king assures his friend that it is now safe to return to Berlin, telling him that, "The imminency of danger is past; but there will still be many bad moments to get through, before reaching the end of the Campaign. These, however, only regard myself; never mind these" (*Works* 18: 94). This translation of Carlyle's, however, differs from the original, in which Frederick writes, "The imminent danger has passed, but there will be still many bad moments to suffer before gaining the end of the campaign. As these bad moments only concern my troops, it does not matter" ("L'éminent danger est passé, mais il y aura encore bien des mauvais moments à essayer avant de gagner la fin de la campagne. Comme ces mauvais moments ne regardent que mon personnel, ce n'est pas une affaire") (*Oeuvres* 19: 86). Carlyle's translation of "mon personnel" into "myself" when the true meaning is "my troops" could be as a result of his misreading of this word and believing it to be "personne", in which case his translation would be

¹² In another anecdote concerning Frederick and his troops in which he display a similar robust humour, the king is rumoured to have asked a group of soldiers on the battlefield who were afraid of facing the enemy, "Dogs, do you want to live for ever?" ("Hunde, wollt ihr ewig leben?").

correct. Nevertheless, it is not beyond the realms of possibility that Carlyle deliberately reworked this sentence to Frederick's advantage.

A more telling example of Carlyle's censorship can be seen in his omission of an incident in which Frederick ordered twenty lashes to be inflicted on those troops who had abandoned their arms and fled at the height of the battle.¹³ This material appears in a work by G. Hildebrandt entitled, *Anekdoten und Charakterzeuge aus dem Leben Friedrichs des Grossen*. Carlyle admits to having read and being singularly unimpressed by Hildebrandt's work, declaring that this material was "mostly dubious" and "a very ignorant and careless Edition" (*Works* 14: 346). These sentiments are repeated in a letter which Carlyle wrote to Neuberg on July 6th 1852 on receipt of Hildebrandt's work. Carlyle opined, "his own authority is good for nothing, of course, his very knowledge and natural judgment (I perceive) being good for very little" (*CL* 27: 155). The fact remains that Carlyle probably ignored this incident as it showed a brutal side of Frederick which he wished to remain hidden. A useful comparison can be made with Carlyle's decision to exclude Frederick's edict on dealing with prisoners, when he advised his commanders "to put them to the sword" because they were "so very troublesome" (*Military instructions* 199). Carlyle's extensive use of Frederick's letters throughout his chapter on Kunersdorf, and indeed his entire epic, fits in well with his technique of using first-hand material such as Kriele's and Tempelhof's to give his own account credibility and authenticity.

¹³ Although the material from Hildebrandt is not in the form of a letter, it has been included here because this incident took place during the period in which the above letters were written, immediately following the battle. Hildebrandt's text is cited in a recent biography of Frederick by David Fraser. Fraser cites Hildebrandt's work when he claims, "Some of the Prussians had behaved badly in battle, throwing away their arms, and Frederick ordered every such case to be given twenty strokes of the cane" (420).

Nevertheless, as stated earlier, Carlyle manipulated his sources in order to present situations in a particular way, generally in order to flatter Frederick. He processed the material in the *Oeuvres* in the same manner, omitting parts of letters or often entire letters and heavily editing those which he deemed suitable for inclusion.

The examination of a manuscript page of *Frederick* from The Huntington Library, followed by a comparison of this fragment with the material as it appears in the final published work, provides a revealing insight into Carlyle's working methods.¹⁴ This fragment deals with the immediate aftermath of the battle of Kunersdorf and begins at the moment where Frederick is forced to quit the field of battle. Although it is written in a hand other than Carlyle's, the corrections and revisions on the document are in Carlyle's own hand.¹⁵ In the original manuscript, Carlyle notes that following the Prussian defeat,

Friedrich's despair did not last quite two days Friedrich saw that there still lay something of battle in him, that, though only a miracle could save him, he might at least determine to finish sword in hand, try it to the very last. A great relief, this coming to oneself again. Friedrich's humour is of a fateful hue about this time, and afterward, notably without bile, yet nothing lacking of the old activity, old steadfastness, rapidity, alacrity as if all things were still to be won. (HM 12769 32)

When Carlyle's amendments are added this excerpt becomes:

Friedrich's despair did not last quite two days ... [he] considered ... that there still lay possibility of battle in him and that, though only a miracle could save him, try it to the very last. A great relief, this of coming to oneself again! Friedrich's humour is not despondent, now or afterwards; though nothing can make it blacker tho' grown generally with the shadow of death is very grim. (32)

¹⁴ HM 12769 Carlyle, Thomas. [A fragment of Carlyle's *Frederick the Great* with additions and corrections in the handwriting of the author], [c.a 1864]. See page 166 for a reproduction of this fragment. This Huntington manuscript fragment and the manuscript fragment from the Beinecke Library at Yale University which was referred to in chapter three of this thesis are consecutive page numbers 31 and 32 from the original manuscript of *Frederick*.

¹⁵ The manuscript is believed to be in Henry Larkin's hand.

A Fragment of Carlyle's *Frederick the Great* with additions and corrections in the handwriting of the author, [c.a. 1864].

break and gallop off with him. At Bettsche into the Prussian
 with some of his late army not quite 3,000 men. From Hirsch is not
 there till next morning Hirsch with his party late early in the afternoon
 laid hold of Frankfort, as we have made the garrison prisoners, that
 all the brave bridges from Frankfort to Remulden, thanking Heaven for
 him and for not an other. At dusk, Hirsch has 2000 men, so tramped
 in style, he knew what it meant, and answered in words perceptible
 "No" with a little emblem, bravely, yet sadly, again, and at midnight
 "Die with me." Got to Prussia without accident.

4. 9. 1757. I was in a storm all night last night two days. The second
 day, seeing 23,000 ^{gallies} ^{men} ^{again}, ^{for} ^{the} ^{same} ^{purpose} ^{as} ^{before}
 to them from Berlin, ^{with} ^{the} ^{same} ^{force} ^{as} ^{before}. [and that he knew how long he
 fought, ^{and} ^{that} ^{he} ^{was} ^{not} ^{to} ^{be} ^{defeated}]. - [encouraged in the storm till noon, when
 his own camp was / Hirsch's about 2000 on the heights to west, London
 in his side / Hirsch's all round / Hirsch's]. - [and that the
 still lay ^{with} ^{the} ^{same} ^{force} ^{as} ^{before}], but though ^{the} ^{same} ^{force} ^{as} ^{before} ^{was} ^{not} ^{to} ^{be} ^{defeated}
~~he must at least have been to break through the line of his, it to the~~
 any last. A great relief, this morning to myself again! Hirsch's has
^{no} ^{idea} ^{of} ^{what} ^{he} ^{is} ^{doing} ^{at} ^{all} ⁱⁿ ^{the} ^{end} ^{of} ^{the} ^{day} ^{is} ^{my} ^{own} ^{work}
 like, yet nothing lacking of the old activity, old steadfastness, nobility
 of a soldier, as if all things were still to be won. It is the ^{same} ^{force} ^{as} ^{before} ^{is} ^{my} ^{own} ^{work}
 traveller lost in the storm, was ^{not} ^{to} ^{be} ^{defeated}, rain to increase, snow to increase, all
 the water out and all the ^{same} ^{force} ^{as} ^{before}, who has got himself against them,
 and still unharmedly along. "Die death, then, ^{and} ^{you} ^{demons},
 no black savagery!" - ^{and} ^{you} ^{demons} ^{are} ^{not} ^{to} ^{be} ^{defeated} ^{at} ^{all} ⁱⁿ ^{the} ^{end} ^{of} ^{the} ^{day} ^{is} ^{my} ^{own} ^{work}
 forms. was at times a year, but this is at all times ^{and} ^{heartfully} ^{braced} ^{on}, ^{and} ^{the} ^{same} ^{force} ^{as} ^{before} ^{is} ^{my} ^{own} ^{work}
~~and at all times a soldier. -~~ ^{and} ^{the} ^{same} ^{force} ^{as} ^{before} ^{is} ^{my} ^{own} ^{work}
 and a quantity. His utterance to ^{the} ^{same} ^{force} ^{as} ^{before} ^{is} ^{my} ^{own} ^{work}

- brief hints, spontaneous almost unexpressed, give fine testimony of ^{the} ^{same} ^{force} ^{as} ^{before} ^{is} ^{my} ^{own} ^{work}
 the fire's darkness ^{and} ^{the} ^{same} ^{force} ^{as} ^{before} ^{is} ^{my} ^{own} ^{work} as of ^{the} ^{same} ^{force} ^{as} ^{before} ^{is} ^{my} ^{own} ^{work}
 himself; a traveller grown familiar with the howling, solitude, and
 that the storm do not bite, that the darkness is the dead Earth's Shadow
 - a most lone soul of a man; - but continually ^{and} ^{the} ^{same} ^{force} ^{as} ^{before} ^{is} ^{my} ^{own} ^{work}
 trudging forward, as if the brightest goal and haven were near and in view
 If many of us would or could steadily refer to ^{the} ^{same} ^{force} ^{as} ^{before} ^{is} ^{my} ^{own} ^{work}

Carlyle, however, was not satisfied with these changes. He then replaces the sentence which begins with the words, "Friedrich's humour" with a further amendment which is written on a piece of scrap paper and pasted onto the manuscript. The excerpt now reads:

Friedrich's despair did not last quite two days ... [he] considered ... that there still lay possibility of battle in him and that, though only a miracle could save him, try it to the very last. A great relief, this of coming to oneself again! Friedrich's humour is not despondent, now or afterwards, very angry at this time, very sad, though, as it were, scorning even to hope; but he is at all times of beautifully practical turn; and has, in his very despair, a sobriety of eyesight and a fixed steadiness of holding to his purpose. (32)

The final published version of this passage is as follows:

Friedrich's despair did not last quite four days ... he ... considered that artilleries and furnishings could come to him from Berlin, which is but 60 miles; that there still lay possibility ahead, and that, though only a miracle could save him, he would try it to the very last.

A great relief, this of coming to oneself again! 'Till death, then; rage on, ye elements and black savageries!' Friedrich's humour is not despondent, now or afterwards; though at this time it is very sad, very angry, and, as it were, scorning even to hope: but he is at all times of beautifully practical turn; and has, in his very despair, a sobriety of eyesight and a fixed steadiness of holding to his purpose, which are of rare quality. (*Works* 18: 87)

These amendments demonstrate a marked trend by Carlyle where he appears determined to play down Frederick's personal responsibility for events. Thus we find the personalised statement from the original document, "there still lay something of battle in him" is transformed into the more general remark, "there still lay possibility ahead". In a similar manner, Frederick's combative attitude which is implied in the phrase, "he might at least determine to finish sword in hand", becomes the more sedate, "he would try it to the very last". At the same time, Carlyle takes pains to portray the king's increasingly positive frame of mind. The negative connotation which is implicit in the description of Frederick's "humour" being "of a fateful hue"

is transformed by degrees into the much more affirmative portrayal of a king who is “not despondent, now or afterwards” but possessing “a sobriety of eyesight and a fixed steadiness of holding to his purpose”.

Another revealing example of Carlyle’s determination to move the focus away from Frederick’s despair can be seen in his decision to divide the original manuscript and create two separate chapters, beginning a new chapter with the passage which begins with the words, “Friedrich’s despair”.¹⁶ Between this new chapter and the previous section of the original manuscript Carlyle introduces new material which consists primarily of anecdotes and letters. However, it is the order in which Carlyle presents this new material which is significant.¹⁷ He inserts a new section immediately after his remarks concerning Major-General Wunsch and his laying hold of Frankfurt. Between the phrases, “poor Frankfurt tremulously thanking Heaven for him, and for such an omen” and “At dark, however, Wunsch had summons”, Carlyle adds:

In spite of their Wagenberg and these Pontoon-Bridges, it appears, there would have been no retreat for the Russians except into Wunsch’s cannon: Wagenberg way, latish in the afternoon, there was such a scramble of runaways and retreating baggage, all was jammed into impassability; scarcely could a single man get through. In case of defeat, the Russian Army would have had no chance but surrender or extermination. (81)

As Carlyle cites Tempelhof for this information it is clear that the source material for this passage had been available to him for some time, yet he chose to insert this excerpt at a very late stage in his revisions. Carlyle is attempting to play down

¹⁶ Carlyle has written “new chapter” at this point on the manuscript. This new chapter is entitled, “Chapter V: Saxony Without Defence: Schmettau Surrenders Dresden” (*Works* 18: 87).

¹⁷ This material consists of: Carlyle’s comments regarding the Russian retreat; Anecdote concerning Frederick assisting two of his wounded officers; Letter from Frederick to Finckenstein on August 12th; Instructions from Frederick to Finck on August 12th; Letter from Frederick to von Schmettau on August 14th; Anecdote concerning Major Kleist; Summary of losses on both sides after Kunersdorf (*Works* 18: 81-86).

Frederick's defeat by making readers aware that, due to the military acumen of the Prussian army, the Russians have been manoeuvred into a position of great vulnerability. By even mentioning the possibility of defeat on the part of the combined army and the dire consequences that would follow, Carlyle implies that their victory was by no means guaranteed, a suggestion which compliments Frederick and his troops. It is interesting to note that Frederick was also of the opinion that the outcome of this conflict hung in the balance. He follows his criticism of the Prince of Württemberg's "ill-timed charge on the Russian infantry" with the declaration, "Who can but remark the slender thread by which victory is suspended!" (*Posthumous Works* 30-31).

As stated earlier, Carlyle put his strategy of rehabilitating Frederick to use immediately after the battle of Kunersdorf when he presented readers with an anecdote which emphasised the king's compassion and humanity towards two of his severely injured lieutenants. This anecdote is followed by two documents, both of which are dated August 12th 1759. The first is a letter from Frederick to Finckenstein, a document which portrays Frederick in the depths of despair: "Our loss is very considerable It is a great calamity; and I will not survive it: the consequences of this Battle will be worse than the Battle itself. I have no resources more; and, to confess the truth, I hold all for lost. I will not survive the destruction of my Country. Farewell forever (*Adieu pour jamais*)" (*Works* 18: 82). Carlyle notes the "tragic character" of this letter and the document which follows; a set of instructions from Frederick in which he hands over control of the Prussian army to Lieutenant-General

Finck. Yet there is a noticeable change of tone in these instructions. Frederick informs Finck that he

‘gets a difficult commission; the unlucky Army which I give-up to him is no longer in condition to make head against the Russians ... should Loudon go for Berlin, he might attack Loudon, and try to beat him: this, if it succeeded, would be a stand against misfortune, and hold matters up. Time gained is much, in these desperate circumstances.’ (83).¹⁸

In this document, Carlyle portrays Frederick putting aside his feelings of despair and engaging with the practicalities of dealing with the pressing military issues resulting from his army’s defeat. Frederick’s letter to von Schmettau on August 14th reveals a further stage in this progression. The king assures von Schmettau that it was only “‘a fit of illness”” that had driven him to relinquish command of his army and informs him that this state of affairs is only temporary: “‘I have for the present left the command of my Troops to Lieutenant-General von Finck”” (84). Frederick’s rehabilitation is further enhanced by the introduction of an anecdote concerning Major Kleist. Earlier in this thesis, it was noted that Carlyle invites comparisons between Kleist and Frederick with the specific intention of boosting the king’s profile. At this point in the chapter, by means of these documents, Carlyle has successfully deflected his readers’ attention away from Frederick as a defeated and broken monarch, leaving them instead with a positive image of a king who has regained control of himself and his situation.

Carlyle ends the chapter by providing a summary of the losses suffered by both sides in the battle. Despite their heavy defeat, Carlyle’s account shows a marked bias towards Frederick and his troops. He maintains that, “‘The Prussian loss, in this

¹⁸ Throughout these instructions, Frederick addresses Finck in the third person.

Battle, was ... in all, about 19,000 men. Nor was the Russian loss much lighter: of Russians and Austrians together, near 18,000, as Tempelhof counts” (86). What Carlyle omits to mention is that in terms of percentages, the Prussian losses were considerably higher than that of the combined Russian and Austrian army.¹⁹ Furthermore, Carlyle flatters Frederick by repeating Soltikof’s remark that “the King of Prussia sells his defeats at a dear rate” and then offering his own opinion that the victory was “a great feat indeed for Russia, this Victory over such a King” (86). The chapter then concludes, not with a picture of Frederick as a defeated king of a routed army, but with condemnation of the behaviour of the Russians, who “shamefully neglected” the pursuit of the Prussian army, because they had “stepped into a peasant’s cottage to consult on it; contrived somehow to find tolerable liquor there; and sat drinking instead” (86). The newly created chapter then opens with the words, “Friedrich’s despair”, from the original manuscript. Carlyle, however, is quick to let his readers know that the king’s condition is only a transitory state of affairs. In an addition to the manuscript he informs them that Frederick’s suffering “did not last quite four days. On the fourth day,—day after leaving Reitwein,—there is this little Document, which still exists, of more comfortable tenor” (87). Carlyle immediately piques the interest of his readers by mentioning this “little Document”. This is in the form of a letter to Wunsch on August 17th in which Frederick announces, “as I am now recovered from my illness, you have to address your Reports directly to Myself” (87). Within the first paragraph of this new chapter, Carlyle has informed his readers that Frederick has recovered his equilibrium and resumed his role as leader of the

¹⁹ Out of a total of approximately 50,000 men (this is Carlyle’s figure, Frederick himself estimated the number at 48,000) the Prussian loss of 19,000 amounts to more than a third of their troops. The losses suffered by the combined Austrian and Russian army, 18,000 men out of a total of 90,000 (Carlyle’s estimate, Tempelhof puts this figure even higher at almost 145,000) represents only one fifth of their total figure.

Prussian army. Further additions to the manuscript which appear in the final published version of *Frederick* are all similarly designed to enhance Frederick's profile.

The original manuscript ends with the following paragraph:

His utterances to D'Argens, about this time and onward,—brief hints, spontaneous almost unconscious, give fine testimony of him. A fixed darkness very great sorrow and misery as if Erebus habitual his wind but strictly shut up; nothing it shown to others, or even to himself: a traveller grown familiar with the howling solitudes, aware that the storms do not pity, that the darkness is the dead Earth's Shadow – a most lone soul of a man;— but continually at all moments toiling forward, as if the brightest goal and haven were near and in view. If many of us would or could clearly [illegible words] to surrender the vision. (HM 12769 32)

In the final published version the paragraph has been expanded and the final sentence has been deleted:

His utterances to D'Argens, about this time and onward, — brief hints, spontaneous, almost unconscious, — give curious testimony of his glooms and moody humours. Of which the reader shall see something. For the present, he is in deep indignation with his poor Troops, among other miseries. 'Actual running away!' he will have it to be; and takes no account of thirst, hunger, heat, utter weariness and physical impossibility! This lasts for some weeks. But in general there is nothing of this injustice to those about him. In general, nothing even of gloom is manifested; on the contrary, cheerfulness, brisk hope, a strangely continual succession of hopes (mostly illusory);— though within, there is traceable very great sorrow, weariness and misery. A fixed darkness, as of Erebus, is grown habitual to him; but is strictly shut up, little of it shown to others, or even, in a sense, to himself. He is as a traveller overtaken by the Night and its tempests and rain-deluges, but refusing to pause; who is wetted to the bone, and does not care farther for rain. A traveller grown familiar with the howling solitudes; aware that the Storm-winds do not pity, that Darkness is the dead Earth's Shadow:— a most lone soul of a man; but continually toiling forward, as if the brightest goal and haven were near and in view. (*Works* 18: 87-88)

Carlyle has added a new section detailing Frederick's disgust with those troops who had fled the battlefield, which, he claims, "lasts for some weeks". Although Carlyle avoids any mention of recriminations by the king and makes no direct reference to

Frederick's order of corporal punishment for the troops who ran away, he hints at this when he refers to Frederick's "deep indignation with his poor Troops" whilst noting that "there is nothing of this injustice to those about him".

Carlyle acknowledges the king's feelings of "very great sorrow, weariness and misery", but he is eager to emphasise Frederick's "cheerfulness" and "brisk hope" in this time of crisis and upheaval. Towards the end of this excerpt Carlyle adds a further description of Frederick: "He is as a traveller overtaken by the Night and its tempests and rain-deluges, but refusing to pause; who is wetted to the bone, and does not care farther for rain". The inclusion of this sentence with its poignant and poetic description of Frederick in the midst of his travails lends extra emphasis to Carlyle's subsequent description of the king, "continually toiling forward, as if the brightest goal and haven were near and in view". Despite the king's crushing defeat at Kunersdorf and his subsequent descent into deep despair which led him to relinquish control of his army, Carlyle succeeds in mollifying the effects of this military disaster. By employing a patchwork of different media, he charts Frederick's gradual recovery from hopelessness. Carlyle uses the king's reactions to these disastrous circumstances as a means of demonstrating his resilience and inner strength, portraying Frederick as he gradually regains control of himself and his army until he re-emerges triumphantly with "a fixed steadiness of holding to his purpose" (87).

The letter from Neuberg to von Ense which was cited at the beginning of this chapter demonstrated Carlyle's "voraciousness" in his approach to his research on

Frederick.²⁰ Carlyle was dogged in his search for the facts and consulted a variety of sources in order to get as clear and accurate a picture of historical events as possible. The lengthy account of Frederick's ancestry which Carlyle provides in Volume I of *Frederick* is a clear illustration of the thoroughness of his research and his attention to detail. Although he received criticism for devoting so much of the first volume to Frederick's genealogy, Carlyle put the depth and accuracy of his research to good use in this instance. Not only does he firmly situate Frederick in history, but the long list of ancestors contains echoes of a biblical structure which would have resonated with contemporary readers who were steeped in the literature of the Bible. Carlyle's research was driven by "two points" which he considered to be vital, his stated desire for "*human details ... and the scenes of all those high feats of arms (CL 27: 27)*. For that reason, Carlyle consistently favoured the account of a "seeing Witness" above all others. Throughout *Frederick*, Carlyle puts this vast store of research material to good use in order to satisfy his own criterion of demonstrating "that the bygone ages of the world were actually filled by living men" (*Works 29: 77*).

Carlyle's technique in his chapter on the battle of Kunersdorf is representative of his working methods throughout *Frederick*. He uses his research material as a base from which to create an account which becomes a patchwork of different media, consisting of various eye-witness accounts, 'travelogue' material and personal letters, all held together by Carlyle's running commentary. Nevertheless, although Carlyle's research was for the most part thorough and accurate there is no doubt that he

²⁰ In his search for authenticity, Carlyle had borrowed several volumes relating to the Seven Years' War from the Prussian Government in May 1856. The following year, on May 26th 1857, Carlyle returned this material, via Neuberg to Maurice Alberts, the Secretary and Chancellor of the Prussian legation in London.

occasionally did make mistakes. Minor errors could be attributed to the scale of the project and the vast number of research volumes which he consulted over the years that he was working on *Frederick*. However, my investigation into Carlyle's research methods for this particular conflict reveals a pattern of recurring behaviour. As my research has demonstrated, Carlyle's handling of his source data displays a marked propensity to omit or censor key material which he deemed to be unacceptable to the case that he was making. The investigation of his work-in-progress on the *Frederick* manuscript fragment illustrates that his tactic of maintaining Frederick at the head of the triadic structure remained one of his primary objectives. To this end, either deliberately or inadvertently, Carlyle repeatedly and consistently revises and edits material in Frederick's favour. In addition, Carlyle's powers of translation from German into English and his ability to decipher non-standard script have come under scrutiny, leading to questions over the accuracy of the translations which he produced for *Frederick*. Furthermore, as stated earlier, evidence suggests that Neuberger may have played a far more important role in the selection and editing of source material than has been previously thought, a revelation which prompts the question of how much responsibility was devolved by Carlyle to his assistant and to what extent this may have influenced *Frederick*.

Chapter 6

Carlyle's "intolerable heroes": Initial reactions to *Frederick the Great*

“Truly, if all readers were possessed of the sense and patient candour of Forster, it *w'd* be a pleast thing to write big Books! . . . I incline, in sincerity, to the private opinion that this is a Book much unsuitable to them: nay that it is in itself a baddish Book,—tho' verily it is the best I could make it.”¹

Carlyle's confidential admission in his letter to John Forster reveals neither elation nor relief at the conclusion of his labours on *Frederick* but a marked sense of disillusionment with the project. His reference to the necessity for readers to possess “sense and patient candour” in order to deal with “big Books” suggests that there may have been a decrease in demand at this time for epics such as *Frederick* which were published in multiple volumes over several years. Given that Carlyle was almost seventy years old by the time the final volumes were published, the possibility exists that he himself was no longer in vogue. After all, readers who had enjoyed his most famous work to date, *The French Revolution* in 1837 or had railed against his most controversial, the *Latter-Day Pamphlets* in 1850 were of a different generation to the majority of readers in 1865 to whom Carlyle's style of writing might not have held the same appeal. Carlyle's letter to Forster hints at an unpalatable truth; in his “private opinion” he felt that he had failed to convince reviewers of Frederick's heroic credentials.

¹ Carlyle expressed these sentiments in a letter to John Forster on 29th March 1865 shortly after the publication of the final two volumes of *Frederick*. (*Forster Collection*. Victoria and Albert National Art Library. (Great Britain) Ms. Forster MS 89).

