

# ТОМАС КАРЛЕЙЛЬ

HISTORY OF FRIEDRICH  
II OF PRUSSIA —  
APPENDIX

**Thomas Carlyle**  
**History of Friedrich II**  
**of Prussia — Appendix**

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# **Thomas Carlyle**

## **History of Friedrich II of Prussia — Appendix**

### **APPENDIX**

This Piece, it would seem, was translated sixteen years ago; some four or five years before any part of the present HISTORY OF FRIEDRICH got to paper. The intercalated bits of Commentary were, as is evident, all or mostly written at the same time:—these also, though they are now become, in parts, SUPERFLUOUS to a reader that has been diligent, I have not thought of changing, where not compelled. Here and there, especially in the Introductory Part, some slight additions have crept in;—which the above kind of reader will possibly enough detect; and may even have, for friendly reasons, some vestige of interest in assigning to their new date and comparing with the old. (NOTE OF 1868.)

# A DAY WITH FRIEDRICH. —(23d July, 1779.)

"OBERAMTMANN (Head-Manager) Fromme" was a sister's son of Poet, Gleim,—Gleim Canon of Halberstadt, who wrote Prussian "grenadier-songs" in, or in reference to, the Seven-Years War, songs still printed, but worth little; who begged once, after Friedrich's death, an OLD HAT of his, and took it with him to Halberstadt (where I hope it still is); who had a "Temple-of-Honor," or little Garden-house so named, with Portraits of his Friends hung in it; who put Jean Paul VERY SOON there, with a great explosion of praises; and who, in short, seems to have been a very good effervescent creature, at last rather wealthy too, and able to effervesce with some comfort;—Oberamtman Fromme, I say, was this Gleim's Nephew; and stood as a kind of Royal Land-Bailiff under Frederick the Great, in a tract of country called the RHYN-LUCH (a dreadfully moory country of sands and quagmires, all green and fertile now, some twenty or thirty miles northwest of Berlin); busy there in 1779, and had been for some years past. He had originally been an Officer of the Artillery; but obtained his discharge in 1769, and got, before long, into this employment. A man of excellent disposition and temper; with a solid and heavy stroke of work in him, whatever he might be set to; and who in this

OBERAMTMANNSHIP "became highly esteemed