In chapters six and seven, I will produce evidence from contemporary periodicals to make the case that it was feelings of hostility towards the Prussian king and his father that was the driving force behind reviewers' responses to *Frederick*. In addition, I will demonstrate that Carlyle's epic failed to alter reviewer's negative preconceptions of either of these individuals. Furthermore, I will argue that Carlyle's insistence on portraying Frederick and his father, Friedrich Wilhelm, as heroic figures regardless of evidence to the contrary and despite his own increasing reservations, damaged Carlyle's own credibility as a reputable historian. Throughout these two chapters, I will focus in particular on the reviews in *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* and the *Eclectic Review* but will also include reviews from a selection of other periodicals.² I will explore the ways in which these periodicals reviewed *Frederick* as each volume was published between 1858 and 1865.³ Chapter six will focus on the reactions of reviewers in 1858 to Volumes I and II of *Frederick*. In chapter seven, a brief comparison will be made between the response to these initial volumes and reviewers' reactions to Volumes III and IV which were published in 1862 and 1864 respectively. I will then investigate whether or not there was a change in attitude to *Frederick* on completion of the work in 1865 or in 1866 on the high profile occasion of Carlyle's installation as Rector of Edinburgh University, an event which was closely followed by the sudden death of his wife Jane. Carlyle's death on February 5th 1881, swiftly followed by the publication of Froude's *Reminiscences*, stimulated fresh interest in Carlyle's life and work. I will

² A brief description of these periodicals can be found in Appendix D. These periodicals will hereafter be referred to as the *Athenaeum*, *Blackwood's*, *Chambers's*, the *Eclectic*, the *Edinburgh*, the *Examiner*, *Fraser's*, the *Quarterly* and the *Saturday* respectively.

³ Volumes I and II of *Frederick* were published in September 1858, Volume III in May 1862, Volume IV in February 1864 and Volumes V and VI in March 1865.

investigate whether or not either of these newsworthy events brought about a reassessment of reviewers' perceptions of *Frederick*.

In their key position as mediators between Carlyle and the reading public, reviewers could exert a powerful influence on the triadic structure of Frederick, Carlyle and the reader. Several years prior to the publication of the first volumes of *Frederick* in 1858 reviewers were encouraging an air of eager anticipation amongst potential readers. The *Examiner* of October 30th 1852 brought to their readers' attention news of Carlyle's trip to Germany to gather information for his epic, announcing that Carlyle was "now in Berlin, where he has been for some weeks busily engaged in looking over documents &c, in the library, for the purpose of collecting materials from the most authentic sources for his history of Frederick the Great, which he is about to write" ("Foreign Gleanings" 695). Four years later on September 2nd 1856, the *Belfast News-Letter* noted that Carlyle was "now on a visit to his relations in Dumfries and District. It is reported that a portion of his history of Frederick the Great will, in all likelihood, be forthcoming in the course of a few months" ("Fashion" 4).

By the time the first two volumes of *Frederick* were published, readers' and reviewers' expectations were high.⁴ Reviewers from *Blackwood's*, the *Edinburgh* and the *Quarterly*, however, maintained that Volumes I and II fell far short of meeting these expectations. The excessive length of these two volumes, coupled with the fact that they dealt, in large part, not with Frederick himself but with his

⁴ *Chambers's* opened its review of January 1859 with, "These two bulky volumes of Mr Carlyle's, so long and eagerly expected" ("Carlyle's History" 51).

ancestors irritated these reviewers who felt that they had been misled by Carlyle. After being approached by John Blackwood in 1858 to submit an anonymous review of Volumes I and II of *Frederick*, General Sir Edward Bruce Hamley replied to him on November 12th of that year:⁵

My Dear Blackwood, —You were right in ascribing my neglect in not immediately answering your letter to an intention to send a paper. I had begun one on Carlyle, but I find that to do it justice, and treat him as a writer of so much notice should be treated if any effect is to be produced, I must read the previous biographies of Frederick, and also some of Carlyle's former productions, which I have seen nothing of this long while, in order to show that by acquaintance with his writings and mode of thought I am qualified to do him justice. I can't get the books here, and must therefore go up to live in town for a few days and read them; and to do this so hurriedly as would be necessary for [the] next number, would be probably to produce a paper which I should regret to find afterwards might have been much better. (Shand 1: 131)⁶

I would argue that, in this letter Hamley appears to be more concerned with not exposing his own ignorance about Carlyle than in truly doing him justice in his review. Nevertheless, his reticence to embark on an essay before carrying out some thorough research on “a writer of so much notice” gives an indication of the high regard in which Carlyle was held as the first two volumes of *Frederick* were being

⁵ Hamley (1824-93) was the youngest son of Vice-Admiral William Hamley and was a British general who had served in several conflicts including the Crimean campaign. He was also a military writer who frequently contributed articles to various periodicals and was a “member of what was referred to as the Military Staff of *Blackwood's*” (Seigel *Thomas Carlyle* 20). His most famous work, *The Operations of War*, published in 1867, was regarded as the definitive textbook of military instruction and was used by Camberley Staff College until 1894 as the primary text for their entrance examination.

⁶ After extensive research in the NLS, I have been unable to trace the letters that Shand reproduces in his text. Shand dates Hamley's letter November 12th 1859, yet as Hamley's review of *Frederick* was published in *Blackwood's* in February 1859 it seems reasonable to conclude that this letter was written in 1858. This conclusion is supported by further letters from Hamley to John Blackwood in January and February 1859 which are in the NLS. Writing on January 19th 1859, Hamley refers to his forthcoming essay on *Frederick*, “I am very glad you like the paper & I hope your readers will like it too I had intended the two titles not as headings of Chapters, exactly—that would be too formal a division—but to keep the essay on his philosophy apart from the review of the book by the words ‘History in Motley’ between them. But perhaps the two fanciful titles might convey the impression you mention. We can't very well change ‘Mirage Philosophy’ because it is alluded to in the last paragraph of that chapter—neither is it suitable as a heading for the review—therefore if you approve we will put between the two parts the words ‘History of Frederick’ without saying ‘Chap. II’ or ‘Part II’—which would have too set & formal a look for an essay” (*Blackwood Papers* Ms. 4131.173 NLS).

published. Hamley's reading of Volumes I and II appeared to have a profound effect on his opinion of Carlyle. He wrote to Blackwood informing him, "I have been reading Carlyle—not without disgust. He is an incorrigibly bad boy, and I think we shall have to birch him for his present offence" (130).⁷

This birching was duly carried out. In his 1859 review of *Frederick*, Hamley complained:

after a glimpse of the principal figures, we are called aside to observe, through three hundred pages, the antecedent history of Prussia from ages of absolute obscurity and savagery. We have before remarked that conscientiousness is a distinguishing feature of Mr. Carlyle; and it has led him to follow this subject with laborious care, and to represent it to the reader in all the distinctness which an incessant effort to be graphic must, with his singular power of imparting life and motion, secure. If distinctness were the only requisite, this piece of history would be perfect; but the life imparted to the actors is both grotesque and galvanic. It is the sort of life which Brougham, Peel, and Louis Napoleon would receive, if the next century were to find them revived from the pictures in *Punch*. Each Burggraf and Kurfurst hops, grins, and grimaces across the scene quite alive certainly; but if he could be endowed with consciousness as well as life, he would be rather puzzled to recognise himself under the antic disguise and significant (or insignificant) nickname. However, if all the distinctness had been preserved with higher finish and truer effect, we should still consider that the book, as a history of Frederick, would be encumbered by this long episode of the Hohenzollerns. ("Carlyle. Mirage Philosophy" 146)

In this excerpt, Hamley demonstrates his disgust when he describes Carlyle's depiction of Frederick's ancestors as "grotesque". Yet the underlying tone of sarcasm which runs throughout Hamley's comments indicates that he proposes to "birch" Carlyle, not with malicious intent but with a sardonic touch. In addition to criticizing Carlyle's tendency to caricature the historical figures that he is describing, Hamley's primary objection was that a publication which claimed to be "a history of

⁷ Shand does not give a year for this letter and although he gives the date as October 14th it seems more likely, given its content, that it was written after Hamley's letter to Blackwood of November 12th 1858.

Frederick” devoted “three hundred pages” not to the Prussian monarch but to his distant ancestors.⁸

Many reviewers put Carlyle’s decision to include this lengthy genealogy under intense scrutiny. In its 1858 review of *Frederick*, the *Examiner* expressed enthusiasm for Carlyle’s methods:

There is no story to be interrupted; the child lies with all its life before it in the nurse’s lap, while we turn from him to read the story of his race and nation. Mr Carlyle goes fairly back a thousand years, and gives upwards of three hundred pages to a vigorous summary of all that is most actual and essential, all namely that was most productive of results, in the past history out of which the political present of the king whose history he shall tell was made (“*History of Frederick*” 628).

The reviewer from *Fraser’s*, Sir James Fitzjames Stephen, who was a friend of Carlyle’s, was equally complimentary: “Mr. Carlyle begins his book with a history of Prussia in miniature. It fills about half a volume, and is a model of picturesque vigour, giving all the leading points of a tedious and intricate story with beautiful clearness” (797). Other reviewers, however, remained unconvinced of the necessity for such a lengthy and detailed historical account. In its October 1859 article, the *Edinburgh* adopted an injured tone, declaring, “we really feel it to be impossible to accompany Mr. Carlyle through the præ-historic ages in which he traces through 378 pages the outline of what was one day to become the kingdom of Prussia. Indeed, this part of Mr. Carlyle’s performance is of the most disjointed and bewildering character” (“*Carlyle’s Frederic*” 379-380).

⁸ The *Eclectic* chose not to comment on this aspect of *Frederick* but focused instead on Carlyle’s predilection for hero figures. The issue for August 1859 carried an article entitled “Hero-Worship of Recent Historians” in which the reviewer lamented the “almost morbid love of hero-finding [which] seems to have siezed on our literary men”, naming Carlyle as “the Coryphæus and chief offender” (107, 108).

The sentiments expressed by the *Edinburgh's* reviewer were similar to those which had been expressed in a more vigorous manner by the *Quarterly* in an article dated April 1859:

The proper business of the book is ushered in by some three hundred pages of antecedent history. With an extensive violation of the Horatian precept, not to begin the history of the Siege of Troy with an account of the accouchement of Leda, it has been thought necessary to lay the foundation of the work so deep as in the tenth century, and the history of the house of Brandenburg is traced from the days of Henry the Fowler. (“Art. I. *History*” 279)

The overriding impression from reading these critical reviews is that their anonymous authors felt in some way slighted by Carlyle. There was a general sense of deep disappointment from reviewers on finding that this long-awaited history of Frederick the Great barely mentioned the Prussian monarch but had become bogged down with “three hundred pages of antecedent history”.⁹ The frustration of reviewers was exacerbated by Carlyle’s lengthy and complimentary description of Frederick’s father, Friedrich Wilhelm, a figure whom Thomas Babington Macaulay had recently depicted as a monster.¹⁰ In his anonymous essay in *Blackwood's*, Hamley complained that Friedrich Wilhelm was “the principal figure; Frederick

⁹ It should be noted that the Stephen review in *Fraser's* was written in 1865 after *Frederick* had been completed. By the time all six volumes of *Frederick* had been published, reviewers, with the benefit of hindsight, were able to recognise the way in which Carlyle’s lengthy description of Frederick’s ancestry helped to situate Frederick and the nascent Prussian state within a historical framework. Nevertheless, at the time that Volumes I and II were published, the reaction of the majority of reviewers was that *Frederick* had not met their expectations.

¹⁰ Macaulay had outlined Friedrich Wilhelm’s character in his 1842 review essay: “If he met a lady in the street, he gave her a kick, and told her to go home and mind her brats. If he saw a clergyman staring at the soldiers, he admonished the reverend gentleman to betake himself to study and prayer, and enforced this pious advice by a sound caning, administered on the spot. But it was in his own house that he was most unreasonable and ferocious His son Frederic and his daughter Wilhelmina, afterwards Margravine of Bareuth [sic], were in an especial manner objects of his aversion . . . the Prince was kicked and cudgelled, and pulled by the hair. At dinner the plates were hurled at his head: sometimes he was restricted to bread and water: sometimes he was forced to swallow food so nauseous that he could not keep it on his stomach. Once his father knocked him down, dragged him along the floor to a window, and was with difficulty prevented from strangling him with the cord of the curtain” (246-247).

himself occupying comparatively small space, and in that appearing as mean and insignificant, destitute of any noble feature or promise of greatness” additionally arguing, “On Mr. Carlyle’s own showing he seems to have made too much of his hero’s father” (“Carlyle. Mirage Philosophy”, 146). The reviewer from the *Eclectic* took a harder line:

There is no denying Mr Carlyle’s courage or audacity (let the reader call it which he will) in this. A more unpromising subject to make a hero of could hardly have been found than Friedrich Wilhelm I. Ungainly in his person, harsh and startling in his speech, with a voice which Mr. Carlyle calls “plangent,” which we interpret as one combining a ring with a roar; rude to an incredible extent in his manners, vulgar and sensual in his habits, low in all his tastes, and half-brutish in some of them; there was nothing in his mental endowments, nothing in his official administration, nothing in his dealings with other Powers, sufficient to redeem him from indifference. (“Hero-Worship” 109-110)¹¹

The stance taken by both Hamley and the *Eclectic*’s reviewer summed up the mood of the majority of contemporary reviewers and signalled the beginning of a growing dissatisfaction with Carlyle’s attempt to portray Frederick and his father as heroes. A significant section of reviewers remained unconvinced of Friedrich Wilhelm’s pacific qualities and their scepticism led them eventually to doubt Carlyle’s wider project.

According to Hamley, Friedrich Wilhelm’s character was already well known to the world at large, “the impression being chiefly conveyed through the medium of the memoirs of his daughter, the Margravine of Baireuth” (“Carlyle. Mirage Philosophy”, 146). He was, therefore, highly critical of Carlyle’s partiality towards him:

¹¹ Carlyle maintains that Friedrich Wilhelm’s voice, “even when not loud, was of clangorous and penetrating, quasi-metallic nature ... His Majesty spoke through the nose; snuffled his speech, in an earnest ominously plangent manner. In angry moments, which were frequent, it must have been—unpleasant to listen to” (*Works* 12: 348).

The character of such a King could evidently be summed up in a very different verdict from the decisive one of Macaulay; and it was of course the duty of an historian to give all due preponderance to the favourable side. But when we find Mr. Carlyle casting all his weight into one scale as indignant counterpoise to the former unjust state of the balance, till censure kicks the beam, we find ourselves still far, in the opposite direction, from a just estimate. A ruler who did so much to elevate his country, cannot be abruptly dismissed as brute and tyrant. But on the other hand, a “dumb poet,” who makes a hell of his household, kicks ambassadors, drives his children to despair, and drinks himself into chronic delirium, is an equally anomalous character, neither does the epithet of “inarticulate man of genius” by any means satisfy the case. (147)

Hamley’s criticism in this passage reveals his growing distrust of Carlyle as a reliable historian. In his opinion, both Carlyle and Macaulay had failed in their duties as historians by failing to provide honest and accurate accounts of the facts.¹² In particular, Carlyle’s handling of Freidrich Wilhelm’s brutal treatment of his daughter provoked condemnation. The *Eclectic*’s reviewer held the view that it was Friedrich Wilhelm’s love of discipline that “led him to persist in deeds of cruelty, some of which are of a kind to make one’s blood boil with indignation, or run cold with horror”, repeating a well known incident concerning Freidrich Wilhelm: “In one of his fits of passion, he struck (this time with his fist) his innocent, gentle, and beautiful daughter, Wilhelmina, till he had felled her to the ground, and then could hardly be prevented from kicking her as she lay faint and bleeding” (“Hero-Worship” 111).

¹² The *Edinburgh* used Macaulay’s article to question Carlyle’s methods: “In a celebrated article which formerly appeared in the pages of this Review, it was said that ‘the palace at Berlin was hell, and the king the most execrable of fiends, a man between Moloch and Puck;’ and if the king appears otherwise in Mr. Carlyle’s book, it is because Mr. Carlyle has perverted the evidence or given mutilated extracts” (“Carlyle’s *Frederic*” 395). In its review of Volumes I and II of *Frederick*, the *Quarterly* expressed similar concerns: “The colours of good and evil lie before him, but he cannot discern between them. The two things which never fail to operate in destroying his ability to discriminate are success—the might which makes right—and a certain sense of humour, like that which lends enjoyment to practical jokes, turning the laugh against the dupe; and which may be itself resolved into a variety of the former. It is, in fact, fundamentally identical with it, and consists in the love of being on the winning side, or on that which in common phrase is the last to laugh. This disposition pervades the whole of Mr. Carlyle’s writings, and it is one of the defects which disqualifies him from ever being a trustworthy guide” (“Art. I. *History*” 286).

Carlyle does not shirk from portraying the violence of this incident, using Wilhelmina's memoirs to provide the details. The event took place shortly after Frederick had been apprehended trying to flee the court with his unfortunate friend, Lieutenant Katte.¹³ Before he introduces Wilhelmina's account, Carlyle informs the reader that "The next six months were undoubtedly by far the wretchedest of Friedrich Wilhelm's life. The poor King ... was often like to be driven mad by the turn things had taken" (*Works* 13: 322). Carlyle then provides Wilhelmina's description of events on her father's arrival in Berlin along with Carlyle's own parenthetical interjections:

'We all ran to kiss his hands; but he no sooner noticed than rage and fury took possession of him. He became black in the face, his eyes sparkling fire, his mouth foaming ... he seized me with one hand, slapping me on the face with the other,'—clenched as a fist (*poing*),—'several blows; one of which struck me on the temple, so that I fell back, and should have split my head against a corner of the wainscot, had not Madam de Sonsfeld caught me by the headdress and broken the fall. I lay on the ground without consciousness. The King, in a frenzy, was for striking me with his feet; had not the Queen, my Sisters, and the rest, run between, and those who were present prevented him.' (322-323)

Even allowing for Wilhelmina's dramatic account, this passage demonstrates the ferocity of the attack. Although she does not state that her father used his fist, Carlyle makes a point of informing readers of this fact with his interjection of the phrase, "clenched as a fist (*poing*)".¹⁴ As the whole affair was widely known to the world at large, Carlyle could not deny the extreme level of physical force that was involved. On the contrary, he goes out of his way to emphasise the fact that Friedrich

¹³ Katte was later hanged, on Friedrich Wilhelm's orders, for colluding with Frederick and accompanying him in his attempt to flee.

¹⁴ The current recognised translation of the French word, "*poing*" is "fist". 19th century French dictionaries give the meaning as "closed hand".

Wilhelm used his fist, contradicting Wilhelmina's own account where she describes her father "slapping me on the face".

Carlyle's subsequent commentary on the event, however, is specifically designed to defuse the situation and encourage sympathy, not for Wilhelmina, but for Friedrich Wilhelm. He continues his narrative by treating the entire incident with a diffidence which many reviewers found galling and unacceptable:

This is the celebrated assault of paternal Majesty on Wilhelmina; the rumour of which has gone into all lands, exciting wonder and horror, but could not be so exact as this account at first-hand. Naturally the crowd of street-passengers, once dispersed by the Guard, carried the matter abroad, and there was no end of sympathetic exaggerations. Report ran in Berlin, for example, that the poor Princess was killed, beaten or trampled to death; which we clearly see she was not. (324)

The tone in this excerpt is one of condescension tinged with scorn for those who choose to believe the "sympathetic exaggerations" of the attack. Carlyle is being disingenuous when he repeats the rumours of Wilhelmina's death. By providing his readers with a fictitious and more catastrophic scenario, he decreases the severity of the actual event in their minds. His boast that the accuracy of this "first-hand" report supersedes existing rumours about the incident suggests that Carlyle intends that his readers should be neither repelled nor shocked by the violence in Wilhelmina's account. As noted from Carlyle's introduction to this episode, when he describes the "poor King" as a man who was "often like to be driven mad by the turn things had taken", his sympathies lie entirely with Friedrich Wilhelm and he contrives to shift blame away from him at every opportunity.

Carlyle's tactics did not go unnoticed by reviewers.¹⁵ The *Eclectic* offered its own interpretation of the methods that Carlyle used when dealing with Frederick's father:

Mr. Carlyle is scrupulously careful to narrate all that he finds recorded of his hero, and exactly as he finds it recorded. He is, in fact, too thoroughly in love with him, to imagine that anything needs to be concealed that he either said or did. According to his way of thinking, it is the man that gives its character to the action, not the action to the man. Faithfully, therefore, with painful and scrupulous fidelity, he narrates all that he can find in any authentic document relating to his subject, and having narrated it, though not always with equal fulness and force, he turns round on the world and says, "Is not that admirable? Saw you ever anything to surpass that?" Had any other man done such things, Mr. Carlyle would have poured on him a whole lava stream of sulphureous invective; but in the favoured hero he can see no sin—nay, what would be sin in others, becomes excusable, if not a virtue, in him. ("Hero-Worship" 111-112)

Two key areas are highlighted in this passage: Carlyle's technique of interjecting his own comments throughout the text and his biased treatment of "the favoured hero". The motivation behind Carlyle's decision to insist that Frederick's father was a heroic figure, against all the odds, is precisely because he was the father of the Crown Prince. Carlyle was aware that depicting Friedrich Wilhelm in the same monstrous vein as Macaulay would seriously tarnish Frederick's own reputation.

Hamley, in *Blackwood's*, was more emphatic in his criticism of Carlyle's methods:

the fact is that Frederick William was pre-destined by Mr. Carlyle for a hero, and none of his elect can sin So, when he beats and starves his son, we are simply told "the poor youth has a bad time, *and the poor father too!*" Hence arises a new dilemma for our author with his heroic theory to get fitted. There are now two heroes to be maintained in heroism, the filial and the paternal, but their relationship is decidedly unheroic. ("Carlyle. Mirage Philosophy", 147)

¹⁵ Both the *Quarterly* and the *Edinburgh* criticized Carlyle for his persistent bias in Friedrich Wilhelm's favour. Commenting on his reporting of the assault on Wilhelmina, the *Quarterly's* reviewer declared, "The only person for whom Mr. Carlyle bespeaks any pity in this and similar scenes which followed during the next six months, is the King himself" ("Art. I. *History*" 296), whilst the *Edinburgh* complained, "the smallest journalist of that time felt more compassion for the victims of Frederic William than is shown by Mr. Carlyle. The intolerable and daily tortures of a whole family are treated with mockery and scorn ... in fine, [he] outrages all notions of decency, manliness, and humanity" ("Carlyle's *Frederic*" 391).

This passage outlines the problems that reviewers were facing on reading *Frederick*. They had preconceptions of both Frederick and his father and were struggling to reconcile these with the characters outlined in Carlyle's text. Hamley also notes that in his efforts to eulogize Frederick, Carlyle now found himself in the awkward position of being obliged to treat Friedrich Wilhelm in the same manner. In addition, as Carlyle's history had not yet reached Frederick's accession to the throne in 1740, Carlyle's description of him as a beaten, starved and cowed Crown Prince did not match reviewers' preconceptions of him as a warrior king.

Yet not every reviewer was critical of Carlyle's favourable depiction of Friedrich Wilhelm. The reviewer from *Chambers's* expressed the opinion that "no biography can be called complete that does not paint in detail those parental influences that mould the child, the 'father of the man'" ("Carlyle's History" 51). This reviewer goes on to describe Friedrich Wilhelm as

a remarkable character hitherto scantily appreciated; a character especially appealing to Mr Carlyle's sympathies, and portrayed by him with an enthusiasm that will carry most of his readers away, if not to his own ultimate conclusions, at least far beyond the limits of their previously formed estimate; such enthusiasm as our author's, whether it make for or against a man, being very contagious, as we all know by this time. (51)

The suggestion made by this reviewer that any perceived defects in Friedrich Wilhelm's character would be swept away by the force of Carlyle's enthusiasm is a glowing testament to Carlyle's literary powers. However, the failure to acknowledge Friedrich Wilhelm as the monstrous and cruel individual that he was generally accepted to be exposes the reviewer's unrealistic assessment of the facts. The *Examiner's* reviewer held similar views on the necessity for Carlyle to delineate the

nature of Frederick's father in order to reveal the son's own character, opining, "the great power exerted over Frederick during the years of his training was begotten by his father's character, and for that reason it especially is necessary that the father's character should be defined with absolute distinctness" (*History of Frederick* 628). This reviewer was also enamoured with Carlyle's depiction of Friedrich Wilhelm, declaring, "we regard the portrait of King Friedrich Wilhelm as Mr Carlyle's special triumph in this first half of his history" (628).

Nevertheless, negative criticism of Volumes I and II, such as those in *Blackwood's* and the *Eclectic* far outweighed positive reviews at this time. This claim runs contrary to recent scholarship which has maintained that *Frederick* won nearly unanimous approval from reviewers.¹⁶ My research has revealed that even positive reviewers were often highly critical of Carlyle's obsequious portrayal of Friedrich Wilhelm and his vexed choice of Frederick as a heroic figure. I also take issue with Vanden Bossche's claim that *Frederick* restored Carlyle's reputation and would argue that quite the reverse is true. In his efforts to force Frederick and his father into the heroic mould Carlyle damaged his own credibility with a section of these influential reviewers. This claim is bolstered by the reaction of the *Eclectic's* reviewer to an incident in which Friedrich Wilhelm had condemned a young girl, Doris Ritter, "to be whipped by the beadle, and to beat hemp for three years" for merely speaking to Frederick ("Hero-Worship" 118):

Now here is an outrage to make the blood boil in the veins of any man who has a man's feelings in him But how does Mr. Carlyle treat this escapade

¹⁶ In an entry entitled, "*Frederick the Great*" which appears in *The Carlyle Encyclopedia*, Chris Vanden Bossche remarks: "*Frederick the Great* was Carlyle's last major work. By the time he completed it he was seventy years old and his writing hand had become palsied. However, the history received almost universally approving reviews and restored his reputation, which had been tarnished by the excesses of *Latter-Day Pamphlets*" (175).

of his royal bear? We are sorry to say, as a very trifling affair indeed—a mere bagatelle arising out of Rhadamanthus not being “a trifle better informed”—“a sad pickle,” out of which poor Doris got “on her own strength, and wedded and did well enough.” We wonder what Mr. Carlyle would have said had a daughter or any female relation of his own been treated so by anyone whom he had not predetermined to bow down to and worship? (118).

Hostile reviewers in the *Quarterly* and the *Edinburgh* were equally scathing in their condemnation of Carlyle’s eulogizing of Friedrich Wilhelm. The *Quarterly* complained, “the present instalment of the work is in great measure devoted to placing a man who has hitherto been considered to be little better than a ruffian in the rank of one of the best and wisest monarchs of Christendom, and proving him to be one of the kindest and most judicious parents that ever adorned domestic life” (“Art. I. *History*” 275). The *Edinburgh* was more direct in its criticism, describing Friedrich Wilhelm as an “odious monarch” who was “Mean, avaricious, illiterate, brutal, choleric, and intemperate” additionally declaring, “The anecdotes of the capricious tyranny of this king are endless, and all excite one emotion—disgust” (“Carlyle’s *Frederic*” 384, 388). These excerpts from the *Edinburgh* clearly demonstrate that, with only a few exceptions reviewers were not prepared to tolerate Carlyle’s “rhapsodical ecstasies of admiration” for such a monstrous figure (385).

Carlyle’s determination to transform the public’s perception of Friedrich Wilhelm was part of his overall strategy of presenting Frederick to the world at large as a heroic figure who was descended from a long and distinguished Hohenzollern ancestry. However, in order to be truly successful in this endeavour it was necessary for Carlyle to challenge and alter readers’ preconceptions of Frederick himself. The *Eclectic*’s reviewer offered an opinion on the working methods of both Carlyle and Froude, stating that they chose to “draw forth and decorate a hero” because it was

“for the literary mind a congenial task; and it is one which the public are prone to render profitable There is, therefore, a constant readiness on the part of literary men to gratify the public taste, by dressing up some ancient reputation in modern trappings, and presenting its owner afresh for adulation” (“Hero-Worship” 106). This reviewer, however, remained unconvinced of Frederick’s suitability as a hero and criticized Carlyle for his dogged pursuit of heroic figures:

His vast literary energy is now devoted—if not exclusively, yet principally—to hero-worship, to the worship of genius. His passion for this has grown by indulgence, until it has assumed a character positively morbid. His heroes at first really were heroes, and the world could feel itself indebted to the man, who, with congenial power, claimed for them the homage that was their due. But as his tendency in this direction was always to excess, so of late his propensity has assumed an altogether unhealthy and pernicious character ... he has brought himself to attempt to pass off fools and knaves for true, and grand, and saintly worthies. (108)

Carlyle’s insistence on portraying Frederick and his father as heroes in the face of widespread historical evidence to the contrary was beginning to antagonise a section of reviewers.¹⁷

¹⁷ The *Quarterly*’s reviewer also believed that Carlyle’s fascination for strong-willed, powerful figures had evolved into an unhealthy obsession: “It is not surprising that the biography of Frederick II. of Prussia should have had considerable attractions for Mr. Carlyle. The triumph of the monarch’s strong and self-relying will in doing battle with adverse circumstances was in itself enough to command the sympathies of a writer with whom success and the practical assertion of power have always been the chief claims to fame. The tragic elements too of Frederick’s early life could not fail to touch other feelings of the best nature, which in certain moods belong to no one more largely than to Mr. Carlyle. But even here it seems that the disposition to side with the strongest will has exercised its habitual sway over the mind of the historian; for during the life-time of Frederick’s tyrannical father this potentate of the hour is the person for whom our approbation is asked, while the Crown Prince is made to play almost as inferior a part in his own biography as he actually did at his father’s court” (“Art. I. *History*” 275). The *Edinburgh* was more scathing in its criticism of Carlyle: “His doctrine of reverence for power is no more than a civilised version of the abject superstition which made the savage transform thunder, war, and pestilence into divinities, and sent him on his knees to kiss the feet of white men with fire-arms” (“Carlyle’s *Frederic*” 410).

Yet there existed a role in which Frederick could readily be portrayed as a heroic figure: as a successful and astute military commander. According to Hamley in his *Blackwood's* essay, Frederick's heroic nature was intrinsically linked to his activities as a soldier:

In the warrior who, when he was routed and almost ruined by his own rashness, not only met and defeated a fresh foe, but turned upon the victors, and, at the moment when as it seemed no choice remained for him but submission or extinction, converted disaster into a glorious success, no aid from transcendentalism was needed to recognise a hero. But the heroism lay almost altogether in his soldier-phase, and this is precisely the aspect in which Mr. Carlyle is least qualified to deal with him, judging from some hints which he has already let fall. To ascribe the victory of Rosbach to "strategic art" shows a very inadequate acquaintance either with the victory or with the art. Nor does the ... estimate of Napoleon's genius for war restore us to any great confidence in him as an historian of military events. ("Carlyle. Mirage Philosophy" 143)

Hamley's criticism of Carlyle as a military historian, albeit written anonymously, ran contrary to the opinion of the majority of reviewers who were fulsome in their praise of Carlyle's grasp of military affairs. Yet his comments on Frederick's heroism are noteworthy as they reveal that, in his view, it was primarily Frederick's reputation as a military commander that stimulated interest and raised his profile amongst British readers.

In the end, Hamley adopted a wry attitude towards Carlyle's decision to eulogize Frederick:

Frederick is his hero—and we know what that means with Mr. Carlyle, who invariably turns the old constitutional maxim that the King can do no wrong, into a philosophical fact ... though the task of discovering in the royal infidel a grain of that reverence which is a main element of your transcendental hero, or of reconciling some of his mean vices with other heroical requirements, is a difficult one, yet we have no doubt that he will leave the

hands of the artist not only by no means so black as he has been painted, but altogether of a “snow-and-rosebloom” beauty.¹⁸ (144)

There is a touch of sarcasm in Hamley’s belief that Carlyle had the ability to restore Frederick’s reputation far beyond what readers would consider acceptable and that he possessed the literary talent to transform this “royal infidel” into a paragon of loveliness. In Hamley’s opinion, Carlyle’s attempts to gloss over Frederick’s many defects and portray him as a heroic figure away from the battlefield was always going to be an enormous challenge. Earlier in his essay, Hamley had produced a decidedly negative appraisal of Carlyle’s working methods:

As a philosopher, then, expounding a doctrine of general application, we think he has been immensely overrated, looming large in clouds of his own raising. As an objector, he is often, though we believe not intentionally, unfairly carried away by his habit of prophesying and denouncing. As a guide, he puts into our benighted hands a lantern with no candle in it. As a moralist, he is altogether unexceptionable; yet even here we find none of the originality which his admirers so largely claim for him. (138)

One of the most revealing comments in this excerpt is Hamley’s assertion that Carlyle was not a dependable guide.¹⁹ This remark echoes the earlier comment made by the *Quarterly*’s reviewer when he criticized Carlyle’s inability to discern good from evil, declaring that his “love of being on the winning side ... disqualifies him from ever being a trustworthy guide” (“Art. I. *History*” 286).

The *Quarterly*’s reviewer announced that *Frederick* was “Mr. Carlyle’s worst work” (276). Whilst giving Carlyle credit for the enormous amount of material that he had

¹⁸ The term “snow-and-rosebloom” is a Carlylism which appears in *Sartor Resartus* (1833). It was an oft-used description of Carlyle’s: “When Carlyle speaks of a ‘snow and rose-bloom maiden,’ he uses as distinct an adjective as if he said lovely” (*Ruskin: the Critical Heritage* 218). According to John Lewis Bradley, the editor of this work, the anonymous author of the article in which this phrase appears was “almost certainly Peter Bayne (1830-96), journalist and author” (211).

¹⁹ This trait of Carlyle’s was also noted in chapters four and five of this thesis when an investigation into Carlyle’s research methods revealed that his partiality towards Frederick led him to edit his source material to the extent that he changed its fundamental nature.

collected in order to write Frederick's history, the reviewer declared, "the present work outdoes its predecessors in those faults of style, and still graver occasional aberrations of thought, which have always given as much pain to Mr. Carlyle's admirers as they have afforded amusement to the world at large" (276).²⁰ Although reviewers often likened Carlyle to a magician, wizard or puppeteer, unlike the reviewer from *Chambers's* the majority of them did not look at these traits in a favourable light but found in them evidence to suggest that Carlyle was manipulating his readers. Carlyle's style in *Frederick* was often referred to in terms of a theatrical performance with Carlyle taking centre stage and using various literary tricks to entertain his audience. Hamley responded indignantly to Carlyle's theatrical displays:

there is one habit of his which we can never get accustomed to, and which always recurs to us in a ridiculous light—that of keeping some of his images constantly by him, and reproducing them as if they were puppets in a box. When he sits down to write, his peaceful study is thronged by spectres of the most terrific description, invoked by the flourish of his pen. While he is with due incantation casting the magic bullets that are to hit and slay the Unveracities and Ineptitudes, the charmed circle in which he works is surrounded by a horrible panoramic phantasmagory, where all ages and nations of the world are jumbled as in a Christmas pantomime What you thought was a simple folly, the magician tells you is an Ineptitude, and, as a charm against it, offers you an old bone from his collection of amulets; what had hitherto passed for a weak ordinary official personage, turns out to be a Phantasm-Captain; till you either end by becoming a trustful guest at this Barmecide's feast of horrors, or else cannot help looking on your entertainer

²⁰ The *Quarterly's* reviewer also noted, "we have of course the old vocabulary repeated which is destined to try so severely the temper and the judgment of future lexicographers of the English tongue." ("Art. I. *History*" 278), whilst the *Saturday's* review of 1858 opened with a recommendation for prospective readers of *Frederick*: "Readers to whom Mr. Carlyle's peculiar language presents an impassable stumbling-block will do well to abstain from opening a book which will in the highest degree irritate and perplex them. The historian of Frederick the Great has not suppressed the slightest feature of that distinctive style which has stamped his idiosyncrasy on all his former works. There is the same repetition of favourite allusions, the same dramatic dialogue with the personages of the story" ("Carlyle's History" 398). Yet the reviewer from *Chambers's* was complimentary about Carlyle's stylistic abilities: "There is no such magician as Mr Carlyle for calling *spirits* from history's vasty deep, making its dry bones live, causing us to hear through all the dust of the centuries, through whatever obsolete armour or disguise of circumstance, the beatings of the human heart—in its strength and weakness alike so closely akin to our own" ("Carlyle's History" 52).

as one who has the power of bringing himself into a state of *delirium tremens* without undergoing the preliminary excesses. (“Carlyle. Mirage Philosophy”, 140) ²¹

The tone of sarcasm which appeared in Hamley’s earlier analysis of Carlyle’s potential to transform Frederick into a “snow-and-rosebloom” character is much more noticeable in this passage where he uses both sarcasm and ridicule to carry out a sustained attack on Carlyle’s methods. Hamley’s earlier charge that Carlyle was not a reliable guide is repeated here when he argues that readers must choose whether or not to become “a trustful guest” and accept Carlyle’s “feast of horrors” without question. In a similar manner to that which was noted earlier when the *Eclectic*’s reviewer questioned Carlyle’s morality over his handling of the treatment of Doris Ritter, Hamley moves away from criticizing Carlyle’s style to making unflattering observations about him personally:

We sometimes wonder whether Thomas carries his principles into the ordinary affairs of life; whether, when he wants to descend from the upper story [sic] of his habitation, he avails himself of the Vesture or Appearance of the stairs or places himself in relation to the Laws of the Universe, and precipitates himself over the bannisters, confiding in the underlying fact of gravitation? Does he read his evening paper by the light of the eternal stars? When he leaves his haunted study, and drops his pen, does he abjure his rough magic, bury his staff in the back garden, drown his book of spells in the water-butt, and hang up on a peg in the hall, along with his wizard gown, covered with weird images like a San-Benito garment, all his doleful vaticinations, and appear as a man of the world? or does he walk abroad accompanied by the spectral crew that minister to him during the terrific period of composition? (“Carlyle. Mirage Philosophy”, 140-141)

In this passage, Hamley employs a comic touch to parody Carlyle and dismantle his reputation as a great man of letters, using the rhetorical device of addressing him by his Christian name as one means of achieving this end. In their reviews, both

²¹ Barmecide, was a prince from Baghdad who features in a story from the *Arabian Nights*. In this tale the prince places a succession of empty dishes before a beggar, pretending that they contain a sumptuous feast, a fiction which the beggar humorously accepts. Hence, the term refers to one who offers imaginary food or illusory benefits.

Hamley and the *Eclectic's* reviewer shift from their critique of *Frederick* into making personal remarks about Carlyle. This raises questions as to whether or not a section of reviewers were prejudiced against Carlyle in general and were using these reviews of *Frederick* as an opportunity to vent existing grievances. The overall result of Hamley's review is that he undermines Carlyle's credibility as an author and invites readers to question whether or not Carlyle's portrayal of Frederick should really be taken seriously.²²

His theatrical performances aside, Carlyle's extensive use of pictorial techniques also invited attention from reviewers. In its 1858 review, the *Athenaeum* prefaced Carlyle's detailed description of Friedrich Wilhelm's "Royal Tabaks Collegium" with the announcement, "Here is an admirable Teniers sketch" (*History of Friedrich* 353). This favourable comparison between Carlyle and the celebrated painter is worthy of attention as it emphasises Carlyle's perceived skill in portraiture. The *Eclectic's* reviewer, however, maintained that Carlyle adopted this technique solely in line with his "attempt to pass off fools and knaves for true, and grand, and saintly worthies" ("Hero-Worship" 108):

the effect is somewhat like that which would be produced by taking a spectator into a picture gallery, and allowing him only a hasty glance at the

²² Hamley was not alone in criticizing Carlyle's penchant for theatrics. The *Edinburgh's* reviewer complained about "these intolerant and intolerable heroes, whom he is for ever preaching up to the world, and having a ghastly sort of similitude to life when he has got hold of the strings to give it spasmodic action. But having once fashioned this grotesque monster in his brain, he becomes seized with the most vehement and even jealous affection for his creation, and whatever brutal or unmanly excesses are committed, there is Mr. Carlyle in the stage-box, as it were, thrusting his tongue in his cheek, shaking his sides in suppressed laughter, and occasionally breaking into rapturous applause" ("Carlyle's *Frederic*" 391-392). The reviewer from the *Quarterly* opined: "in reading the History of Frederick II. of Prussia, we are almost led to doubt whether the volume which we supposed was open before us has not been playfully removed, and a volume of the Adventures of Gargantua and Pantagruel substituted in its place. Rabelais never rioted in greater licence of style, or has more completely set decorum at defiance . . . Mr Carlyle again dives for a moment below his table, and reappears as Prince Leopold of Anhalt-Dessau with his 'gunpowder face' and his 'iron-ramrod,' or as 'Margaret Pouch-Mouth,' alluding to that facial peculiarity" ("Art. I. *History*" 277-278).

bad pictures, whilst the merits of the good are carefully exhibited to his view and impressed on his attention: he would go away with the impression that the gallery, as a whole, was worthy of all praise, though it may be that the bad pictures so immensely outnumbered the good, and were so very bad that, as a whole, it was next to worthless. (113)

In addition, the *Eclectic's* reviewer complained of Carlyle's tendency, "when he has recorded some undignified or brutal deed of his hero, to assume a tone of scornful defiance towards all who would presume to censure it" (113). This remark was a key observation as it signalled that reviewers' attitudes towards Carlyle were beginning to harden. Carlyle's increasingly scornful and arrogant attitude eventually provoked an angry response from a section of these influential reviewers and their light-hearted ridicule evolved into distaste.²³

Hamley was more forceful in his criticism of Carlyle's running commentary alongside the historical narrative: "In no previous work is his determination to obtrude his own personality more uncompromising than in this History of Frederick. His quips and cranks and wanton wiles begin with the first page, and continue in endless succession, sometimes monotonous, sometimes highly diversified, till the last" ("Carlyle. Mirage Philosophy", 143). Reviewers writing in the *Edinburgh*, *Blackwood's* and the *Quarterly* then appeared to take genuine offence at Carlyle's high-handedness. The *Edinburgh's* reviewer remarked indignantly that Carlyle was behaving as if he had attained "those heights of spiritualism from which he can look down with derision on the achievements of Leibnitz and Wolf" ("Carlyle's *Frederic*"

²³ Not every reviewer took offence at Carlyle's persistent interjections. Referring to a document proffered by Carlyle which contained "Friedrich Wilhelm's own views on the important subject of the princely education", *Chambers's* reviewer remarked that this material was "enriched for us by Mr Carlyle's running commentary" ("Carlyle's History" 53).

405).²⁴ In a similar vein, Hamley complained: “It is probably the most arrogant style that anybody who did not profess to believe himself inspired ever wrote in. The author seems to look down on us as if from some skyey eminence—much as Jove, seated on Olympus, may have looked down on mortal doings by the banks of the Scamander, sometimes in wrath, sometimes in contemptuous compassion” (“Carlyle. Mirage Philosophy”, 153). It was the reviewer from the *Quarterly*, however, who made the crucial link between Carlyle’s incessant interjections and their effect on *Frederick* as a historical text:

Even when an original document is set forth, it is so garbled by admixture with the editor’s running comments, that it is not easy to separate the old text from the infiltration of the new gloss into all its crevices. There is certainly no intention to mislead, but this practice impairs the integrity of the writer’s vouchers, communicates an air of romantic history to the whole, and so destroys the tone of reality which it is a special object to maintain. The new matter may be pertinent—it may be explanatory—it is often amusing—but the habit of appearing to give *verbatim* and *in extenso* that which, in fact, is coloured in almost every line by the peculiar tincture of the transcriber’s mind, is unfavourable to historical accuracy, and cannot be recommended for imitation. (“Art. I. *History*” 302)

Carlyle was being treated generously by this reviewer when he remarked that there was “certainly no intention to mislead”. On the contrary, as I have argued, Carlyle’s running commentary was only one of a variety of stylistic techniques employed by him in his deliberate and sustained attempt to transform Frederick and his father into heroic figures. This passage offers evidence that Carlyle’s persistent interruptions to the text were beginning to compromise his integrity as a historian in the eyes of a section of reviewers.

²⁴ The *Edinburgh*’s reviewer described Christian Wolf as “one of the greatest intellects of Europe ... his philosophy was an ingenious adaptation of that of Leibnitz” (“Carlyle’s *Frederic*” 405).

On publication of Volumes I and II of *Frederick*, Carlyle's credentials as a historian evidently came under intense scrutiny. The *Eclectic's* reviewer believed that contemporary historians such as Froude and Carlyle held positions of responsibility, maintaining that it was a "sacred duty of history" to present an unbiased account of the past and emphasising that for this to "be done legitimately, it is indispensable that it be done fairly—by force of evidence, and not by mere cleverness of special pleading" ("Hero-Worship" 107, 108).²⁵ Furthermore, this reviewer repeated the charge that Carlyle was forcing historical events to comply with his own agenda, complaining:

Mr. Froude, we doubt not, as well as Mr. Carlyle, would admit that truthfulness is the first virtue of an historian. Of what use, indeed, is history, or why should any one take the trouble to write it, unless it is to be truthful? And yet their practice is wholly at variance with this. Judging from their books, we should infer that their conception of the design of history is to force facts to represent an ideal of their own minds. (123)

This excerpt contained a much more serious accusation, that in his attempt to "force facts" to fit in with his own agenda of eulogizing Frederick and his father, Carlyle's history was perceived to be straying too far from the truth.²⁶ According to Hamley,

²⁵ Yet despite acknowledging Carlyle's "forced attempts to make Friedrich Wilhelm appear a great, a wise, and a just king, —and making allowances for those eccentricities of style and method which are characteristic of Mr. Carlyle's mind", the *Eclectic's* reviewer did give Carlyle credit for providing "not only the most vivid and picturesque, but the most truthful and copious narrative extant in any language, of the rise and establishment of the great Prussian monarchy" ("Hero-Worship" 119). Carlyle's history also received praise from the *Athenaeum*: "We have indicated but the chief passages and a few famous acts out of this grand and dramatic history. In another article we hope to exhibit other famous scenes and personages for the delight and instruction of our readers" ("*History of Friedrich*" 1858, 354).

²⁶ The *Edinburgh's* reviewer agreed with this assessment of Carlyle's method of writing history: "looking at it as a serious attempt at representing actual facts, we cannot but declare it to be deserving of the gravest condemnation" ("Carlyle's *Frederic*" 408). This review opened with the declaration: "A publication which lays claim to the title of a history ought, in our opinion, to recommend itself to the reader by a perspicuous narrative, a vigorous and unaffected style, a just appreciation of truth and falsehood, a discriminating insight into character and the motives of human actions, an accurate survey of the sequence of events, and a conscientious regard for those who have previously laboured in the same vineyard. If it be too much to require that all these qualities be united in a historian, it is at least to be expected that they shall not all be wanting. But this is a test to which it is impossible to subject Mr. Carlyle's last production. By this rule his 'History of Frederic II.' would deserve to be remembered chiefly as a conspicuous example of all that a history ought not to be" (376).

Carlyle treated historical figures and events “in the same grotesque fashion If this is fine history, we should think Mrs. Gamp would have made a fine historian” (“Carlyle. Mirage Philosophy”, 151).²⁷ After providing readers with a lengthy excerpt from Frederick in which Carlyle describes a collection of historical correspondence as a “sordid mass of eavesdroppings, kitchen-ashes and floor-sweepings, collected and interchanged by a pair of treacherous Flunkeys”, Hamley concluded (151):

We heartily wish that we could speak more of solid merits as a set-off against such passages as these. But the truth is, that with a strong wish to discover historical excellence in this memoir of an eminent king and soldier, we have been driven to the reluctant conclusion that in no previous production of Carlyle’s has the halfpenny worth of bread borne so small a proportion to the intolerable deal of sack. Formerly we took his guineas, notwithstanding the fantastic image and superscription, for the sake of the genuine gold. But when he takes to giving us gilt farthings of the same pattern—excuse us, Thomas—think of the police and the laws against counterfeit coin. (151-152)

The sarcasm and ridicule that we noted in an earlier quotation from Hamley are still evident in this excerpt, as is the rhetorical device of addressing Carlyle by his Christian name. It is apparent from reading these reviews that, for a section of reviewers, Carlyle’s authority as a historian was quickly being eroded.²⁸

The *Eclectic*’s reviewer justified the stance that had been taken in criticizing Carlyle:

In conclusion, we cannot refrain from uttering a wish that literary men, especially those who have the ear of the community, were more deeply impressed with a sense of the responsibility of their position It is no small matter to have the willing attention of thousands of intelligent and accountable beings who, in this busy and book-loving age, seek refreshment

²⁷ Mrs. Gamp, a character from Dickens’ *Martin Chuzzlewit* was a nurse who dealt with births and deaths.

²⁸ The *Edinburgh* announced: “If this is history or biography, Mr. Gilbert A’Beckett’s Comic History of England [sic] has a claim to the serious perusal of every historical student” (“Carlyle’s *Frederic*” 379), whilst the *Quarterly* declared: “No history that was ever put together could, with few exceptions, be more chaotic and unintelligible than this work of Mr. Carlyle’s” (“Art. I. *History*” 301).

in literature, but have little time to sift carefully the opinions that are urged upon them by the authors whose works they read. (“Hero-Worship” 125)

Although the possibility exists that too much credit was being given to Carlyle’s powers of persuasion and too little to readers’ aptitude for independent and discerning thought, this reviewer nevertheless made an important point in observing that many readers had neither the time nor the inclination to interrogate the opinions of authors of repute such as Carlyle. Furthermore, bearing in mind the vast amount of research that Carlyle had undertaken for *Frederick*, the majority of readers would never be in the position to gain enough historical knowledge to either verify or contest his version of events.²⁹

In these initial volumes, Carlyle had denied himself the opportunity to depict Frederick in the role with which his readers were most familiar, as a formidable king and military commander, and his awareness that *Frederick* may not have met readers’ expectations led him to take steps to address the situation. He closes Volume II with the death of Friedrich Wilhelm and focuses the attention of his readers firmly on Frederick, hinting at the kind of ruler they can expect to see in forthcoming volumes.³⁰ Using the same tactics that were noted in previous chapters when he

²⁹ The *Quarterly* lamented the fact that Carlyle had squandered a tremendous opportunity: “What is most seriously to be regretted is the waste of time involved in this mode of writing history. Mr. Carlyle has traversed eight hundred years of German annals, and has shown in flashes an acquaintance with his subject which has astonished the most learned of the Teutons themselves. It is not likely that the same task will be speedily undertaken again, and we cannot help deploring that such an opportunity has been lost for throwing a steady light, in the shape of a good English history, upon the Germanic centuries through which Mr. Carlyle has taken his glancing and irregular flight. A vast deal more valuable matter might surely have been sifted out, and been rescued from the ‘dust-bins of creation,’ to which Mr. Carlyle has, with groanings and despair, returned so much of the contents of his sieve. A good service might thus have been done, for which both Germany and England would have been grateful” (“Art. I. *History*” 279).

³⁰ Carlyle notes, “The last breath of Friedrich Wilhelm having fled, Friedrich hurried to a private room; sat there all in tears” (*Works* 14: 276). Carlyle then produces a passage of dialogue that takes place between Frederick and one of his generals, the “Old Dessauer”, in which the latter expresses his hopes that he and his sons ““will have the same authority as in the late reign’. Freidrich’s eyes, at this

describes Frederick as “Olympian” in order to promote him as a quasi-divine ruler, Carlyle makes his readers well aware that Frederick plans to stamp his authority on his role as monarch from an early stage. The publication of Volumes I and II of *Frederick* in 1858 had met with a mixed response from reviewers. Many were deeply disappointed on finding that these volumes dealt, in the main, not with Frederick but with his father, Friedrich Wilhelm. Carlyle’s depiction of Frederick as a cowed and beaten Crown Prince who, in his misery had once attempted to flee his father’s court, did not tally with reviewers’ preconceptions of him. The problem was exacerbated by Carlyle’s insistence on eulogizing the decidedly unheroic Friedrich Wilhelm, a strategy which rankled many reviewers and led to doubts about Carlyle’s credentials as a historian. In the later volumes of *Frederick*, Carlyle had an opportunity to rectify the situation. Chapter seven carries out an in-depth investigation of the response to these volumes and determines whether or not Carlyle was successful in his attempts to hold Frederick up as an exemplar for his contemporaries and persuade them to continue reading his epic.

last clause, flash-out tearless, strangely Olympian. ‘In your posts I have no thought of making change: in your posts, yes;—and as to authority, I know of none there can be but what resides in the King that is sovereign!’” (276).

Chapter 7

Carlyle's "big Book" reviewed: The contemporary response to *Frederick the Great*

“here the work of years is devoted to the career of a man whose great merit was, that he was successful fighter of battles. A character less elevated, less fertile of opportunities for indulging a romantic or poetic vein in the biographer, is scarcely to be found in the high places of history Why not have sought better, then, Mr. Carlyle?”¹

In a letter to Louisa, Lady Ashburton on 4th September 1865 in which he referred to Carlyle's dispirited attitude on completion of *Frederick*, Thomas Woolner declared:

I think the almost entire want of intelligent notice of his great work now completed must make him feel depressed ... a few words to show that his toilsome struggle has at least been recognised would surely be not too much to expect from easy-going fellow creatures. But this grand book is concluded and obtains less notice than a vol. of republished essays from the Magazines; or a light book of travels, and is treated as an insignificant production compared with a serial novel by Wilkie Collins or by Mr Anthony Trollope. (Acc. 11388, Folder 103. NLS)

Woolner's suggestion that “a vol. of republished essays from the Magazines; or a light book of travels” would be received more enthusiastically than the final two volumes of *Frederick* appears to confirm the notion that modern tastes were moving away from epics towards less demanding reading material. Despite Carlyle's efforts to persuade reviewers that subsequent volumes would focus on Frederick in his role as King of Prussia, *Blackwood's*, *Chambers's* and the *Quarterly* chose not to review Volumes III and IV, with the *Edinburgh* refusing to review any future volumes. In an article which was published in April 1881, shortly after Carlyle's death, the

¹ Hamley's sentiments in his anonymous review of July 1865 in *Blackwood's*, after reading the final two volumes of *Frederick* (“Carlyle's Frederick” 39).

Edinburgh's reviewer explained the reasons behind this decision and the periodical's stance towards Carlyle: "We are not of those who believe that he ever attained the rank of an historian, or that his later works have any historical value" ("Art. VII." 479). This passage was then footnoted as follows:

In an article on the first volumes of his 'History of Frederic of Prussia,' which will be found in Vol. cx. of this Review, p. 376, we examined with care his merits as an historian. Our opinion of that work is unchanged, and we took no further notice of it. We observe with pleasure that General Sir Edward Hamley, in an admirable Essay which has recently been republished from 'Blackwood's Magazine,' expresses with great force the same views we ourselves entertain. (479) ²

Notwithstanding the *Edinburgh*'s rather puzzling decision to ignore a substantial body of work from one of the Victorian era's greatest living authors, this reviewer's remarks reveal the extent to which Carlyle had antagonised a section of contemporary reviewers with his first two volumes of *Frederick*. As noted in chapter six of this thesis, it is also worth bearing in mind that there is reason to believe that a number of these reviewers already harboured prejudices against Carlyle before the first volumes of *Frederick* were published in 1858.

Carlyle opens Volume III in the same vein with which he closed Volume II by continuing to focus his readers' attention squarely on Frederick.³ In comparison with the slow pace of the first two volumes, the narrative in Volume III was much more lively and Frederick's minor role as Crown Prince was replaced by his

² The work referred to is Hamley's 1859 essay, "Carlyle. Mirage Philosophy". In the *Edinburgh*'s 1881 article, the reviewer makes public that Hamley was the author of this 1859 essay in *Blackwood's*.

³ Volume III begins with Frederick's accession to the throne in 1740, an event which Carlyle covers in Book XI and to which he gives the title, "FRIEDRICH TAKES THE REINS IN HAND, 1740". The title alone gives a clear indication that Carlyle is intent on portraying Frederick as a dynamic monarch. In Book XII, he provides a detailed account of Frederick's involvement in the First Silesian War, a conflict which began with Frederick's invasion of Silesia in 1740. Carlyle ends the volume with the Peace of Breslau in 1744 which is dealt with in Book XIII.

enthusiastic embrace of kingship.⁴ The *Eclectic's* reviewer described Volume III as a “much longed-for volume”, which suggests that Carlyle’s tactics at the conclusion of Volume II of encouraging an air of eager anticipation for future volumes of *Frederick* have, in this reviewer’s case, been successful (“The Third” 499). Judging by the comments from the reviews investigated in this chapter, Carlyle appears to have moved closer to meeting readers’ original expectations in Volumes III and IV.⁵ The appeal of these later volumes can be attributed, at least partially, to Carlyle’s vivid and dynamic coverage of Frederick’s battles. As the *Eclectic's* reviewer noted, “Of the various items of Carlyle’s fame, that of painter of battle pictures is considerable” (504). This sentiment was amplified by the reviewer in the *Athenaeum* who declared, “the battle pictures are unrolled, dark as the cloud and radiant as the blood that at once painted and obscured the field. In modern literature there are few military descriptions so perfect in their way as those of Mr. Carlyle” (“*History of Friedrich*” 1862, 585).⁶ Carlyle’s narrative had finally moved on to an area which proved to be of intense interest for his readers. The *Athenaeum's* description of the king “roll[ing] away to the first Silesian War, to conquer that highest table-land of

⁴ In a review dated June 1862, the *Eclectic's* reviewer admired the “rushing narrative” of Volume III, describing it as “extraordinarily brilliant and powerful” (“The Third” 499). The *Athenaeum* opened its review of May 3rd 1862 with, “After a few preliminary passages, the narrative, in this third volume, rushes grandly and swiftly on, most rapid and most brilliant when the leading figure is that of Frederick himself, cavalcading over the historic plateaux of Silesia. Frederick, at length, is King” (“*History of Friedrich*” 585).

⁵ The *Athenaeum's* reviewer announced, “the third volume is of more immediate and unflinching interest than its predecessors” (“*History of Friedrich*” 1862, 588).

⁶ Reviewing Volume III on October 18th 1862, the *Saturday's* reviewer also complimented Carlyle’s handling of battle scenes and offered an explanation for this assessment, “The accounts of three battles which fall within the limits of the present volume are almost unequalled in simplicity and perspicuity . . . Mr. Carlyle, after long study, extracts for himself the principal and decisive circumstances of the struggle; and unless he has himself misinterpreted the authorities whom he has consulted, it is impossible that the dullest reader can fail to understand the process of the struggle, and the causes of victory and defeat. It is only on reflection that the care and labour are appreciated by which the information distilled into three or four pages must originally have been procured. The topographical accuracy of an engineer, and the skill of a landscape painter, are combined in the careful delineation of the field of battle” (“Frederick” 477).

Germany, or the Cisalpine countries,—to become a warrior, a great captain and the wonder of Europe” reveals this reviewer’s assessment of the wide-reaching and lasting impact of Frederick’s military achievements (586).

It was Frederick’s status as “the wonder of Europe” which presumably fascinated the British public, and which had accounted for reviewers’ deep disappointment with Carlyle’s portrayal of him as a cowed youth in the first two volumes of *Frederick*. Carlyle’s rich and evocative battle-field descriptions in Volume III left those reviewers who had elected to carry on reading beyond the first two volumes eager for more. The remarks with which the *Athenaeum* closed its 1862 review encapsulated this enthusiasm, “The siege of Prague, the selection of Francis of Lorraine as Emperor, the quadruple Alliance, the Peace of Dresden and the mighty Seven Years’ War, with its terrible train of wasted battles, are yet to come; and many a rich chapter must be added to this noble narrative before the grave darkens over the dust of the Great Frederick” (588). According to the *Eclectic*’s reviewer, Carlyle’s “noble narrative” continued in Volume IV. In June 1864, this reviewer declared, “in this volume a succession of panoramic pages move before the reader, the great fights in which the wisdom, strength, and agility of Frederick were displayed, and which won for him at the close of the second Silesian war the surname of *Great*” (“Carlyle’s Frederick” 706).⁷ In Volumes III and IV, Frederick’s pivotal position at the apex of the triadic structure was gradually being reinforced just as Carlyle’s authority as a

⁷ The *Saturday*’s reviewer opined in a review dated April 2nd 1864, “The further on in Frederick’s history we get the more interesting it becomes, for the ten years of peace were signalized by the great quarrel with Voltaire, and the Seven Years War was of real European importance. Those who admire Mr. Carlyle’s genius or tolerate his eccentricities sufficiently to have made their way through the three preceeding volumes will probably find that the fourth is equal in merit to its predecessors” (“Carlyle’s Frederick” 414).

historian was being resurrected by critics after having been undermined in Volumes I and II. It is worth noting, however, that this authority was being granted by reviewers to Carlyle in his role as a military historian and that questions were still being asked about his credentials as a more general historian. In their reviews of Volumes I and II, the *Edinburgh*, the *Quarterly* and the *Saturday* had queried Carlyle's constant disparagement of the Prussian historians from whom he derived his source material. In October 1859, The *Edinburgh's* reviewer had commented ironically, "The Prussian writers have evidently gone to work with malice prepense to write dull books for the torture of Mr. Carlyle. No abuse is sufficiently virulent for these honest labourers, who got together all the materials of which Mr. Carlyle has often made an insufficient use" ("Carlyle's *Frederic*" 378).

Writing in April of 1859, the *Quarterly* had joined the debate, "the accumulated stores of many an old German Dryasdust have been rifled, and we cannot help remarking that the poor Dryasdusts have been very badly treated. They have been first laid under contribution, and then outrageously vilified by their whimsical persecutor" ("Art. I. *History*" 279). The tone from both of these reviewers is one of indignation over Carlyle's treatment of these distinguished historians.⁸ There is a marked sense that Carlyle was perceived to be flouting the rules of historical writing by showing disrespect and contempt towards those who had studiously and

⁸ The *Edinburgh's* reviewer provided a comprehensive list of the historians in question in his 1859 review: "Ranke's work is well known. Buchholz is conscientious if somewhat dull; and Voigt's history of Prussia is especially worthy of commendation, And for the life of Frederic the Great, we doubt if any one ever had materials so well manipulated and so well prepared to his hand; independently of the memoirs of great value, and of the highly meritorious works of Preuss, Ranke, Förster, and Vehse, the works of Frederic himself, including the whole of his correspondence, have been issued, under the superintendence of Dr. Preuss, from the Royal Press of Berlin, with most careful annotation, and with a splendour almost unparalleled in the annals of bibliography" ("Carlyle's *Frederic*" 378-379).

laboriously produced the very source material which was essential for his history. Carlyle's behaviour brings to mind the description of the *Edinburgh's* reviewer who had complained in 1859 that Carlyle was conducting himself as if he had reached "those heights of spiritualism from which he can look down with derision on the achievements of Leibnitz and Wolf" ("Carlyle's *Frederic*" 405).

Criticism of Carlyle's abuse of his sources was still ongoing in 1864. On April 2nd of that year, the *Saturday's* reviewer attempted to put matters into perspective:

The Prussians of Frederick's time wrote as well as they could about things which they were only permitted to know very imperfectly, and the best reason for the existence of the modern historian is that he can look at the past as a whole, can construct a theory about it, and can work up his theory into a style suited to the generation for which he writes That is to say, a great many persons who were not very clever wrote as best they could, and as far as they knew, about the little things of their day; and then, a hundred years after, a foreigner, with a patent theory of a "silent couraged" hero and a lively-at-any-price style, finds that the theory and the style were not done ready to his hands a century previously Mr. Carlyle's complaint is, therefore, to the effect that the minor French and German writers in the middle of the eighteenth century wrote on trivial matters in a trivial but natural way, and that they principally saw the less happy side of the King of Prussia. It requires all the apparatus of Smelfungus and Dryasdust to conceal the absurdity of disguising so simple a fact under the title of "a mad dance of will-o'-wisps and fireflies thrown into agitation." ("Carlyle's Frederick" 414)

This reviewer made a useful comparison between the restrictions under which eighteenth century historians were labouring and Carlyle's modern working environment. However, it was the suggestion that eighteenth century historians did not shirk from portraying Frederick's "less happy side" that may have accounted for Carlyle's subsequent hostile reaction. Although this reviewer's assessment of Carlyle's misuse of his sources appeared to be less inflammatory than the 1859 reviews, it provoked an angry response from Carlyle who had been sent a copy of the *Saturday's* 1864 review by his brother, John. Writing to Jane on April 4th,

Carlyle referred to the *Saturday*'s reviewer as a "dirty puppy" and complained that the review was "extremely contemptible" (*Carlyle Collection* Ms. 616.595. NLS). In a letter to John the following day, he elaborated on his description of this reviewer, calling him "a dirty little *messin*, profoundly unconscious when his betters are riding by: in the absence of a dog-whip, I read him very slightly" (*Carlyle Collection* Ms. 526.15. NLS).⁹

While it is difficult to determine whether or not Carlyle knew who the *Saturday*'s reviewer was, or if he was making an assumption about this particular reviewer based on his opinion of critics in general, Carlyle's extraordinary outbursts in these letters is striking. Despite his contemptuous dismissal of the *Saturday*'s reviewer, Carlyle's tone in his letters suggests that he has been stung by the reviewer's sarcastic and disrespectful description of him. Carlyle's letter to his brother continued:

Being so demoralized, I spent the greater part of the evg, reading the rest of that sad review stuff,—with a profound feeling of sadness at the "popularity" of such an article. *All* the writers, now and whenever I look, seem to be of the same type as mine. Shallow, barren wetches [sic]; *uninstructed* on all subjects, only crammed a little on some few, & insolently conceited on all; transcendancy of commonplace the characteristic of everything they say and think (and I suppose, do) from year's end to year's end. Prithee shepherd, who keeps all these asses?— (Ms. 526.15. NLS)¹⁰

Carlyle's sentiments in this letter confirm that his response to the *Saturday*'s reviewer was typical of his attitude to contemporary reviewers in general. Yet he would have been all too aware that this small but select group of individuals wielded enormous influence as mediators between authors and their readers. Unfavourable

⁹ "Messin" referred to a small pet dog or lapdog but was also used as a derogatory term to describe a feeble, contemptible, or sycophantic person.

¹⁰ A reference to Laurence Sterne's *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman*: "—— Prithee shepherd! who keeps all those Jack Asses?***" (369).

reviews could discourage readers from buying future volumes, a state of affairs which would threaten the stability of Carlyle's triadic structure and which goes some way to explain his admission to his brother that he felt "so demoralized".¹¹

Reviewing volumes I and II of *Frederick* in 1859, the *Eclectic's* reviewer had expressed the opinion that modern literary men held a position of responsibility towards their readers, over whom they exercised enormous power. In Carlyle's case, his long-standing position as a revered man of letters meant that reviewers often approached his productions with an air of deference, if not outright awe. The *Eclectic* opened its review of June 1864 by posing the question, "Another instalment of this big book We inquire with painful interest, when will it come to an end?" ("Carlyle's Frederick" 703). Yet the reviewer immediately admitted that this was not a criticism of Carlyle personally:

As to criticising Mr. Carlyle, this is a matter which we being wise in our generation, quite give up. We should as soon think of criticising any of the great forces and forms of nature, saying to the piping north-east wind, "Sir, you are too noisy," or to Mont Blanc, "Sir, you carry your head too high!" or to Ben Muichdieuh, "Sir, you are a great deal too rugged!" If these, whatever they be, could reply to us, they would say, "we are just what you find us, and thus you must leave us or take us." (703)

Although this reviewer is being ironic, these remarks from the *Eclectic* are similar to the comments made by Hamley about Carlyle in his letter to John Blackwood on November 12th 1858, when he declared that he wished to "treat him as a writer of so

¹¹ Sales figures for *Frederick* indicate a drop in demand for later volumes. The following table lists "all copies printed, copies actually sold and copies on hand" for Volumes I to IV (Tarr 173).

Volume I – 5,000 printed, 4,230 sold, 770 on hand

Volume II – 5,000 printed, 4,230 sold, 770 on hand

Volume III – 4,500 printed, 2,900 sold, 1,600 on hand

Volume IV – 4,500 printed, 1,800 sold, 2,700 on hand

This table is incomplete as the information that it contains was obtained from the records of Chapman and Hall, the publishers of *Frederick* and many of the company's records have been destroyed. No data appears to be available for Volumes V and VI.

much notice should be treated” (Shand 1: 131). The sentiments from both of these reviewers indicate that even critical commentators deferred to Carlyle’s reputation and were often prepared to treat him generously.

Carlyle’s letter to his brother reveals his awareness that he was owed a degree of deference and respect from reviewers. However, this anticipated deference among critics appeared to be no longer in evidence in many of the reviews of Volumes I to IV which appeared between 1858 and 1864. As noted earlier, several reviewers had criticized Carlyle for his arrogant style in *Frederick*. The *Saturday’s* reviewer evidently believed that Carlyle was guilty of taking for granted his readers’ acquiescence, expressing “amazement of finding how great are the vagaries on which an audacious writer, cheered by an applauding public, will venture” (“Carlyle’s *Frederick*” 1864, 414). The reality was that contemporary reviewers were not the generation who had grown up with Carlyle and were more inclined to interrogate the information with which they were being presented. For these reviewers, when Carlyle’s text did not stand up to this scrutiny, his competence and authority as a historian also came into question. One explanation for Carlyle’s vigorous reaction to the *Saturday’s* 1864 review may be that he recognised that this reviewer had exposed a truth which Carlyle had expended much time and effort in evading, that *Frederick* would never be the hero that Carlyle wished him to be. The reviewer noted, “Mr. Carlyle, however, never seems thoroughly easy in his choice. Smelfungus has evidently a secret suspicion that the doggeries were perhaps not so very far wrong after all; and Mr. Carlyle is far too honest a writer to conceal facts or to give them consciously a varnish of untruth. He owns that *Frederick* was sadly deficient in some

ways” (414). The reviewer whom Carlyle had condemned as being “*uninstructed* on all subjects” had not only seen through his various literary techniques but had also reached the conclusion that Carlyle could not even convince himself of Frederick’s heroism, far less his readers.

Nevertheless, Carlyle continued with his strategy of extolling Frederick’s virtues in Volumes V and VI which were published together in March 1865. For the first time, reviewers could look at the work in its entirety and were able to appreciate the tremendous effort that Carlyle had undertaken to produce this six volume epic.¹² Periodicals which had opted to overlook Volumes III and IV (for example *Blackwood’s* and the *Quarterly*) decided that the final two volumes were worthy of their attention and Hamley was once more given the task of writing the anonymous review for *Blackwood’s*.¹³ The touch of sarcasm which permeated Hamley’s earlier review was still very much in evidence in 1865. He suggested that as Carlyle was fond of “Dwelling incessantly in an atmosphere of unreality ... it might have been expected that he would in some degree lose his hold on humanity, and would adapt himself more and more to those cloudlands wherein he delighted to abide” (“Carlyle’s Frederick” 38).

¹² In its review of March 25th 1865, the *Athenaeum* opened with, “Mr. Carlyle’s long and laborious work has come to a close” (“*History of Friedrich*” 413) and in October of that year, the *Eclectic’s* reviewer described the completed work as “four thousand pages of the most exemplary, diligent, and painfully painstaking writing” (“Mr. Carlyle’s Last Chapter” 299). According to the *Examiner’s* review of March 25th 1865, *Frederick* was “not only the chief publication of the week, but also one of the chief publications of our time. For thereby we have added in its complete form to our literature a great and sincere work, containing the results of an undaunted spirit of labour” (“Books” 182). In his review in the *Quarterly* of July 1865, Herman Merivale described *Frederick* as Carlyle’s “great and laborious work, the crowning effort of a life of unremitting literary industry” and declared that it would “remain in truth a great work, and a substantial contribution at once to accurate history and to high literature” (225).

¹³ The *Edinburgh*, however, maintained the stance it had taken in 1859 and ignored all volumes published after 1858.

Despite this underlying tone of ridicule, Hamley appeared to be far more conciliatory towards Carlyle in 1865 than he had been in 1859: “Far, however, from becoming more and more hazy and unintelligible as he grows older, he exhibits in these later volumes fewer crotchets and fewer freaks of style, but not less of that descriptive and allusive power and wealth of imagery which have always formed his chief attractions” (38). Hamley then posited his own reasons for the appeal of these later volumes, suggesting that it was

partly due to our familiarity with Carlylese, rendering us indifferent to verbal pranks, and more sensitive to excellences. But it is owing in much greater degree to the improvement in his subject. He is no longer encumbered with Frederick-William, the eccentric hero of the earlier volumes, the crazy, brutal father of the soldier-king. (38)

Hamley also claimed that Carlyle’s coverage of “Frederick’s boyhood ... so squalid, so barren of interest and incident” had only exacerbated the problem (39). Like many other readers, Hamley was not particularly interested in Frederick’s forebears, his youthful endeavours or, indeed the peaceful elements of his reign. His comment that Carlyle’s monumental history was “devoted to the career of a man whose great merit was, that he was a successful fighter of battles” revealed the true nature of Frederick’s appeal to a British readership (39).¹⁴

In the concluding volumes of his epic, Carlyle had the opportunity to meet these expectations with his coverage of Frederick’s exploits during the Seven Years’ War. The *Athenaeum*’s reviewer noted that this long struggle had not only “made a nation of Prussia”, it had also reverberated in the wider world: “it made America English

¹⁴ It is worth noting, however, that as a military historian, Hamley would have been pre-disposed to make this type of judgement.

instead of French, and it made France, beaten, stripped and humiliated as she was, a subject for epigrams, even at the hands or pens of Frenchmen; and sinful, unrepentant, as she was, and bankrupt as she became, it helped her to that great collapse, which set on foot the terrible Revolution” (*History of Friedrich* 1865, 414). According to this reviewer, in his coverage of the Seven Years’ War Carlyle had “surpassed himself. His research, his judgment, his peculiar powers, his comprehensiveness, his grandeur and his ‘burlesque’ of history were never more conspicuous than in this portion of his work” (414). The majority of reviewers held similar opinions on Carlyle’s abilities as a military historian in these later volumes and this area of his work received almost universal approval.¹⁵ The *Eclectic*’s reviewer was enraptured by Carlyle’s battlefield descriptions, comparing them favourably with “those huge and horrible, but clever, glaring, and brilliant canvasses of Horace Vernet in the Louvre, in which the modern battle-scenes of France have been depicted” (“Mr. Carlyle’s Last Chapter” 313).

Carlyle’s expertise as a military historian also now found favour with Hamley, who remarked, “the same industry which formerly led the historian to grope and sift thoroughly, though with many lamentations and protests, amid the chronicles of the voluminous Dryasdusts of Prussia” had led Carlyle “to study military problems to unusually good purpose” (“Carlyle’s Frederick” 39). Hamley continued:

¹⁵ One notable exception was the *Saturday*’s reviewer, who on April 22nd 1865 complained: “In spite of all the pains Mr. Carlyle has taken to make it lively, the history of the struggle remains as dreary as ever. It is nothing but a long mournful series of marches across brooks at 2 P.M. and into bogs at 5 P.M. The brook and the bog are minutely described to us, and the hour precisely noted; but we can neither realize, nor persuade ourselves to care about, the contest. Sometimes Frederick wins, and sometimes he loses; but we know beforehand that all the parties to it ended as they began, and therefore the ups and downs do not affect us much” (“Carlyle’s Frederick” 477).

A man who can in a science so eminently practical, and which has for the most part been so pedantically treated, as the science of war, discard the pedantry, arrive at common-sense conclusions, and describe military operations with unusual spirit and lucidity, must possess faculties of whose existence there was little evidence in his former works. Exuberance of imagery, fertility of allusion, occasional passages of vigorous eloquence in painting a scene or a character—these we should expect from the author of ‘Sartor Resartus’ and ‘Hero-worship,’ but *not* a plain account of the manœuvres of hostile armies. (39)

Carlyle appears to have surprised Hamley with his realistic portrayals of Frederick’s numerous battles in the Seven Years’ War. Hamley recognised Carlyle’s particular success in this department when he remarked that Frederick “stands forth surrounded by figures so spirited and so martial, in the midst of such a clangour of arms and shock of nations, as would lend interest to a narrative far less picturesque in treatment and clear in effect than Mr. Carlyle’s” (39).

As they continued to read these later volumes of *Frederick*, many reviewers found that their increasingly imaginative involvement in Carlyle’s history mitigated their intense dislike of Frederick. The *Eclectic’s* reviewer complimented Carlyle for telling “this story in [a] very bardic strain ... he has told the story of his Achilles, in the spirit, we sometimes think with the very gifts, of a Homer, and we have yet to be persuaded that it should occupy a place second to any of the immortal histories of our language” (“Mr. Carlyle’s Last Chapter” 324). This was praise indeed from a periodical which, in its 1859 review of *Frederick*, had castigated Carlyle for not taking his responsibilities as a historian seriously enough and for assuming “a tone of scornful defiance” towards those who criticized his methods (“Hero-Worship” 113). The *Eclectic’s* declaration in 1865 that *Frederick* deserved to be regarded as one of “the immortal histories of our language” was far removed from its 1859 charge that

Carlyle and Froude were both guilty of trying to “force facts to represent an ideal of their own minds” (“Mr. Carlyle’s Last Chapter” 324, “Hero-Worship” 123).

In his unsigned 1865 review in the *Quarterly*, Merivale was equally complimentary towards Carlyle, describing him as “something of a classic” and remarking, “As a writer, Mr. Carlyle’s fame is established: criticism has done its worst on him: imitation and flattery have done their worst also: in this character ‘nothing can touch him farther,’ and we certainly shall not profane the great work before us by the slight handling of an ordinary review” (254). However, as Merivale’s review continues it becomes clear that he is using the word “classic” to describe Carlyle in a very specific way, and that, in this instance, the term was not necessarily complimentary. After giving him credit for “forming the literary taste of England and America to an extent which no contemporary (unless, possibly, one of a very different class, Macaulay) has approached”, Merivale said of Carlyle, “His peculiar style and mannerism seem already things of the past to this generation. Imitators of Carlyle abounded not many years ago, and a serious infliction they became. They are already comparatively rare” (254).¹⁶ Yet despite the perception of some critics that his eccentric style belonged to a different era, in 1865 Carlyle was still highly regarded by the majority of reviewers. In his anonymous 1865 review Hamley remarked, “All the world is familiar with his oddities and his genius, and the circle must be dull and unlettered indeed where there cannot be found critics ready to praise or to denounce him” (“Carlyle’s Frederick” 56). Although Hamley was critical of Carlyle’s

¹⁶ In his review, Merivale complimented Carlyle, referring to him as “the great Master himself”. Yet he noted that whilst in *Frederick* Carlyle employed “the very same strange but impressive diction, the same *tours de force* of style, and the same settled eccentricities of thought, not softened in the least degree by age or disuse” that had been present in his previous works, these traits were now regarded as being “antiquated [even] in those who took them up at second hand” (254).

penchant for “habitually treating everything and everybody, except a few oddly selected heroes and their doings, in a jeering, semi-contemptuous way” he ended his article with a tone of deference and respect: “in parting with Carlyle we prefer rather to touch on those characteristics which spring from the force and fertility of his genius. The jeering tone is, after all, only a strange habit, not of heart, but of fancy; for no reader can doubt that the writer in his most contemptuous mood still wishes heartily well to humanity” (56).

In a manner that echoed the *volte face* of the *Eclectic*'s review, Hamley's tone in his 1865 review had altered substantially from that of his 1859 essay. The valedictory tone in his phrase, “in parting with Carlyle” offers a clue as to why reviewers may have looked at Carlyle more sympathetically in 1865. Carlyle was seen to be, if not at the end of his long and productive literary career then very close to it, and reviewers were now beginning to sum up his past achievements. Indeed, the tone of many of these later reviews is striking in that they appear to be rehearsals for Carlyle's obituary. The *Eclectic*'s reviewer produced a glowing assessment of *Frederick*, declaring it to be “the second most splendid and magnificent history in our language. We say the second, but it is only in a calm and measured stateliness, in a symmetrical coherency, that Gibbon may be placed first” (“Mr. Carlyle's Last Chapter” 300-301).¹⁷ Yet comments made by this reviewer reveal that Carlyle had not been successful in changing this particular reviewer's attitude towards Frederick:

¹⁷ The *Eclectic*'s reviewer went on to justify this rather grand claim: “for the power of awakening manifold pleasurable feelings, for the graphic and the graced, for the subtle or more vernacular wit and humour, for the liveliest and most charming episodes—reading like necessary little novelettes in the main story—for philosophic remark, for analysis of character, we know not how we could prefer another history in our language to this, simply as history. We put out of sight *The French Revolution* of our author, the most Homeric of all stories since the *Iliad*, but told rather as Daniel or Isaiah might tell the burdens and the woes of ancient people, than as history usually tells her tale, precisely and clearly” (301).

“what could have induced him to select such a hero? Kings the worthiest and greatest have never had such a monument; this man, who, to our thinking, deserves the title of the last of the scoundrels, almost equally with the last of the kings” (300).

The period which was covered in Volumes V and VI had provided Carlyle with the ideal conditions for altering the pre-existing belief that Frederick was a “scoundrel”. By portraying the king as a courageous military commander during the many conflicts of the Seven Years’ War, Carlyle intended to emphasise Frederick’s heroism. Yet in its 1865 review, the *Saturday* portrayed Frederick in terms that were decidedly unheroic, describing the king as, “very hard-working, very despotic, with a stern purpose to which he succeeded in making other men bend, and full of bulldog courage. Undoubtedly he was a captain of men and a captain of industry, and made many millions of men fight, or dig, or die, as he pleased” (“Carlyle’s Frederick” 476). Hamley agreed with this assessment, describing Frederick’s conduct in these wars as a “triumph of tactics” and insisting that, “In many skilful marches, and amid many failures—in the terrible defeat of Kunersdorf and the victory of Liegnitz” the king was to be commended for “showing still the same indomitable persistence” (“Carlyle’s Frederick” 48, 55). Hamley’s review, however, contained a significant caveat: “It is a picture which wants only a high just cause in the background to render it heroic; failing that, we have the image only of a valiant bulldog, who, having stolen a bone, fights for it, lies gasping and growling on it, shakes his torn ears, winks his bleeding eyes, and will surrender it only with his life” (55).

Hamley's remarks reveal that, in his opinion, the king's invasion of Silesia in 1740, an act which triggered the First Silesian War and which many commentators at the time and since believed to be unlawful, was not a "high just cause".¹⁸ Yet, as Hamley noted, if Carlyle's strategy of eulogizing Frederick was to be a success, the king could not be depicted as behaving in an unjust manner in this, his first military campaign as monarch: "if Frederick must be his hero, Mr. Carlyle may be pardoned for dealing lightly, or even like a partisan, with this passage of the history; for it is the very keystone of the whole: admit that Frederick is wrong here, and the whole Silesian war falls about our ears, a mere jumble of battles, fought in the cause of royal brigandism, then so common" (43).¹⁹ Despite his persistent portrayals of Frederick as a fearless military leader during the Seven Years' War and his insistence that the invasion of Silesia was justified in the final volumes of *Frederick*, Carlyle was unable to convince the majority of reviewers of Frederick's heroic status. The *Athenaeum's* reviewer attempted to offer a balanced account of the ways in which Frederick was perceived, noting that "Chesterfield thought him the greatest hero the world had ever beheld", that as "king, warrior, poet, Stanhope recognized

¹⁸ The *Eclectic's* reviewer referred to "the immorality ... of the annexation of Silesia" ("Mr. Carlyle's Last Chapter" 309) and Hamley declared that Carlyle's handling of the invasion was similar to the way in which "Don Quixote treated the pasteboard visor of his helmet—as something to be taken for granted and confided in, but not rudely put to proof. A discreet and shifty partisan, we admit; but a veracious and incorruptible historian!—"O heavens!" ("Carlyle's Frederick" 43).

¹⁹ A document from Carlyle's collection of research material that I discovered in the Beinecke Library at Yale University during a research trip gives an indication of the depth of feeling amongst some of the inhabitants of Silesia with regard to Frederick's invasion of their country. This article which appeared in the *Times* newspaper (date unknown) referred to the recent sale of a coin from a most unusual batch: "A CURIOSITY.—A great rarity in the shape of coins has lately been sold at Paris—namely, a silver one struck off at Breslau in 1751. Among the persons employed at the time in the Mint was an Austrian who, out of hatred to Frederic II. of Prussia, who had taken possession of Silesia by right of conquest, conceived the idea of revenging himself on that Monarch in the following manner:—The motto on the coin, "Ein reichs thaler" (a crown of the kingdom), he divided in such a manner as to make it read, "Ein reich stahl er" (he stole a kingdom). The king ordered those insulting coins to be all melted down, but some few of them still exist" (MS Vault.Shelves.Carlyle Box 2, File 3, D11).

no fault in him” but “Horace Walpole ... denounced him as a mere captain of banditti” (*History of Friedrich* 1865, 414). Hamley preceded his own answer to the vexed question, “What was the character of Mr. Carlyle’s hero?” with an analysis of Carlyle’s methods (“Carlyle’s Frederick” 43):

We are reviewing a work written by one who, if he be not a great moralist, is nothing: he has been looking all through history for a model of a hero-king—he has studied him for years, painted him for years, and announces loudly, “Got him at last!—look at him—copy him if you would be good and great—his doings are as unerring as a natural law, and when you think him wrong it is *you* that are mistaken.” And we find at the very outset that Frederick’s dealings are not even those of the average tradesman, but rather of the huckster. (43)²⁰

Hamley then noted that although, in his opinion, Frederick “had talents, conversational powers, and a fondness for discussion, whether light or philosophic, which would have made him one of the most agreeable men of his time”, these favourable traits were marred by “a marked malevolence which rendered the atmosphere around him insecure and capricious” (49).

Comments made by the *Eclectic*’s reviewer after reading these final two volumes encapsulated reviewers’ responses towards Frederick: “we have not taken these last volumes of Frederick in hand converted at all from our long-standing impressions about him. It is exceedingly remarkable, he seems now to us just what he seemed when we read those tissues of well-known anecdote about him in school-boy days, an utterly hard and mostly detestable character” (“Mr. Carlyle’s Last Chapter” 300).

Despite having the opportunity to show Frederick in all his martial splendour,

²⁰ Hamley’s assessment of Carlyle’s *modus operandi* was echoed by the *Saturday*’s reviewer who declared: “the life of Frederick totally fails to give Carlyle scope for his power of seizing that which is pious, noble, and good in the characters of pious, noble, and good men. He feels this, and shows that he feels it. He is obliged to be constantly patronizing Frederick, making the best of him, exclaiming and protesting that, although he was a heathenish old brute, he still fought and wrought so well that anything may be forgiven him” (“Carlyle’s Frederick” 1865, 476)

Carlyle, it seemed, had failed in his efforts to reinvent Frederick and reviewers remained stubbornly unconvinced of the king's heroism. Hamley confessed that he was still perplexed by Carlyle's choice of subject for his history suggesting that "A character less elevated, less fertile of opportunities for indulging a romantic or poetic vein in the biographer, is scarcely to be found in the high places of history" and he posed the question which was at the forefront of many reviewers' minds, "Why not have sought better, then, Mr. Carlyle?" ("Carlyle's Frederick" 39).

It has already been noted that a section of reviewers felt that Carlyle's confidence in the unassailability of his position as a respected literary man led to his adopting a high-handed or arrogant tone on occasion. In 1865, in a passage which briefly mentions Frederick's partition of Poland, the *Eclectic's* reviewer made the following observation on this aspect of Carlyle's style:

Through thick and thin, Mr Carlyle goes in for his hero; as is to be expected by all who know Mr. Carlyle, he does not argue this case much, nor use great persuasion, to show that Frederick had some plea for joining the pack of wolves, but he cuffs and thumps the reader about the head, with his usual magnificent tempest of words, till, in sheer dismay, one gives up fighting the matter out with him, holding one's own impression still, that it was a base and bad action, assuring us again that Frederick is not to be tried by any high and truly noble standard. ("Mr. Carlyle's Last Chapter" 309)

The remarks in this excerpt are of crucial importance as they demonstrate that a section of reviewers were all too aware that Carlyle was attempting to bully them into accepting that Frederick was an honourable king, despite Carlyle's own reservations. The point worth noting is that after six volumes of relentless persuasion on the part of Carlyle, these reviewers still held fast to their own established beliefs regarding Frederick's character.

The final review of *Frederick* in 1865 was the article by James Fitzjames Stephen which appeared in the December issue of *Fraser's*. A useful comparison can be made between Carlyle's response to this review in *Fraser's* and his reaction to the *Saturday's* 1864 review. Although, in general, Stephen gave a balanced critique of *Frederick* he also questioned Carlyle's choice of Frederick as a worthy subject for his lengthy history, asking, "Why should Mr. Carlyle trouble himself to write his life?" ("Mr. Carlyle" 795). The sentiments which had been expressed by the *Saturday's* reviewer in 1864 were virtually echoed by Stephen in 1865 when he noted that "Every part of the book gives the impression that Mr. Carlyle never came thoroughly to like Frederick. He tries his best to do so, and succeeds in admiring certain parts of his character, but in other matters, and especially in what lies deepest and is of most lasting importance, he seems to be sometimes baffled and sometimes repelled by him" (796). Furthermore, Stephen believed that Carlyle had failed in his attempt to eulogize Frederick successfully, claiming, "If he had succeeded better in making a hero of Frederick, his history would have had much less historical value" (797). Far from objecting to this criticism of his hero, writing to his brother, John on December 2nd 1865 Carlyle declared, "The Stephen Review of me in *Fraser* is really goodish; thinking you wd wish perhaps to read it, Jean & you, I mean to despatch it on Monday,—you to forward it to Walter Welsh, at yr leisure. Stephen is the late Sir James Stn's eldest Son; a rising Lawyer, and really an honest intelligt kind of man" (*Carlyle Collection* Ms. 526.35. NLS). Carlyle's obvious delight at Stephen's review and his complimentary remarks about Stephen personally contrast sharply with his reaction to the *Saturday's* 1864 article and his description of the offending reviewer as a "dirty little *messin*". At this stage of his life, eight months after the final

volumes of *Frederick* had been published Carlyle may have felt more inclined to accept that Frederick would never be accepted as a heroic figure. His attitude towards Stephen's article could be viewed as his tacit acknowledgment that Frederick had always been a problematic choice.

After the *Fraser's* review in December 1865, I have been unable to trace any further reviews of *Frederick*, which suggests that, after its initial publication the work did not invite much comment from the periodical press. The implication is that by 1865 the attention of the critical community was not held by Carlyle or his writings. Indeed, little appears to have been written about Carlyle until the occasion of his inauguration as Rector of Edinburgh University on April 2nd 1866. One exception to this was "The Calendar 1866" which featured as the title page in the *Punch* issue of 6th January 1866. This calendar was surrounded by cartoons portraying the social, political, scientific, and cultural events of 1866 where each date in the calendar was signified by an incident or a person. Carlyle featured twice in this Calendar. In the section which is reproduced on page 224, he is pictured carrying a child's bucket and spade as he marches purposefully away from a volume which is lying open on the ground beside him and which bears the words "FRIEDRICH FINIS". A short poem accompanies the picture:

"Carlyle, writing 'finis' to 'Friedrich,' altogether,
And off to Scarborough in the summer weather".

Carlyle writing "finis" to "Friedrich," altogether,
And off to Scarborough in the summer weather.

Whitebait and the Greenwich pensioner bidding
SAGITTARIUS aiming an arrow at the Bull



SEPTEMBER 30 DAYS.

| | | | |
|-------|---------------|-------|---------------|
| 1 S | Part. sh. c. | 16 S | 16 S. af. Tr. |
| 2 M | 14 S. af. Tr. | 17 M | Lambert. |
| 3 M | S. r. 5h17m | 18 Tu | Geol. Land. |
| 4 Tu | N. Style c. | 19 W | B. Posters. |
| 5 W | Comte d. | 20 Tu | Emb. Wk.] |
| 6 Th | Combert d. | 21 F | St. March. |
| 7 F | Eunurthug | 22 S | Vivall d. |
| 8 S | N. B. Y. M. | 23 S | 17 S. af. Tr. |
| 9 S | 15 S. af. Tr. | 24 N | S. Butler d. |
| 10 M | S. s. 6h25m | 25 Tu | H. All. 1815 |
| 11 Tu | S. of Delhi | 26 W | St. Cyprian |
| 12 W | Lk. 1759 | 27 Th | Alphers |
| 13 Th | Gen. Wolfe | 28 F | S. r. 5h56m |
| 14 F | Wellington. | 29 S | Mich. Day |
| 15 S | d. 1852] | 30 S | 18 S. af. Tr. |

OCTOBER 31 DAYS.

| | | | |
|-------|---------------|-----------|-------------|
| 1 M | C. M. T. h. | 17 W | Blaidre |
| 2 Tu | S. s. 5h35m | 18 Th | St. Luke |
| 3 W | Alfred d. | 19 F | Kneller |
| 4 Th | Rennie d. | 20 S | B. N. V. r. |
| 5 F | Placidus | 21 S. af. | S. r. 6h51m |
| 6 S | Paith | 22 M | B. Edgell |
| 7 S | 19 S. af. Tr. | 23 Tu | Irish Kel |
| 8 M | S. r. 6h14m | 24 W | Webster |
| 9 Tu | St. Denis | 25 Th | St. Crisp |
| 10 W | Old Mic. D. | 26 F | Dannon h |
| 11 Th | Old Mic. D. | 27 S | Cpt. Cool |
| 12 F | America d. | 28 M | 22 S. af. |
| 13 S | Edw. Conf. | 29 S | S. r. 6h51m |
| 14 S | 20 S. af. Tr. | 30 Tu | Sheridan |
| 15 M | D. 10h. 41m | 31 W | S. s. 4h3 |
| 16 Tu | B. Bouheurs | | |

| | | | |
|-------|---------------|-------|----------------|
| 13 S | Ann. af. As. | 20 M | Chas. II. res. |
| 14 M | C. E. T. div. | 30 W | Pope d. |
| 15 Tu | Quiver died | 31 Tu | Corp. Chris. |
| 16 W | H. Alburn | | |
| 13 W | Hast. bhd. | 28 Tu | Qu. Vict. Cr |
| 14 Th | B. Naseby | 29 F | St. Peter |
| 15 F | Mag. Charta | 30 S | S. r. 3h47m |

Carlyle's literary fame, coupled with his distaste for public performance meant that his decision to accept the post as Rector had produced an air of eager anticipation for his installation address. In its 1866 article, the *Glasgow Herald* remarked that it was "no wonder that the announcement that this man was at last to come forth and address the public with his living voice should have sent a thrill of curiosity and eager expectation throughout the whole country" ("Advertisements" 4). Carlyle's rectorial address to the students at Edinburgh was widely reported by the newspapers of the day.²¹ He was accorded a rapturous welcome by his audience of around two thousand people.²² Yet it was not the content of Carlyle's speech that appeared to strike a chord with his audience but his method of delivery. The *Pall Mall Gazette's* report of April 3rd 1866 typified the reaction of many members of the audience: "Your correspondent here declares that he should hold it worth his coming all the way from London in the rain in the Sunday night train were it only to have heard Carlyle say, 'There is a nobler ambition than the gaining of all California, or the getting of all the suffrages that are on the planet just now!'" ("Thomas Carlyle at Edinburgh" 3). Froude confirms that Carlyle's address had a profound effect on the public's perceptions of him, claiming, "It was now admitted universally that Carlyle was a 'great man'" (*Thomas Carlyle* 307). Yet he goes on to remark that Carlyle himself "was long puzzled at the effect upon the world's estimate of him which this speech produced. There was not a word in it which he had not already said, and said far more forcibly a hundred times. But suddenly and thenceforward, till his death set

²¹ Carlyle's installation was covered by newspapers throughout Britain, including London publications such as the *Times*, the *Daily News* and the *Examiner*, Scottish papers such as the *Scotsman*, *Glasgow Herald* and *Caledonian Mercury* as well as a host of provincial newspapers throughout England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales. Froude noted, "The speech was printed in full in half the newspapers in the island. It was received with universal acclamation" (*Thomas Carlyle* 306).

²² Double this number had applied for tickets but the Music Hall in George Street could only seat two thousand.

them off again, hostile tongues ceased to speak against him, and hostile pens to write” (306).

More importantly, Carlyle’s performance at Edinburgh was responsible for stimulating a resurgence of interest in his work. As Froude remarks, “A low price edition of his works became in demand, and they flew into a strange temporary popularity with the reading multitude” (306). Chapman and Hall met this demand with the publication of the People’s Edition of *The Collected Works of Thomas Carlyle* between 1871 and 1874, which included Carlyle’s inaugural address.²³ According to Isaac Dyer, this was “personally superintended through the press by Carlyle, who took great interest in it and insisted it be sold at the extremely low price of two shillings a volume. Nearly fifty thousand copies were sold” (58). Froude notes that when it first appeared in the pages of *Fraser’s* in 1833, *Sartor Resartus* had been given a lukewarm reception, but in 1871, “20,000 copies of the shilling edition of it were now sold instantly on its publication” (*Thomas Carlyle* 306-307). As neither Froude nor Dyer provide similar information for sales of *Frederick*, it is impossible to determine whether or not there was a specific demand for this work. However, no subsequent editions of *Frederick* were published independently between the Chapman and Hall edition of 1869, which had been incorporated into the *Collected Works*, and an abridged edition focusing on Frederick’s battles which appeared in 1892, an indication that such a demand did not exist. The suggestion is

²³ The first edition of *The Collected Works of Thomas Carlyle*, which was published in sixteen volumes by Chapman and Hall between 1857 and 1858 did not include *Frederick*. In 1869, *Frederick* “was issued in seven volumes in type and bindings uniform with this edition, thus making the complete set twenty-three volumes” (Dyer 57). The Library edition of the *Collected Works* was published between 1869 and 1871. *Frederick* was included in the People’s Edition and the Library Edition. Dyer maintains that the issue of the People’s Edition was “traceable to the effect produced on the popular mind by the *Inaugural Address*” (58). An American Edition of the People’s Edition was published simultaneously.

that readers were buying the People's Edition out of a desire to read *Sartor Resartus* or *The French Revolution* and that there was little public demand for a cheap edition of *Frederick*.

The flurry of press reports which had greeted Carlyle's inaugural address as Rector was superseded by a period in which sympathetic, as well as hostile pens ceased to write about Carlyle or his work.²⁴ Articles which appeared in *Fraser's* in November 1868, the *Daily News* on December 31st 1873 and *Chambers's* in October 1880 brought Carlyle and *Frederick* briefly back to the public's attention.²⁵ Carlyle's death on February 5th 1881, however, provoked a frenzy of activity in the media, when, according to Seigel "the leading writers of the day took up their pens to write his obituary and to assess his stormy literary career" (*Thomas Carlyle* 21).²⁶ The publication of Froude's *Reminiscences* within a month of Carlyle's death intensified

²⁴ Notable exceptions were coverage of Jane's death on April 21st 1866, whilst Carlyle was still in Scotland after giving his address, and Carlyle's 80th birthday celebrations on December 4th 1875.

²⁵ The article in *Fraser's* dealt with the removal from Berlin of a statue of Marshal Keith which had been erected in his honour by Frederick. It was proposed that this be relocated to Keith's birthplace of Peterhead. Letters were dispatched on the subject which were answered promptly by King Wilhelm and Count Bismarck. The latter replied: "Your request was sure to meet with a sympathetic reception on the part of His Majesty's Government, as the highly gifted Scotch historian who with such a thorough appreciation wrote the history of our Great King, and thereby erected to his Generals (and amongst these to Field-Marshal Keith) a worthy historical monument, has long since undertaken, as your request proves, to form between his native land and Prussia a spiritual tie to which His Majesty's Government would willingly give a lasting expression by the erection of a statue of Keith in the Scotch seaport" ("Prussia" 658). The *Daily News* covered the presentation to Carlyle of the Prussian Order of Merit ("London" 5). A review of Carlyle and his life's work which appeared in *Chambers's* in October 1880 also mentioned *Frederick* but only in passing, in a comment on Carlyle's partiality for regular exercise: "Besides walking, he was at one time fond of omnibus riding. While his *Life of Friedrich II.* was in progress, he declared that he rode in this way twice around the world" ("Thomas Carlyle" 665).

²⁶ Many reviewers in 1881 regarded Carlyle's installation as Rector in 1866 as one of the most important events of this career and the performance which he produced whilst giving his inaugural address was singled out for particular praise. On February 7th 1881, the correspondent from the *Birmingham Daily Post* reproduced three glowing testimonials from individuals who had been present at the installation. One of the attendees admitted that, until the occasion of his inauguration Carlyle had "been to me only a voice ... when I saw him for the first time with the eyes of the flesh stand up amongst us the other day, and heard him speak kindly, brotherly, affectionate words, I am not ashamed to confess that I felt moved towards him as I do not think in any possible combination of circumstances I could have felt moved towards any other living man" ("Death" 5).

the media interest, not only because of the timing of the publication but also due to the controversial nature of the material. When it came to assessing his literary career, whilst the majority of reviewers gave a comprehensive assessment of Carlyle's literary output from the earliest essays onwards, *Frederick* barely received a mention. Furthermore, these reviewers were virtually unanimous in their opinion that it was the *French Revolution* that deserved to be regarded as Carlyle's masterpiece.²⁷ The *Glasgow Herald's* correspondent noted that this was the first work that bore Carlyle's name and stressed how influential this text had been, claiming, "it is still so popular, that probably nine out of ten men, both in this generation and of the last, have obtained their view of that tremendous historical event from Carlyle's prose epic" ("Life" 5).²⁸ In his obituary on Carlyle which appeared in the *Academy* of February 12th 1881, Edward Dowden made a noteworthy comment about this work, "In other writers we may read more correctly the causes and effects of the French Revolution. If we would enter the suck of the maelstrom and explore its green-glimmering terror we must accompany Carlyle" (118). Dowden's description of Carlyle's ability to involve his readers imaginatively in the narrative of the *French Revolution* is strikingly similar to his technique in *Frederick*, yet while the former was lauded as "the book of the century" on Carlyle's death,

²⁷ On February 12th 1881, the *Saturday's* reviewer noted, "The merits of Carlyle's prose epic on the French Revolution are of a different and of a higher order There are fuller accounts of the Revolution, but many students remember the principal events most vividly by reference to the history which made them more interesting than scenes in a romance" ("Mr. Carlyle" 200). Writing in the *Cornhill Magazine* in March 1881, Leslie Stephen averred that Carlyle's *French Revolution* was "the equal of the later works (in some other qualities it is their superior)" (354). In his review in *Fraser's* in April 1881, Andrew Lang opined that the *French Revolution* "first proved what Mr. Carlyle could really do" and described it as "by far the greatest of Mr. Carlyle's books" (525, 526). According to Richard Holt Hutton in his review of Carlyle in *Good Words* in December 1881, the *French Revolution* was "perhaps, the book of the century" (288). In his February 1881 article, the *Birmingham Daily Post's* correspondent described it as "rather a great Homeric poem than a history; but it is needless to characterise it, for it is now an English classic" ("Death" 5).

²⁸ Harrison agreed with this assessment declaring, "That so many Englishmen are more familiar with the scenes and the men and women of the French Revolution than they are with the scenes and the men and women of their own history, is very largely the work of Carlyle" (*Studies* 53).

Frederick was virtually ignored by reviewers (Hutton 288).²⁹ In a review of Froude's *Reminiscences* in April 1881, the *Quarterly's* reviewer made a direct comparison between the two works:

The subject of the French Revolution was a congenial one, and afforded an opportune vent for rhapsodies, ejaculations, and apostrophes. At all events, they seemed to come naturally. Not so in his 'Frederic,' which drags its slow length along through ten volumes, occupied him thirteen years, and (he tells us) was composed with loathing. Here the lack of enthusiasm is supplied by bombast or buffoonery, and History, losing all semblance of dignity, more and more degenerates into farce. ("Art. IV." 397)

Of those reviewers who did mention *Frederick*, the correspondent from the *Birmingham Daily Post* was one of the few who had anything complimentary to say, acknowledging the labour involved in its production and praising Carlyle's military descriptions and picturesqueness.³⁰ Those later reviewers who did make reference to *Frederick* continued with the same line of criticism which had greeted this work when the first volumes appeared in 1858, berating Carlyle for eulogizing Frederick and Friedrich Wilhelm. Indeed, if anything, in 1881 reviewers were even more scathing in their condemnation of Carlyle's attempt to make heroes out of these two individuals. There was a hint of sarcasm in the *Examiner's* description of Carlyle as, "the more than apologist of Frederick who has forgotten Frederick's treachery on account of his 'strength' and 'justice'" ("Mr. Carlyle's Political Influence" 126). Lang also criticized Carlyle for his eulogistic tendencies: "He falls down at the feet

²⁹ *Blackwood's* elected neither to write about Carlyle's death nor review his work until July 1882, at which point they published an eighteen-page article entitled "Carlyle's Life" in which no mention was made of *Frederick*.

³⁰ In this review, the *Birmingham Daily Post's* correspondent declared, "As a military critic Carlyle in this work takes a very high rank. Nowhere are descriptions of battles so vivid as in this work" ("Death" 5). The *Saturday's* reviewer also praised specific aspects of *Frederick*: "the history of Prussia in the first volume is an admirable specimen of concise narrative; and scarcely any writer has described battles so intelligibly, though Carlyle was otherwise unacquainted with military affairs" ("Mr. Carlyle" 200).

of conquerors and warriors, he deifies force and fighting” (515).³¹ Julia Wedgwood, in an otherwise complimentary review condemned Carlyle for “that glorification of Frederick William of Prussia which seems to us the most repulsive thing he ever wrote” (597).

Writing in April 1881, the *Edinburgh's* reviewer described Frederick as a “heroic despot” and said of Carlyle: “He could palliate the brutal buffoonery of Frederic William and the mendacity of Prussian ambition, as if he were utterly devoid of moral sense” (“Art. VII.” 474). The reviewer in the *Quarterly*, commenting on a passage in *Frederick* in which Carlyle likened Frederick’s father to a lion, declared, “Frederick William was more like a bear than a lion, and the laboured attempt to elevate him into a hero or a man of genius was an inexplicable inexcusable absurdity” (“Art. IV.” 398). Adding to the chorus of disapproval was the reviewer in the *Athenaeum* who outlined Carlyle’s methodology: “His reverence for work and his admiration of all successful work induced in him an adoration of power, merely as power, of which in his later years he found the fullest embodiment in Frederick of Prussia, whose worst deeds and blackest treacheries were to be regarded as heroic exploits solely because he was able to achieve them” (“Mr. Carlyle” 235). The strong words and disparaging tone of these extracts reveal that, even in 1881, Carlyle’s eulogizing of Frederick and his father in the early volumes of *Frederick* continued to rile reviewers. Reviewers’ initial responses to *Frederick* had hardened over time and had now become standard opinion. In 1881, this view had become something of a last word on the subject, one which has remained in place to this day.

³¹ Lang went on to make a rather outlandish claim with regard to Carlyle’s hero-worship of “men of action”, maintaining, “There is something womanish in the literary character, and men of letters run after a soldier with a feminine passion for his red coat and agreeable martial swagger” (525).

Carlyle had been faced with a dilemma when he wrote the first two volumes of *Frederick*. His challenge was to portray Frederick as a heroic figure during his early years as Crown Prince. After all, Frederick had only come to the attention of the world at large during a later period of his life, as a powerful king and renowned military commander. As a means of situating Frederick in a historical context, Carlyle had felt it necessary to provide a detailed account of the king's ancestry. Furthermore, in order to begin the process of eulogizing Frederick, he had reasoned that it was vital to confer heroic status on his father. Carlyle's decision to spend roughly three hundred pages describing Frederick's ancestors may have baffled many reviewers, but it was his determination to present Friedrich Wilhelm as a hero which rankled them most. Friedrich Wilhelm's brutish behaviour had been too well reported in the past for reviewers ever to accept him as a heroic character and they became increasingly annoyed at Carlyle's persistent efforts to depict him as such. Although there is no doubt that later volumes of *Frederick* were received by reviewers with greater appreciation than Volumes I and II had been in 1858, the realisation that an author of repute such as Carlyle could undertake to attempt the transformation of such an unworthy individual into a heroic figure made reviewers question Carlyle's judgement. More importantly, it led them to interrogate Carlyle's eulogistic portrayal of Frederick. As a result, Carlyle's attempt to position the king at the apex of his triadic structure was unsuccessful and the three-way relationship ultimately failed.

By the time that they reviewed Carlyle's body of work after his death, many reviewers mentioned *Frederick* purely as a point of reference; they recognised that the publication of the final volumes of this work in 1865 had effectively signalled the end of Carlyle's literary career, nearly twenty years before his death.³² Yet whilst reviewers acknowledged that Carlyle had made some errors of judgement during his long and productive literary career, there is no doubt that he was generally perceived to have been a "genius" and a "great man". In his obituary of Carlyle, Leslie Stephen declared that he was paying an "act of homage to one who was yesterday our foremost man of letters" (349). Stephen ended his obituary by claiming, "The hero in literature is the man who is invariably and unflinchingly true to himself Such heroism requires no small endowment of high moral qualities; and they have seldom or never been embodied more fully than in this sturdy, indomitable Scotchman" (358), whilst Hutton remarked on Carlyle's legacy for future generations, "no literary man in the nineteenth century is likely to stand out more distinct, both for flaws and genius, to the centuries which will follow" (288). As for *Frederick's* place in posterity, Carlyle's lengthy and laboriously produced epic was only ever accorded a minor position within his literary canon.

³² *Frederick* was referred to as Carlyle's "last great work" by the correspondents in the *Daily News* and the *Penny Illustrated Paper and Illustrated Times* of February 1881 ("Death" 6, "Thomas Carlyle" 108). According to the *Athenaeum's* reviewer, "Excepting a few unimportant utterances of old thoughts" Carlyle had "produced nothing after the completion of his 'Frederick the Great' in 1865" ("Mr. Carlyle" 232). The *Glasgow Herald's* correspondent remarked, "The Life of Frederick may be fairly said to be the last considerable work which Carlyle has produced" ("Life" 5), a sentiment which was repeated by the correspondent from the *Birmingham Daily Post* who declared that Carlyle's "literary career had practically ended with the conclusion of 'Friedrich II.'" ("Death" 5). Carlyle's final literary offerings, *Early Kings of Norway* and *Portraits of John Knox* were published together in one volume in 1875.

Conclusion

There is no doubt that significant damage was done to Carlyle's posthumous reputation by the speculative revelations concerning his relationship with his wife Jane which appeared in Froude's 1881 publication, *Reminiscences by Thomas Carlyle*. Almost forty years later, on October 30th 1920, *John O'London's Weekly* carried a review of Augustus Ralli's new publication, *Guide to Carlyle* in which they confirmed the harm that Froude's allegations had caused. Their anonymous reviewer declared:

I cling to my belief that the present generation does not read Carlyle with anything like the enthusiasm that their fathers did. The fact may no doubt be partly traced to the unfortunate controversy which has raged round his relations with his wife. Rightly or wrongly, Carlyle's halo has been distinctly dimmed by Froude's revelations. ("The Book World" 125)

During this period, Carlyle's reputation also came under pressure from a different quarter. As Britain became increasingly more militarized in the aftermath of World War I, attitudes had begun to harden towards him due to his unequivocal support for Prussia: "some of his own most vehement doctrines—such, for instance, as his enthusiasm for Prussia—have been proved by the drift of time to have been singularly unfortunate" (125).¹ The twentieth century was, therefore, always going to be problematic for Carlyle.

In addition, Carlyle came under attack for his eulogizing of individuals such as Frederick who were perceived to have achieved their goals primarily through brute

¹ The awareness that his championing of Prussia might rebound on Carlyle as a result of Britain's involvement in World War I had been expressed in 1916 by A.M.D. Hughes: "It is true, the events through which we are now living have branded the philosophy of the book. They have written the vices of 'the Prussian idea' so large that he who runs might read them, and Prussia, and all Germany after are, are plainly at enmity at this hour with the better genius of our kind" (xxii).

strength. In 1927, Norwood Young maintained that Carlyle's hero-worship of the Prussian king was directly responsible for Germany's involvement in the First World War:

There would have been no eagerness for war in Germany but for the military prestige of Prussia, which was based principally upon the Frederick legend which Carlyle had helped to disseminate ... It was the fable of Frederick, surrounded by enemies, beating off their huge forces, defying the world, that gave Prussianised Germany the conviction that its army was unconquerable, that victory was certain (331) ²

Towards the end of World War II, reports that Hitler had been reading *Frederick* during his final days in the Berlin bunker in 1945 brought accusations against Carlyle that he was a forerunner of fascism.³ Carlyle's declaration in 1854 that he was "getting old, yet would grudge to depart without trying to tell a little more of my mind" was the driving force behind his decision to embark on writing *Frederick* (Froude, *Thomas Carlyle* 172). Yet his early vacillation over Frederick's suitability as a heroic figure proved to be prophetic. As his research on the Prussian monarch progressed, he was increasingly unable to convince himself of Frederick's worth as a heroic figure and his persistence in extolling Frederick's virtues, despite substantial evidence to the contrary undermined Carlyle's credibility. Furthermore, it

² Young was not alone in expressing these extreme views. Seigel provides a list of writers in this period who, he claims, "condemn Carlyle's worship of intuition, emotionalism, and force, and see him as a forerunner of fascism and racism" (*Thomas Carlyle* 23). The *National Review* (London) of February 1923 carried an article entitled *Thomas Carlyle as the Catspaw of the Hohenzollerns*, written by "Sartor Resartus" in which it was claimed that Carlyle was duped into writing *Frederick* in order to promote German interests.

³ The story of Hitler's reading *Frederick* in the Berlin bunker has evolved into an urban myth, the repercussions of which are still being felt today. In a letter which appeared in the *Times* newspaper on April 18th 2009, David Sorensen reacted vigorously to a recent article in which historian Tristram Hunt had "repeat[ed] the tired tale of Hitler reading Thomas Carlyle's biography of Frederick the Great in his Berlin bunker" (*Times* 21). Sorensen remarked wryly, "if the story is true, then it says more about the Führer's reading skills than it does about Carlyle's political views" (21). In his book entitled, *Hitler's Private Library: the Books that Shaped his Life*, published on September 5th 2009, Timothy Rybeck also attempts to brand Carlyle a fascist when he notes that Joseph Goebbels presented Hitler with a copy of *Frederick* to read during his final days in the Berlin bunker.

antagonised a section of Carlyle's readers, many of whom agreed with the assessment of the *Eclectic's* reviewer in 1865 that Frederick warranted "the title of the last of the scoundrels, almost equally with the last of the kings" ("Mr. Carlyle's Last Chapter" 300).

In spite of the criticism of Carlyle's treatment of Frederick and his father by contemporary reviewers, by the time the final volumes were published in 1865 *Frederick* was recognised by many to be one of the major literary productions of the Victorian period from one of its most eminent authors. As noted in the introduction to this thesis, since that time *Frederick* has largely been overlooked, even by Carlyleans.⁴ Frederick himself remains a constant fashionable theme, with two new biographies of the king appearing recently.⁵ Yet in their texts Fraser and MacDonogh barely mention Carlyle's *Frederick*.⁶ MacDonogh, however, does make the interesting observation that "Until the British took down the pub signs and turned them over to Kitchener and King George, children were nurtured on images culled from Carlyle's *Frederick the Great*" (4). As the image on page 236 demonstrates, from the late nineteenth century onwards it was Frederick's persona as warrior king which continued to fascinate British readers.⁷

⁴ One exception is David Sorensen, who maintains that Carlyle's epic is "arguably the greatest historical work of the 19th century, superior in range and scope to anything written by Ranke, Michelet or Macaulay" (*Times* 21).

⁵ Fraser, David. *Frederick the Great: King of Prussia*. London: Penguin, 2000; MacDonogh, Giles. *Frederick the Great: A Life in Deed and Letters*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000. First published in London by Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1999.

⁶ Fraser's sole reference to *Frederick* is when he claims that "Carlyle indulged on his [Frederick's] behalf some of his sonorous and fiercely Protestant tyrannophilia" (6). In his introduction, MacDonogh mentions the Berlin bunker incident, declaring that Goebbels read Hitler "choice cuts from Carlyle" (6).

⁷ This image was used as the front page of an article on Frederick which was written by Henry Frith and published in volume 26 of *Every Boy's Annual* in 1886. This was one of several essays on Frederick which featured in a series entitled "Heroes of European History" in this popular magazine aimed at teenage boys. In these essays, Frith referred to and quoted from Carlyle's *Frederick*.

'Frederick the Great', *Every Boy's Annual* 1886



Frederick the Great.--p. 337

The twenty-first century provides an opportunity for a re-evaluation of Carlyle's extraordinary work. In her essay on *Frederick*, Ruth apRoperts argued that the "remarkable three-way relationship" which Carlyle had created was "both open and perpetually shifting" (24). Although the triadic structure may have failed in the nineteenth century, the fluidity of its nature gives scholars today the potential to offer new ways of thinking through this three-way relationship. In addition to investigating this relationship in more depth, there are several key areas regarding Carlyle and *Frederick* that would benefit from further research. Firstly, the well-publicised report of Hitler reading *Frederick* in the Berlin bunker towards the end of World War II which led to charges of fascism against Carlyle. It would be instructive and revealing to carry out further research into the effects that this incident had on Carlyle's reputation at the time as well as its long term implications. Secondly, at a Carlyle conference which took place in 2007, concerns were expressed about the fact that Carlyle's work no longer appears to be taught in schools and rarely forms part of the curricula of Higher Education institutions.⁸ An investigation into the ways in which *Frederick* is perceived today, in order to determine whether or not this text might still have a place in academia and in what capacity, could prove to be an extremely productive exercise. Three abridged editions of *Frederick* which focused on Frederick's numerous battles appeared in 1892, 1911 and 1916. The latter two editions were specifically targeted at children, with the 1916 edition adapted for use in schools. Taking into account the enormous size of Carlyle's epic, one practical way of re-introducing *Frederick* into the classroom might be to follow these early twentieth century models and produce a condensed version of *Frederick* that deals

⁸ This decline in teaching could also be attributed to negative perceptions of Carlyle following World War II, a state of affairs which additional research would help to clarify.

primarily with his military achievements. Finally, additional research into the reviews of *Frederick* in the periodical press of the nineteenth century would be an extremely worthwhile exercise. In this thesis, only a small number of periodicals have been investigated out of the large number that reviewed *Frederick* on its publication between 1858 and 1865 and on the event of Carlyle's death in 1881. Carlyle's installation as Rector of Edinburgh University in April 1866 also provoked renewed activity in the media with the appearance of multiple reviews of Carlyle's life and work. An extensive investigation into these reviews would provide a more comprehensive picture of the changing contemporary response to *Frederick* which would result in a more accurate assessment of this work's legacy for Carlyle.

It is important to note that, whilst in the latter part of the nineteenth century *Frederick* was accorded only a minor position within Carlyle's literary canon, as this book was appropriated by various factions in the early to middle decades of the twentieth century it became, temporarily, the work by which Carlyle was defined. The same charges that had been made against him in 1858 were responsible for the outcry against Carlyle in 1945: his determination to eulogize Frederick at all costs. Carlyle's attempts to position Frederick at the apex of the triadic structure throughout *Frederick* were unsuccessful. As a result, the three-way relationship became weakened and the structure failed. Carlyle's strategy ultimately damaged his own reputation, antagonising not only contemporary but also future readers, with the result that today, *Frederick* is no longer taught in classrooms and still remains largely unread and unappreciated by the world at large. A reassessment of one of the Victorian era's most significant literary productions is long overdue, and a major

investigation into the ways in which Carlyle's epic could be restructured to allow for its dissemination to a wider audience warrants prompt and considered attention from the scholarly community.

Appendix A

A selection of letters from *Oeuvres de Frédéric le Grand*, volumes 19, 25 and 26

1. Frederick to Graf von Finckenstein, 12th August 1759 *Oeuvres* 25: 305-306
2. Frederick to Marquis D'Argens, 16th August 1759 *Oeuvres* 19: 78-79
3. Frederick to Prince Henri, 16th August 1759 *Oeuvres* 26: 199-200
4. Frederick to Marquis D'Argens, 20th August 1759 *Oeuvres* 19: 82
5. Frederick to Prince Ferdinand, 19th August 1759 *Oeuvres* 26: 542-543
6. Frederick to Prince Ferdinand, 5th September 1759 *Oeuvres* 26: 543-544
7. Frederick to Marquis D'Argens, 4th September 1759 *Oeuvres* 19: 86

Appendix A

1. Frederick to Graf von Finckenstein, 12th August 1759 *Oeuvres* 25:305-

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I. AU COMTE DE FINCKENSTEIN.

Beeskow, 3 août (1759).

Je viens d'arriver après de cruelles et terribles marches. Il n'y a rien de désespéré dans tout ceci, et je crois que le bruit et l'inquiétude que cette équipée a causés sera ce qu'il y aura de plus mauvais. Montrez ma lettre à tout le monde, pour que l'on sache que l'État n'est pas sans défense. J'ai fait au delà de mille prisonniers à Hadik. On lui a pris tous ses chariots de farine. Finck, je crois, l'observera de près. Voilà tout ce que je puis dire. Je marcherai demain jusqu'à deux lieues de Francfort. Il faut que Katte^a m'envoie incessamment deux cents winspels de farine et des boulangers, une centaine, à Fürstenwalde. Je camperai à Wulkow. Je suis très-fatigué. Voilà six nuits que je n'ai pas fermé l'œil. Adieu.

2. AU MÊME.

(Wulkow) ce 8 (août 1759).

Si vous entendez tirer demain, ne vous en étonnez pas; c'est la réjouissance pour la bataille de Minden. Je crois que je vous lanternerai encore quelques jours. J'ai beaucoup d'arrangements à prendre; je trouve de grandes difficultés à surmonter, et il faut sauver la patrie, non pas la perdre; je dois être plus prudent et plus entreprenant que jamais. Enfin je ferai et j'entreprendrai

^a Henri-Christophe de Katte, ministre d'État, mort le 23 novembre 1760.

Appendix A

1. Frederick to Graf von Finckenstein, 12th August 1759 *Oeuvres* 25: 305-

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306 VI. CORRESPONDANCE DE FRÉDÉRIC

tout ce que je croirai faisable et possible. Avec cela, je me trouve dans la nécessité de me hâter pour prévenir les desseins que Hadik pourrait avoir sur Berlin. Adieu, mon cher. Ou vous chanterez un *De Profundis*,^a ou un *Te Deum* dans peu.

3. AU MÊME.

(Oetscher) ce 12 (août 1759).

J'ai attaqué ce matin à onze heures l'ennemi. Nous les avons poussés jusqu'au cimetière des juifs,^b auprès de Francfort. Toutes mes troupes ont donné, et ont fait des prodiges; mais ce cimetière nous a fait perdre un prodigieux monde. Nos gens se sont mis en confusion; je les ai ralliés trois fois; à la fin, j'ai pensé être pris moi-même, et j'ai été obligé de céder le champ de bataille. Mon habit est criblé de coups. J'ai deux chevaux de tués. Mon malheur est de vivre encore. Notre perte est très-considérable. D'une armée de quarante-huit mille hommes, je n'en ai pas trois mille dans le moment que je parle. Tout fuit, et je ne suis plus maître de mes gens. On fera bien à Berlin de penser à sa sûreté. C'est un cruel revers, je n'y survivrai pas. Les suites de l'affaire seront pires que l'affaire même; je n'ai plus de ressources, et, à ne point mentir, je crois tout perdu. Je ne survivrai point à la perte de ma patrie. Adieu pour jamais.

^a Voyez t. XIX, p. 323.

^b Voyez t. V, p. 17 et suivantes, et t. XX, p. 281.

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2. Frederick to Marquis D'Argens, 16th August 1759 *Oeuvres* 19: 78-79

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CORRESPONDANCE DE FRÉDÉRIC

j'ai entendu faire quelquefois, à Hambourg, à des Allemands et à des négociants hollandais. J'ai surtout appuyé sur le ridicule de se laisser séduire aux éloges outrés que l'on fait de la reine de Hongrie et du roi de France, parce que j'ai vu bien des gens être la dupe de ces éloges. Je me flatte que V. M. trouvera que j'ai traité cet endroit avec toute la modération possible. Je cherche à prendre un air d'impartialité qui peut servir mieux que la trop grande vivacité. Ce qui me fait plaisir, c'est que ces *Lettres* se débitent en allemand; cela pourra les rendre utiles; sans cela elles l'auraient été fort peu. Je ne connais pas davantage le traducteur que je suis connu de lui. Tout le monde est ici persuadé que les *Lettres* françaises sont véritablement faites par un ministre, ou du moins par un bon protestant.

Je remercie V. M. de la bonté qu'elle a de permettre que je prenne les eaux à Sans-Souci. Je ne manquerai pas d'avoir l'honneur d'écrire à V. M. dès que j'y serai arrivé, et de l'instruire de ce qu'elle souhaite savoir. Puissé-je avoir le bonheur de la voir bientôt comblée de gloire et jouissant d'une tranquillité parfaite dans ce beau séjour qu'elle continue de faire embellir!

Je joins aux *Lettres* françaises deux exemplaires des deux premières allemandes, si par hasard V. M. avait envie de les faire lire à quelqu'un qui n'entendit pas le français. J'ai l'honneur, etc.

64. AU MARQUIS D'ARGENS.

Madlitz, 16 août 1759.

Nous avons été malheureux, mon cher marquis, mais pas par ma faute.^a La victoire était à nous, elle aurait même été complète, lorsque notre infanterie s'impatiente, et abandonna mal à propos le champ de bataille. L'ennemi marche aujourd'hui à Müllrose, pour se joindre à Hadik. L'infanterie russe est

^a Frédéric parle de la bataille de Kunersdorf, livrée le 12 août 1759. Voyez t. V, p. 17-20.

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2. Frederick to Marquis D'Argens, 16th August 1759 *Oeuvres* 19: 78-79

AVEC LE MARQUIS D'ARGENS.

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presque totalement ruinée. Tout ce que j'ai pu rassembler de mes débris monte à trente-deux mille hommes. Je vais me mettre sur leur chemin, me faire égorger, ou sauver la capitale. Ce n'est pas, je pense, manquer de constance. Je ne saurais répondre de l'événement. Si j'avais plus d'une vie, je la sacrifierais pour ma patrie; mais, si ce coup me manque, je me crois quitte envers elle, et je pense qu'il me sera permis de songer à moi-même. Il y a des bornes à tout. Je soutiens mon infortune, sans qu'elle m'abatte le courage. Mais je suis très-résolu, après ce coup-ci, s'il me manque, de me faire une issue pour ne plus être désormais le jouet d'aucune sorte de hasard.^a Je ne sais ni où vous êtes, ni ce que vous deviendrez; mais, si j'ai un conseil à vous donner, attendez à Potsdam ou Brandebourg l'issue de l'événement, et, quoi qu'il arrive, souvenez-vous d'un ami qui vous aime et estimera jusqu'au dernier soupir. Adieu.

Je suis ici sur la terre du général-major Finck,^b frère du ministre, que les Cosaques ont pillée; mais le dommage ne passe pas quelques centaines d'écus. Adieu, mon cher; étudiez Zénon dans ces temps critiques, et laissez reposer Épicure.

65. DU MARQUIS D'ARGENS.

Le 4 (sic) août 1759.

SIRE,

Il ne vous arrive que ce qui est arrivé à César, à Turenne, et plusieurs fois au grand Condé. Si vous prenez sur vous de vous posséder, de soigner votre santé, et de faire usage des ressources que vos lumières vous fourniront, tout sera bientôt réparé. Je meurs de douleur de ne pas être auprès de vous pour pouvoir vous dire sans cesse ce que j'ai l'honneur de vous écrire. Au nom

^a Voyez t. XII, p. 42, 50-56, 100, 101, etc.

^b Voyez t. V, p. 92.

Appendix A

3. Frederick to Prince Henri, 16th August 1759 *Oeuvres* 26: 199-200

AVEC LE PRINCE HENRI.

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la tendresse et de tous les sentiments d'estime avec lesquels je suis, etc.

Vous aurez la bonté de faire faire un feu de réjouissance pour le gain de la bataille de Minden.

68. AU MÊME.

Lebus, 16 août 1759.

Nous sommes venus camper à Lebus. L'ennemi a fait des pertes considérables. La bataille^a aurait été gagnée, si l'infanterie n'avait pas plié tout d'un coup. Le prince de Würtemberg et Seydlitz blessés, la cavalerie a disparu du champ de bataille. Nos chevaux de canon ont été tués, ce qui fait que nous en avons beaucoup perdu. Je fais revenir de l'artillerie de Berlin; enfin je fais l'impossible pour soutenir l'État chancelant. Nous n'avons pas au delà de deux mille cinq cents morts, mais au delà de dix mille blessés, dont sûrement six mille reviendront en peu de temps. Vous ne pouvez rien faire dans tout ceci. J'espère que le prince Ferdinand me délivrera de l'armée de l'Empire. Le moment que je vous annonçais notre malheur, tout paraissait désespéré;^b ce n'est pas que le danger ne soit encore très-grand, mais comptez que tant que j'aurai les yeux ouverts, je soutiendrai l'État comme c'est mon devoir. Un étui que j'ai eu dans la poche m'a garanti la jambe d'un coup de cartouche qui a écrasé l'étui.^c

^a Celle de Kunersdorf. Voyez t. V, p. 18—20.

^b Voyez l'Instruction donnée par le Roi au général de Finck le 12 août, immédiatement après la bataille de Kunersdorf, et sa lettre au ministre d'État comte de Finckenstein, de la même date. La première de ces pièces est imprimée dans J.-D.-E. Prouss, *Friedrich der Grosse, eine Lebensgeschichte*, t. I, p. 450, et l'autre dans notre t. XXV, p. 306. La lettre au prince Henri à laquelle Frédéric fait allusion ne parvint pas à son adresse; elle n'a pas été retrouvée.

^c Voyez t. XIX, p. 189.

Appendix A

3. Frederick to Prince Henri, 16th August 1759 *Oeuvres* 26: 199-200

200° IV. CORRESPONDANCE DE FRÉDÉRIC

Nous sommes tous déchirés; il n'y a presque personne qui n'ait deux ou trois coups de feu dans les habits ou dans le chapeau. Nous sacrifierions volontiers notre garde-robe, si ce n'était que cela. L'ennemi s'est un peu éloigné de Francfort, et campe dans les bois, entre l'Oder et le chemin de Reppen. Représentez-vous, dans cette cruelle crise, tout ce que souffre mon esprit, et vous jugerez facilement que le tourment des damnés n'en approche pas. Heureux les morts! ils sont à l'abri des chagrins et de toutes les inquiétudes.

69. AU MÊME.

Fürstenwalde, 24 août (1759).

Vous saurez l'échec qui nous est arrivé. Je suis ici, à Fürstenwalde. J'ai trente-trois mille hommes encore. Les Russes et Loudon campent de ce côté-ci de Francfort, et se sont retranchés sur les vignes. Hadik est à Müllrose; il a un détachement à Beeskow. Ils attendent que Daun les joigne pour marcher à Berlin. Si vous voyez que Daun marche à Guben, il faudra que par des marches forcées vous me joigniez par Beeskow, où j'enverrai un détachement pour vous faciliter le passage. Si Daun change de projet, et se tourne vers la Silésie, je pourrai lui rendre les vivres et les convois impraticables; mais, autant que j'en puis juger, il y a apparence que Daun, par vanité et pour avoir l'honneur de m'écraser, joindra les Russes à Francfort.

Vous aurez la bonté de donner cinquante ducats au porteur, et vous le garderez chez vous.

Appendix A

4. Frederick to Marquis D'Argens, 20th August 1759 *Oeuvres* 19: 82

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CORRESPONDANCE DE FRÉDÉRIC

67. AU MARQUIS D'ARGENS.

Fürstenwalde, 20 (août 1759).

Quelque envie que j'aie de vous voir, mon cher marquis, je trouve ma situation si affreuse, que je n'ai garde d'y associer personne. Restez à Berlin, ou plutôt retirez-vous à Potsdam. Il arrivera dans peu quelque catastrophe, et il ne faut pas que vous en souffriez. Si les choses prennent une bonne tournure, vous serez dans quatre heures de retour à Berlin. Si le malheur nous poursuit, allez à Hanovre ou à Celle, d'où vous pourrez pourvoir à votre sûreté. Je vous proteste que, à cette dernière action, j'ai fait humainement ce qui m'a été possible pour vaincre; mais mes gens m'ont abandonné, et il ne s'en est pas fallu de beaucoup que je ne fusse tombé dans les mains des barbares.^a Je n'entre point dans le détail de ce qui rend ma situation aussi cruelle. Je n'en dis rien; le mal ne doit être que pour moi, et le bien pour le public. Croyez qu'il faut avoir quelque chose de plus que de la fermeté et de la constance pour se soutenir où je suis. Mais, je vous le dis franchement, si malheur m'arrive, ne comptez point que je survive à la ruine et à la désolation de ma patrie. J'ai ma façon de penser, je n'imite ni Sertorius, ni Caton; je ne pense point à la gloire, mais à l'État, et, après lui avoir tout sacrifié, s'il succombe malgré mes soins, je dois me décharger du fardeau de la vie, qui déjà depuis longtemps me pèse et m'importune.

Quand on a tout perdu, quand on n'a plus d'espoir,
La vie est un opprobre, et la mort un devoir.^b

Adieu, cher marquis. Attendez l'événement, et, quoi qu'il arrive, souvenez-vous d'un ami qui vous aime sincèrement.

^a Voyez t. V, p. 19.

^b Voyez t. XII, p. 53, où le Roi a varié ces deux vers de *Méropé*.

Appendix A

5. Frederick to Prince Ferdinand, 19th August 1759 *Oeuvres* 26: 542-543
 6. Frederick to Prince Ferdinand, 5th September 1759 *Oeuvres* 26: 543-544

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V. LETTRES DE FRÉDÉRIC

afin que rien ne vous arrête. Nous sommes ici dans l'attente des événements; mais la saison est si froide, qu'il ne sera guère possible de camper qu'en quatre semaines dans ces montagnes. Adieu, mon cher frère; j'ai toute sorte de choses à régler encore. Je vous embrasse bien tendrement, étant avec une parfaite estime, etc.

10. AU MÊME.

Reich-Heenersdorf, 15 juin 1759.

... Ne pensez point à la guerre, mon cher frère, mais à vivre, mais à vous rétablir. Tâchez d'écarter toute idée fâcheuse et d'être aussi gai qu'il vous est possible, et n'augmentez pas mes chagrins par la crainte de votre danger.

11. AU MÊME.

Fürstenwalde, 19 (août 1759).

Vous avez très-bien fait d'aller à Stettin. Nous avons été malheureux, mon cher frère, parce que notre infanterie s'est impatientée un quart d'heure trop tôt. L'ennemi est joint par Hadik; toute l'armée veut marcher sur Berlin. Je me suis mis ici sur leur chemin; je crois que demain ou après-demain au plus tard nous aurons une bataille. Les officiers et moi, nous sommes résolus de mourir ou de vaincre; veuille le ciel que le commun soldat pense de même! Prenez soin de votre santé, et n'oubliez pas un frère qui vous aimera jusqu'au dernier soupir. Adieu.

Mes compliments au duc de Wurtemberg, à Seydlitz, à We-

* Voyez ci-dessus, p. 199 et 200, n^{os} 68 et 69.

Appendix A

5. Frederick to Prince Ferdinand, 19th August 1759 *Oeuvres* 26: 542-543
 6. Frederick to Prince Ferdinand, 5th September 1759 *Oeuvres* 26: 543-544

AU PRINCE FERDINAND.

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dell, à tous les honnêtes gens qui ont bien combattu, et ma malédiction à tous les coïons qui se trouvent chez vous sans blessures.

12. AU MÊME.

Fürstenwalde, 28 août 1759.

Vous avez grande raison, mon cher frère, de me croire dans une situation difficile et épineuse. Cela finira comme tout finit dans le monde. Il faut de la fortune pour que ceci tourne à bien; les dés sont sur la table, le hasard en décidera. Attendez les événements sans vous inquiéter, et prenez soin de votre santé. Mes compliments à tous nos généraux blessés. Le prince de Wurtemberg a ou mal lu, ou mal compris ma lettre; mais ce qu'il y a de vrai, c'est que, une grosse heure avant la fin de la bataille, il n'y avait plus de cavaliers sur tout le champ de bataille. Ce n'est pas la faute des généraux blessés, mais c'est ce qui nous a perdus.

13. AU MÊME.

Waldow, 5 septembre 1759.

MON CHER FRÈRE,

Je ne suis qu'un homme. Vous vous intéressez à ma conservation par amitié; mais, mon cher frère, l'État a subsisté avant moi, et se soutiendra après ma mort, s'il plaît à Dieu. Vous devez bien juger que, né sensible comme je le suis, j'ai souffert le martyre pendant trois semaines. Notre situation est moins désespérée qu'elle ne l'était il y a huit jours; mais je me vois entouré d'écueils et d'abîmes. Ma tâche est très-difficile, et, à moins de quelque miracle, ou de la divine avarice de mes ennemis, il

Appendix A

5. Frederick to Prince Ferdinand, 19th August 1759 *Oeuvres* 26: 542-543
 6. Frederick to Prince Ferdinand, 5th September 1759 *Oeuvres* 26: 543-544

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V. LETTRES DE FRÉDÉRIC

sera impossible de bien finir la campagne. Mes compliments à tous nos blessés. Dites, s'il vous plaît, à Seydlitz que je souffre plus que lui; mon esprit est plus malade que sa main. Ma situation est sans cesse violente. Il n'y a plus d'honneur dans les troupes; le j...-f... les a possédés presque tous; on ne sait à quel saint se vouer. Malgré tout cela, je fais bonne contenance avec mes coïons; mais je n'ose rien entreprendre d'audacieux avec eux. Je comprends très-bien que cette catastrophe n'a pas amélioré votre santé; mais il faut prendre sur soi dans ces occasions. Le mal qui nous accable n'est pas arrivé par votre faute; il ne faut donc pas vous en chagriner. Tout homme, pourvu qu'il vive, essuie des malheurs, et voit quelquefois, au travers de ces nuages, des rayons de bonne fortune; il faut supporter l'une et l'autre. Le bon temps, comme le mauvais, passe, et à la fin, notre terme nous conduit au tombeau. La vie est trop courte pour de longues afflictions. Voilà de la belle morale. Est-ce que je la pratique? Hélas! non; les premiers moments de la douleur sont trop violents; l'homme est plus sensible que raisonnable. ^a Soyez plus raisonnable que sensible, et rendez justice à l'amitié et à la tendresse avec laquelle je suis tout à vous.

14. AU MÊME.

Waldow, 10 septembre 1759.

MON CHER FRÈRE,

Depuis ma dernière lettre, Dresde a capitulé le jour que Wunsch a battu Maguire auprès des *Scheunen*. Wunsch de là est retourné à Torgau, que Saint-André voulait reprendre avec onze mille hommes qu'il a sous ses ordres; Wunsch l'a encore battu, lui a pris toutes ses tentes, marmites, havre-sacs et ustensiles de ce corps, avec trois cents prisonniers, six canons et quelques éten-

^a Voyez t. XIV, p. 64; t. XVII, p. 157; t. XVIII, p. 158 et 182; t. XIX, p. 43; t. XXIV, p. 137, 151 et 480; t. XXV, p. 45 et 236.

Appendix A

7. Frederick to Marquis D'Argens, 4th September 1759 *Oeuvres* 19: 86

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CORRESPONDANCE DE FRÉDÉRIC

72. AU MÊME.

Waldow, 4 septembre 1759.

Je crois, mon cher marquis, que Berlin est à présent en sûreté; vous pouvez y retourner. Les barbares sont en Lusace, et je les côtoie, de façon qu'il n'y a rien à craindre pour la capitale. L'éminent danger est passé, mais il y aura encore bien des mauvais moments à essayer avant de gagner la fin de la campagne. Comme ces mauvais moments ne regardent que mon personnel, ce n'est pas une affaire. Mon martyre durera encore deux mois; les neiges et les gelées le finiront. Je vous écris tout ceci parce que je vous crois à Tangermünde moins bien qu'à Berlin ou Potsdam, et parce que l'éloignement des Russes et les prises de Torgau et de Wittenberg rassurent la capitale. Adieu, mon cher; ne m'oubliez pas.

73. DU MARQUIS D'ARGENS.

Wolfenbüttel, 9 septembre 1759.

SIRE,

Je vais me rendre à Berlin; j'y attendrai les nouveaux ordres de V. M., et je suis toujours prêt à aller où vous souhaiterez. Je vous supplie, Sire, de n'avoir aucun égard à ma santé; quand elle serait encore plus faible, elle deviendra forte dès le moment que je pourrai avoir le bonheur de vous voir.

Quand j'arrivai à Tangermünde, tout était si rempli d'étrangers, qu'il me fut impossible de trouver un logement. Je ne voulus pas rester dans des villages, à cause des petits partis de l'armée de l'Empire qui rôdaient aux environs de Magdebourg et de Halberstadt, et je poussai ma route jusqu'à Wolfenbüttel, où je suis encore, et d'où je partirai demain. Je n'ai jamais douté, Sire, que vous ne réparassiez bien l'échec de la dernière bataille,

Appendix B

Letters from *Friedrich der Grosse*, *eine*

***Lebensgeschichte* volume 2.**

1. Frederick to Lieutenant-General von Schmettau, 14th August 1759 *eine*
Lebensgeschichte 2: Urkundenbuch 43-44
2. Frederick to Lieutenant-General Finck, 12th August 1759 *eine*
Lebensgeschichte 2: 215-216

Appendix B

1. Frederick to Lieutenant-General von Schmettau, 14th August 1759 *eine**Lebensgeschichte 2: Urkundenbuch 43-44*

an des Gen. Lieut. Grafen v. Schmettau.

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66. J'ai reçu aujourd'hui Votre lettre du 13. de ce Mois, et Je Vous dirai, que tout ce que Vous m'y marquez est très vrai. Les Autrichiens se mettent derrière des retranchements, de façon qu'il n'est point probable, qu'ils veuillent m'attaquer; quoi qu'il en arrive, je suis à les attendre. Les generaux Harsch et de Ville se trouvent encore auprès de Trautenau, et il leur faut cinq jours pour joindre le Maréchal Daun, pendant qu'il ne m'en faut que deux pour attirer Fouqué. Le General Gemming est auprès de Zittau, et si l'intention du Maréchal Daun est d'avancer sur Moi à la faveur de la sappe couverte, nous nous verrons à la mi Fevrier de l'année prochaine, avant qu'il se trouve à portée. Sur ce etc.

Au Camp de Schmot Seyffen, ce 15. de Juillet, 1759.

(Eigenthümlich)

Daun a Ouvert hier la Tranchée pour assiéger la Silesie, et nous ferons des gablons du Coté de l'ataque pour placer nos canons et nous chargerons nos mines dont L'une fera Sauter Le poste de Lauban et L'autre qui se trouve Imediatement Sous Marc lissa nous fait esperer de faire Sauter tout le Canon de L'Enemy, voila des bonnes Nouvelles pour vos Badaux de Dressden.

(En Chiffres)

67. Vous aurez peut être deja été instruit de l'Echec que j'ai essnyé ici, contre l'armée Russienne, le treize de ce Mois. Quoique au fond nos affaires ne soient pas desesperées ici vis à vis de l'ennemi. Je me vois pourtant par là dans le cas de ne rien pouvoir detacher pour Vous secourir. Au cas donc que les Autrichiens viennent à tenter quelque chose contre Dresde, Vous verrez s'il y a moyens de Vous soutenir; sans quoi il faudra que Vous tachiez d'obtenir une capitulation favorable, savoir à la fin de pouvoir vous retirer librement avec la guarnison entière, Caisses, Magazins, Lazareth et tout ce que Nous avons à Dresde, soit à Berlin, ou pour pouvoir vous joindre à quelque corps de mes Troupes. Comme il m'est survenu une maladie que Je compte ne point devoir avoir des suites

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1. Frederick to Lieutenant-General von Schmettau, 14th August 1759 *eine**Lebensgeschichte 2: Urkundenbuch 43-44*

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C. Cabinetsordres des Königs

fachenses, J'ai laissé en attendant ici le Commandement de mes Troupes au Lieutenant-Général de Finck, les ordres de quel Vous aurez à executer, comme Vous venant directement de ma part. Sur ce Je prie Dieu, qu'il Vous ait en sa sainte et digne garde.

A Reitwein ce 14. d'Aoust 1759.

(En Chiffres.)

68. J'ai reçu Votre lettre du 20. d'Aoust. Vous pouvez facilement Vous imaginer sans que Je Vous le dise que Vous ne sauriez me rendre de service plus important dans la crise presente qu'en Vous conservant dans la ville de Dresde; les choses changeront probablement en peu de face et Vous devez vous attendre à recevoir en peu et peut être en quelques jours du secours du côté de Torgau; cela doit vous suffire. Conservez nous Dresde et servez Vous à cette fin de tous les moyens quel eux qu'ils soient, que Vous pourrez mettre en usage. Sur ce Je prie Dieu qu'il Vous ait en sa sainte et digne garde.

A Fürstenwalde, ce 25. d'Aout 1759.

69. Je viens de recevoir Vötre rapport du 9. de ce Mois. Je ne saurois point approuver la conduite que Vous avez tenue à l'occasion de la defense de Dresde. Il auroit fallu que Vous tinssiez ferme. Vous n'auriez sûrement rien eu à apprehender de l'artillerie de l'ennemi, qui se seroit bien gardé d'en tirer sur Dresde. Mais il Vous est arrivé, ce qui d'ordinaire arrive à Mes Généraux: au moment qu'ils doivent faire contenance, elle leur défaut. Quoiqu'il en soit, mon intention est, que Vous laissiez les Uniformes pour l'armée à Magdebourg. Des que Vous serez arrivé dans cette ville; vous retournerez sur Vos pas droit à Wittenberg, pour y être à portée, d'être employé, quand il le faudra, à Dresden. Sur ce etc.

A Waldow, ce 10. Septembre 1759.

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1. Frederick to Lieutenant-General Finck, 12th August 1759 *eine Lebensgeschichte* 2: 215-216

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Erkennung seiner Seele in dem Dorfe Döfcher bei Strig auf Stroch in einem, von dem Feinde verödeten Bauernhause. Er glaubt nicht, daß noch Rettung möglich sei: aber, mit ruhigem Bewußtsein widmet er die — anscheinend letzten Augenblicke „als erster Diener des Staats“ dem Vaterlande, und als Mensch der Freundschaft. Eigenhändig schreibt er eine „Instruction vor dem General Finck.“ „Der General Fink kriegt eine Schwere Commission, die Unglückliche Armée So ich ihm übergebe, ist nicht mehr im Stande mit die Russen zu Schlagen, Hadek wirdt nach Berlin Eillen villeicht Laudon auch, Gehet der General Fink diese beide nach So kommen die Russen ihm in Rücken, bleibt er an der Oder Stehen So kriegt er den Hadek disseit, indessen So glaube das wen Laudon nach Berlin wolte Solchen Wönte er unterwegens attquiren und Schlagen Solches woht es guht gehet gibt dem unglük einen anstandt und hält die sachen auf, Zeit gewonnen ist Sehr vilhl bei diesen Desperaten umstände, die Zeitunge aus Torgau und Dresden wirdt ihm Eder mein Segreter geben, er mus Meinen Bruder den ich Generalissimas bei der Armée Declariret von allen berichten, dieses unglük gang wiederherzustellen gehet nicht an, indessen was mein Bruder befehlen wirdt das mus geschehen, an meine Neveu mus die Armée Schwehren.“

„Dieses ist der einzige rath den ich bei denen unglücklichen umständen im Stande zu geben bin, hette ich noch resourssen So wehre ich darbei geblieben. Friedrich“¹⁾.

furt; mit beigelegtem genauen Situationsplane, nebst verschiedenen Nachrichten der Schicksale Frankfurts und der umliegenden Gegend in damaliger Zeit.“ Gesammelt und herausgegeben von Johann Ludwig Kriele¹⁾, Prediger zu Runersdorf. Berlin bei Maurer 1801. 172 S. gr. 8. 2) (General v. Rüffling) Widersprüche in den gedruckten und handschriftlichen Relationen über die Schlacht von Runersdorf. Eine Vorlesung. Nebst einer Aufnahme des Schlachtfeldes im Maßstabe von 1:1000 im Militärwochenblatt. Zwölfter Jahrg. 1827. Berlin, bei Mittler S. 3573—3601. Von gedruckten Relationen sind Tempelhoff, Friedrich 2., Kriele und die Herr. Berichte; von ungedruckten das schätzbare Gaudtsche Journal gemeint, über welches hier S. 3588 Auskunft gegeben wird.

1) Diplomatisch genau nach der Handschrift abgedruckt. Mit diesem Hand-

1) Starb als Prediger in Frankfurt den 17. Dec. 1828, 75 J. 11 Monat alt.

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1. Frederick to Lieutenant-General Finck, 12th August 1759 *eine Lebensgeschichte* 2: 215-216

216 Friedrich der Große im siebenjährigen Kriege.

Darauf folgendes Lebewohl auf Immer an Finckenstein:
 „J'ai attaqué ce matin à onze heures l'ennemi. Nous les avons poussé au cimetière de Juifs ¹⁾ auprès de Francfort, toutes mes troupes ont donné et ont fait des prodiges, mais ce cimetière nous a fait perdre un prodigieux monde, nos gens se sont mis en confusion, je les ai raillé trois fois; à la fin j'ai pensé être pris moi-même et j'ai été obligé de céder le champ de bataille. Mon habit est criblé de coups, j'ai deux chevaux tué, mon malheur est de vivre encore; notre perte est très considérable. D'une armée de 48,000 hommes je n'ai pas 3000 dans le moment que je parle, tout fuit ²⁾, et je ne suis plus maître de mes gens; on fera bien à Berlin de penser à sa sûreté. C'est un cruel revers; je n'y survivrai pas; les suites de l'affaire seront pire que l'affaire même. Je n'ai plus de ressource et à ne point mentir, je crois tout perdu. Je ne survivrai point à la perte de ma Patrie. Adieu pour jamais. Federic“ ³⁾. — Auch hieß es bei der ersten Bestürzung in Berlin, man wisse nicht, wo der König sei ⁴⁾. Aber — die Russen versäumten, wie Friedrich

schreiben vergleiche den merkwürdigen Befehl des Königs an den Grafen Schmettau, Reitzen, den 14. August 1759, im Urkundenbuche zu diesem 2. Bande.

- 1) Der König verwechselt hier, wie in den Oeuvres posthumes. T. 4. p. 33 und 35 und in dem auf frischer That verfaßten Schlachtereichte (Helden-, Stats- und Lebensgeschichte. Theil 5. S. 880) den Judenkirchhof mit den Judenbergen. Auf dem Judenkirchhofe, dem westlichen Abhänge der Judenberge ist gar nicht gedämpft worden.
- 2) v. Tempelhoff sagt Theil 3. S. 194: er habe ein Schreiben von Soltilof gesehen, in welchem er den russischen Verlust allein über 16,000 Mann ansieht, mit dem Zusätze: „Ew. Majestät werden sich darüber nicht wundern, Sie wissen, daß der König von Preußen seine Niederlagen allemal sehr theuer verkauft.“ Auch sagte er nach der Schlacht: „Wenn ich noch einen solchen Sieg ersehnte, so werde ich mit einem Stabe in der Hand allein die Nachricht davon nach Petersburg bringen müssen.“
- 3) Klaproth und Cosmar Statsrath S. 58.
- 4) (Gebhard) Bertheldigung Friedrich's des Gr. S. 74.

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Extracts from Tempelhof's *Geschichte des siebenjährigen Krieges in Deutschland zwischen dem Könige von Preussen und der Kaiserin Königin mit ihren Alliierten (sic)*. volume 3.

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Feuer, und avancirten mit vieler Entschlossenheit. Allein sie litten so viel von dem russischen Kartätschenfeuer, daß sie bald anfangen zu wanken, und da auch einige Schwadronen russischer und österreichischer Kavallerie vom rechten Flügel hervorkamen, und die linke Flanke der preussischen Kavallerie bedrohten, so kam sie in Unordnung und nahm förmlich die Flucht. Nachdem sie sich durch die Infanterie gezogen und hinter dem zweiten Treffen wieder gefehet hatte, so ging auch diese theils durch Kumerzdorf, theils zwischen den Teichen durch, so wendete sich jenseit des Dorfes, und rückte mit mehr als gewöhnlicher Dravheit gegen den Spitzberg an, dessen Eroberung den Sieg in einem Augenblick zum Vortheil des Königs entschieden haben würde. Der König kam selbst geritten, sprach den Truppen Muth zu, wies der Artillerie, die mit der Infanterie herbei eilte, einige kleine Hügel an, wo sie sich setzen sollte, um ihr Feuer mit desto besserer Wirkung anzubringen, und eilte hernach wieder nach dem rechten Flügel. Das Treffen ging hierauf aufs neue mit der größten Wuth an. Der König führte die Bataillone selbst ins Feuer, und suchte über den Auhgrund zu kommen: das Sinfische Korps zog sich immer mehr rechts gegen den Lobusch, um den Feind von der Höhe zu vertreiben, indeß dieser immer mehr Regimenter von seinem rechten Flügel nach dem Spitzberg herauf zog, und wohl in vier, fünf Linien hinter einander stellte, denn das Terrain war so enge, daß nicht mehr als vier Bataillone in Front aufmarschiren konnten. Hier sah man, daß oft ein kleiner und unerheblich scheinender Umstand, eine Kleinigkeit, die man bei dem Terrain übersehet, mehr zum Gewinn oder zum Verlust einer Schlacht beiträgt, als die ausgesuchtesten Maasnahmen. Alles kam darauf an, den Feind von dem Auhgrund zu vertreiben. Dieser ist ohngefähr 400 Schritt lang, 10, und da, wo er sich in der Niederung verliert, 12 bis 15 Fuß tief, und 50 bis 60 Schritt breit, ist aber an beiden Seiten sehr steil. Die preussische Infanterie sprang beherzt hinunter, und suchte den entgegengesetzten Rand zu erklimmen, den der General Lantz mit den Grenadierkompagnien von seinem Korps und dem Regiment Daaden-Daaden besetzt hatte, indeß die am diesseitigen Rande stehenden Bataillone über sie wegfeuereten. Es war aber nicht möglich herauf zu kommen, und wenn auch hin und wieder einige sich mit Anstrengung aller ihrer Kräfte herauf arbeiteten, so fanden sie auch ihren Tod, und wurden von oben wieder in den Grund herabgeworfen. Das Würgen war auf beiden Seiten entseßlich, weil die Truppen an manchen Orten nicht 50 Schritt aus einander standen, und das kleine Gewehr in seiner völliigen Stärke wirkte; dennoch verlor der König noch nicht alle Hoffnung. Er sammelte von den Zurückgewichenen immer wieder brave Leute und ließ sie aufs neue anrücken; allein auch diese wurden größtentheils getödtet, verwundet, und endlich, nachdem sie sehr dünne geworden, zurückgeschlagen. Die Bataillone
vons

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vom Stützlichen Korps, die rechter Hand in der Niederung bei dem Ellobusch standen und den Feind auf den Höhen angriffen, hatten kein besser Glück, und wurden nach wiederholten Versuchen immer zurückgeschlagen. Eben so ging es auch dem linken Flügel, der sich alle Mühe gab, den Spitzberg wegzunehmen. Der Feind kam dabei ebenfalls an vielen Orten in Unordnung, und verschiedene von seinen Bataillonen wichen zurück; da er aber nicht allein der preussischen Armee weit überlegen war, sondern auch ohne Gefahr alle seine Truppen vom rechten Flügel wegzuehnen konnte, so war es ihm leicht, die Stelle der geschlagenen wieder zu ersetzen. In diesem kritischen Zeitpunkt schickte der König Befehl an die Kavallerie, daß sie nach dem rechten Flügel herauf gehn, und suchen sollte, in die feindliche Infanterie einzubringen. Der Herzog von Württemberg setzte sich sogleich an die Spitze einiger Regimenter, ging durch den Grund zwischen dem Walde und dem Mühlbergen, formirte so viel Schwadronen, als Raum fanden, in der Niederung bei der großen Mühle, und rückte gegen den Feind an. Auf der Seite, wo der Ellobusch auf dem Plane gezeichnet ist, laufen die Höhen, auf denen der Feind stand, allmählig an, und die Kavallerie hätte auf dem Terrain kein Hinderniß gefunden, das sie aufhalten konnte. Sie folgte auch anfänglich dem Herzog, der an ihrer Spitze vorgaloppierte, und sie immer hinter sich zu haben glaubte; als er aber vor dem Kuhgrund vorbeigewar, und nunmehr dem Feinde mit der ganzen Kavallerie den stärksten Stoß zu geben glaubte, ward er, nicht 50 Schritt von den Höhen, verwundet. Da er sich umsah, fand er sich allein; die ganze Kavallerie hatte sich durch das feindliche Feuer abschrecken lassen, und war zurück geblieben.

Unter diesen Regimentern befanden sich einige, die bei Zornsdorf die stärksten Beweise der Unererschrockenheit gegeben hatten. Es ist oft unerklärbar, warum der Soldat bei manchen Gelegenheiten die größten Schwierigkeiten übersteigt und im eigentlichen Verstande ein Held ist, bei andern hingegen ganz entgegengesetzte Besinnungen aufsert, wenn die Gefahr bei weitem nicht so groß ist. General Puttkammer rückte hierauf noch mit seinen Husaren vor, um einen Angriff zu wagen; allein dieser lief fruchtlos ab, und er selbst ward dabei erschossen.

Das Treffen hatte beinahe 6 Stunden mit der größten Wuth fortgedauert; die Truppen waren an sich schon durch die Hitze, die an diesem blutigen Tage sehr stark war, ermüdet, und hatten durch die wiederholten Angriffe ihre Kräfte völlig erschöpft; mehr als 18000 waren getödtet oder verwundet, eine Zahl, die gewiß die Hälfte der preussischen Armee ausmachte. Nunmehr aber wich auch alles zurück, und wiewohl sich der König alle Mühe gab, noch einige Bataillone zum Stehen zu bringen, so war doch alles taub gegen

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seine Befehle; besonders da sich die feindliche Kavallerie in der Niederung zeigte und dem rechten Flügel des Sinfischen Korps in die Flanke fiel. Ein panisches Schrecken schien die ganze Armee zu ergreifen. Die Verwirrung ward allgemein, und eben die Truppen, die noch vor wenigen Minuten unwiderstehlich zu sein schienen, liefen nunmehr nach den Brücken bei der großen Mühle, bei der Bäckermühle und in den Wald zurück. Da bei den Brücken ein starkes Gedränge entstand, weil Infanterie, Kavallerie und Artillerie zugleich herüber wollten, so geschah es, daß der größte Theil der Artillerie stehen blieb, und der König 165 Kanonen von allen Arten von Kaliber verlor. Der Feind verfolgte die Preußen nur mit einigen wenigen Schwadronen unter Anführung des General Laudon, und war zufrieden, daß er das Schlachtfeld behauptet hatte. Der Rückzug geschah nicht in der besten Ordnung: kein Bataillon hatte seine Leute beisammen, Infanterie, Kavallerie und Artillerie ging in unordentlichen Haufen die Nacht bis Oetscher zurück; und sammelte sich in der Niederung bei den Schiffbrücken, über die niemand gelassen wurde. Nie habe ich die preussische Armee in einem solchen Zustand gesehen. Der Feind benutzte indessen seine Vortheile nicht, und zeigte bei seinem Verfolgen wenig Lebhaftigkeit. Er verwandelte in der That die Schiffbrücken des Königs in Gold.

Um den Sieg vollkommen entscheidend zu machen, den der König davon zu tragen hoffte, hatte der General Wunsch Befehl erhalten, mit einigen Bataillonen, die bei der Schiffbrücke bei Reitzen zurück gelassen waren, Frankfurt im Rücken der russischen Armee wegzunehmen, damit dem Feinde auch der Rückzug über die Oder versperrt würde. Ueber diesen Fluß hatte der General Solतिकof 3 Brücken bei der Gubener Vorstadt schlagen lassen, und ward er geschlagen, so blieb ihm kein anderer Ausweg übrig. Wäre er indessen unglücklich gewesen, so würden wenig Russen über die Oder gekommen sein; denn die bei der Armee befindlichen Fahrzeuge waren auf dem Damm, der nach der Stadt geht, und rechter und linker Hand in dem Grunde vor den Brücken so verwirrt unter einander gefahren, daß nicht einmal ein Mensch zwischen ihnen durchkriechen konnte. General Wunsch hatte seinen Marsch so eingerichtet, daß er erst gegen 5 Uhr Nachmittags bei der Stadt ankam, wahrscheinlich, weil er voraus setzte, daß um diese Zeit der Feind im völligen Rückzuge begriffen sein würde. Er stellte sein Korps auf die Höhen, an deren Fuß die Gubener Vorstadt liegt, machte die Besatzung in der Stadt zu Kriegsgefangenen *), und besetzte die Brücke. Gegen Abend ließ der General Solतिकof die Stadt durch den Obersten Bülow wieder

*) Diese bestand größtentheils aus Salvogarden, die hernach sogleich wieder frei gegeben wurden.

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wieder auffodern, der sich bei dieser Gelegenheit sehr übermüthig bezeigte. Daraus urtheilte der General Wunsch, daß das Treffen verloren sein müßte. Er hatte nun nichts nöthiger, als sich ohne weitere Unternehmung auf dieser Seite zurück zu ziehn.

Der preussische Verlust in diesem blutigen Treffen war mit Inbegriff der Gefangenen und Verlaufenen ohngefähr 20000 Mann; aber unter diesen befanden sich beinahe 15000 größtentheils leicht Verwundete. Der feindliche war nicht viel geringer. In den öffentlichen Blättern ward der russische auf 2614 Mann Tödt, vom Vornehmsten bis auf den Geringssten, und 10863 Verwundeten; der österreichische aber 2185 Mann an Tödt, Verwundeten und Vermißten angegeben. Man weiß, daß ein gewisses Vorurtheil den Grundsatz angenommen hat, den Verlust auf Seiten des Siegers immer geringer zu machen, als er wirklich ist; auch scheint dies in gewissen Staaten die politische Klugheit notwendig zu machen. Wahrscheinlich will man dadurch seinem Herrn hohe Begriffe von der Geschicklichkeit seiner Truppen, ihre Waffen mit Vortheil zu gebrauchen, beibringen. Ich habe aber ein Schreiben vom General Soltikof gesehn, in dem er den russischen Verlust allein über 16000 Mann ansetzt, mit dem Zusatz: Zw. Maj. werden sich darüber nicht wundern, sie wissen, daß der König von Preußen seine Niederlagen allemal sehr theuer verkauft. Auch sagte er nach der Schlacht: Wenn ich noch einen solchen Sieg ersehete, so werde ich mit einem Staab in der Hand allein die Nachricht davon nach Petersburg bringen müssen.

Viele sind der Meinung: der König hätte nach Eroberung des feindlichen Geschüzes auf dem Mühlberge, und nachdem er das ganze Feld bis Kunersdorf von Russen gesäubert, Halt machen und mit den erhaltenen Vortheilen zufrieden sein sollen. Der Feind, sagt man, würde sich in der Nacht zurück gezogen und dem König den ganzen Kampfplatz überlassen haben. Alsdenn wäre dieser Tag in seinen Folgen eben so entscheidend gewesen als der bei Zorndorf, und unterdeß der Feind die Zeitungen seiner Partei mit nichtsbedeutenden Streitigkeiten über die Behauptung des Schlachtfeldes angefüllt hätte, würde er, wie damals, alle Früchte eines unstreitigen Sieges eingeerntet haben.

Diese Meinung gründet sich größtentheils auf die falsche Voraussetzung, daß der Feind schon bis an die Judenberge wäre zurückgetrieben gewesen, und auf diesen seine letzte Stellung genommen hätte. Wäre dies wirklich der Fall gewesen, so wäre es in der That äußerst gefährlich gewesen, mit Truppen, die so lange in dem härtesten Treffen, welches vielleicht je geliefert worden, und an einem der heißesten Tage, den sie jemals gefühlt hatten, mit Anstrengung aller ihrer Kräfte gefochten, und diese durch die stärksten Beweise der

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Entschlossenheit, Standhaftigkeit und Tapferkeit erschöpft hatten, noch einen Angriff zu wagen, der selbst die frischesten Truppen würde abgeschreckt haben. Denn bei dieser Vorkaussetzung hätte der Feind auf lauter Höhen gestanden, und sein linker Flügel wäre durch eben den Grund gedeckt worden, in dem die Nacht das Korps unter dem General Laudon unterm Gewehr zubrachte, der nicht allein sehr tief, sondern auch auf beiden Seiten außerordentlich steil ist, wie ich schon vorhin bei der Beschreibung der Gegend angemerkt habe; der rechte Flügel aber wäre eben so schwer anzugreifen gewesen, weil die Berge, auf die ihn wahrscheinlich der Feind gesetzt haben würde, ebenfalls sehr steil sind, und nur die in der Mitte hätten sich einigermaßen, doch nicht ohne große Schwierigkeiten, ersteigen lassen. Diese Berge liegen aber noch 3 bis 4000 Schritt hinter Kumerodorf, und hätte der König den Feind schon bis dahin zurück getrieben, so zweifle ich sehr, ob er jemals im Stande gewesen sein würde, sich wieder zu sehen; denn auf diesen Bergen stand anfänglich sein rechter Flügel, und ihn so weit zurück treiben, hieß seine ganze Armee vom linken bis zum rechten Flügel herauf, das will sagen, aufs Haupt schlagen. Es fehlte aber noch sehr weit, daß der Feind schon eine solche Niederlage erlitten hätte; der linke Flügel und die Mitte der königlichen Armee waren nicht weiter als einige hundert Schritt jenseit Kumerodorf gekommen, der rechte Flügel stand in dicken unordentlichen Haufen hinter dem Kuhgrund, das Sinfische Korps demselben rechter Hand in der Niederung, und hatte die Höhen vom Elzbruch vor sich, gegen die es zwar mit aller Bravheit heran lief, sie aber nicht ersteigen konnte; der Feind hingegen behauptete sich noch immer auf dem Spitzberg, dem er auch seine ganze Rettung zu danken hatte. Wo sollte also der König Halt machen? Wenn dies ja hätte geschehen sollen, so hätte dazu allerdings der Zeitpunkt gewählt werden müssen, da die Grenadiere die Mühlberge ersteigen und sich eines beträchtlichen Theils des feindlichen Geschützes bemächtigt hatten; dies heißt aber im eigentlichen Verstande: der König hätte gerade in dem Augenblick Halt machen müssen, da er alle Wahrscheinlichkeit auf seiner Seite hatte, den vollkommensten, den entscheidendsten Sieg, einen Sieg zu erhalten, der ihn auf immer von einem Feinde befreien konnte, der ihn während des ganzen Krieges am schwersten gedrückt hatte. Nichts ist ungerechter, als den Werth eines Generals bloß nach dem Ausgang eines Treffens zu beurtheilen; wie viel verliert alsdenn nicht oft der Mann, der nach den besten Grundsätzen gehandelt, seine Entwürfe sorgfältig durchdacht, sie nach den besten und durch die Erfahrung bewährtesten Regeln angeordnet, und bei ihrer Ausführung nichts versäumt hat, wodurch der Erfolg gesichert werden konnte: wenn sein Gegner, der vielleicht nichts weiter thut, als daß er seine Truppen, so wie es im Reglement steht, aufstellt, in eben dem Maße gewinnt, als jener verliert, und den Ruf, daß er als ein thätiger

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tiger und großer Mann gehandelt, einem unvorherzusehenden Zufall, einem Umstand zu danken hat, der ihm oft nicht einmal bekannt wird. Will man ein richtiges unparteiliches Urtheil fällen, so muß man sich auf das Schlachtfeld begeben, sich in jede Stellung, in der sich der angreifende, und der sich vertheidigende Theil, um eine bestimmte Zeit befanden, sich selbst in die Charaktere der gegen einander fechtenden Truppen, Generale und Officiere hineindenken, und alsdenn alles dies mit richtigen Grundsätzen des Krieges verbinden.

Nachdem die Grenadiere die Berge erstiegen hatten, waren noch nicht mehr als 3 Bataillone zum Treffen gekommen, der ganze übrige Theil der Armee hatte noch keinen Mann verloren; er sah den Sieg vor sich hergehn, die größten Schwierigkeiten überwunden, und den Feind in der größten Unordnung. Und nun sollte der König mit einem male Halt machen! sollte alle Aussichten, auf den vollständigsten Sieg fahren lassen! sollte seine braven Truppen, die mit schnellen Schritten herbei eilten und sich recht zum Schlagen herandrängten, mitten in ihrem Laufe aufhalten, und dadurch vor ihren Augen ein öffentliches Geständniß ablegen, daß er sich vor dem Feinde fürchte? Hieße das nicht, ein Mißtrauen auf den Muth seiner Truppen setzen, ja im eigentlichen Verstande sie für feige Weimern erklären? Da der Feind sich bei Vertheidigung seines stärksten Postens von einer so schlechten Seite gezeigt hatte, konnte der König nicht mit dem größten Rechte voraussetzen, daß sein fernerer Widerstand in eben dem Verhältnis sein, und durch den guten Willen und die Tapferkeit frischer Truppen bald überwältigt werden würde? Ob ich gleich bei der Schlacht selbst gegenwärtig gewesen, so habe ich doch noch erst im vorigen Sommer die Gegend genau untersucht; und da finde ich auch nicht die geringste Ursach, die dem König hätte abhalten können, den Angriff, nach Ersteigung der ersten russischen Verschanzungen, weiter fortzusetzen. Der rechte Flügel der preussischen Armee stand auf den Höhen, welche das ganze Feld bis Kunersdorf beherrschen. Dem Auge zeigt sich dort nichts, was den fernern Angriff aufhalten kann: die ganze Gegend ist bis an das Dorf eben; keine Verschanzungen waren mehr zu übersteigen, das Dorf unbefest und abgebrannt; der Feind in der Verlegenheit, Front nach der Flanke zu machen, auf einem engen Terrain eingeschränkt, wo er seine Stärke nicht gebrauchen konnte; die preussische Armee in einer Stellung, bei der sie es möglich machen konnte, ihn in der Front, in der Flanke und im Rücken anzugreifen; und bei allen diesen sich vor Augen legenden Vorteilen sollte der König mit einem male zu einer vollkommenen Unthätigkeit übergehn? So wäre es denn alles mal besser gewesen, sich gar nicht in ein Treffen einzulassen.

Die Umstände des Königs waren aber jetzt so beschaffen, daß er mehr als jemals Ursache hatte, etwas zu wagen, um die Russen außer Stand zu setzen, in diesem Feldzuge

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Manuscripts

Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University, New Haven

The Beinecke Library has a collection of letters to and from Thomas Carlyle which can be accessed via their online catalogue. In addition, there is an extensive card catalogue that outlines the material in the Frederick W. Hilles Manuscript Collection. This manual collection consists of several boxes of material. In addition to a bound manuscript of *Oliver Cromwell's Letters and Speeches*, these boxes contain manuscript pages from *Frederick the Great* along with amendments and comments in Thomas Carlyle's hand.

Bielfeld, Baron. *Lettres Familières et autres de Monsieur le Baron de Bielfeld à la Hague 1763*. Frederick W. Hilles Manuscript Collection. MSS Vault Hilles. Carlyle Manuscripts, Box 23. Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University, New Haven.

Carlyle, Thomas. *History of Friedrich II of Prussia, called Frederick the Great*. Frederick W. Hilles Manuscript Collection. MSS Vault Hilles. Carlyle Manuscripts, Box 23. Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University, New Haven.

MS Vault.Shelves.Carlyle [Card Catalogue] Box 2, file 3, D11. Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University, New Haven.

Harvard College Library, Harvard University, Boston

The Carlyle collection by William Coolidge Lane. This is a catalogue of books on *Oliver Cromwell's Letters and Speeches* and *Frederick the Great* that were bequeathed by Thomas Carlyle to Harvard College Library. The following quotation

is republished from the Bulletin of Harvard University, nos. 24-38, 1883-1887: "This collection ... was left to this library in Mr. Carlyle's will, dated Feb. 6, 1873. The books were received July 11, 1881. Mrs. S. A. C. Bond and Miss M. H. Pope of the library staff have assisted in compiling the catalogue."

Frederick II, King of Prussia. *Military instructions, written by the King of Prussia, for the generals of his army; being his Majesty's own commentaries on his former campaigns; together with short instructions for the use of his light troops; illustrated with copper-plates; translated by an Officer.*

London: Printed for T. Becket and P.A. De Hondt, in the Strand, 1762.

Carlyle's copy can be found in The Carlyle Collection: A Catalogue of books on Oliver Cromwell and Frederick the Great, bequeathed by Thomas Carlyle to Harvard College Library, Harvard University, Boston, by William Coolidge Lane, call number Carl 86.

Huntington Library, San Marino

This manuscript fragment from *Frederick the Great* is housed at the Huntington Library along with seven letters from Thomas Carlyle to Henry Larkin written in May and July 1864, in which Carlyle discusses proposed changes to the *Frederick the Great* manuscript.

Carlyle, Thomas. [A fragment of Carlyle's *Frederick the Great* with additions and corrections in the handwriting of the author], [c.a 1864]. HM 12769

Huntington Library, San Marino.

National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh

The National Library of Scotland holds several collections of letters to and from Thomas Carlyle and his wife Jane Welsh Carlyle. These holdings include correspondence with Joseph Neuberg, Carlyle's research assistant on *Frederick the Great* as well as letters from friends such as Lady Harriet Baring and correspondence with various family members. *Blackwood's Papers* contain correspondence between John Blackwood and General Sir Edward Bruce Hamley concerning Hamley's anonymous 1859 review of volumes I and II of *Frederick the Great* in *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*. Thomas Woolner's 1865 letter to Louisa Lady Ashburton in which he discusses the reception of volumes V and VI of *Frederick the Great* is held along with other correspondence in the *Ashburton Papers*.

Carlyle, Thomas. *Carlyle Collection. Correspondence of Thomas Carlyle and*

Joseph Neuberg 1859-67. Ms. 553.271. NLS.

---. *Carlyle Collection. Letters to his brother, Dr. John Aitken Carlyle, 1819-79.* Ms.

526.15. NLS.

---. *Carlyle Collection. Letters to his brother, Dr. John Aitken Carlyle, 1819-79.* Ms.

526.35. NLS.

---. *Carlyle Collection. Letters of Thomas Carlyle to his wife, 1827-66, with a joint*

letter of the pair to Carlyle's mother, 1831, and letters of Lady Harriet

Baring, 1848, John Stuart Mill, 1858, and Émile Montégut, 1865. Ms.

616.595. NLS.

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NLS.

Hamley, General Sir Edward Bruce. *Blackwood Papers.* Ms. 4131.173. NLS.

Neuberg, Joseph. *Carlyle Collection. Correspondence of Thomas Carlyle and Joseph Neuberg 1859-67*. Ms. 553.278. NLS.

Woolner, Thomas. *Ashburton Papers*. Acc.11388, Folder 103. NLS.

Victoria and Albert National Art Library

The Forster Collection is one of two very large and distinct collections within the National Art Library, the other being the Dyce Collection. John Forster (1812-76) was a noted biographer, critic, essayist and historian. The collection contains many nineteenth century novels which were given to him as review or presentation copies, usually with an affectionate inscription from the author. One such example is *Sartor Resartus* by Thomas Carlyle. The collection also contains several letters and notes to Forster from Carlyle.

Carlyle, Thomas. *Forster Collection*. Victoria and Albert National Art Library.
(Great Britain) Ms. Forster MS 89.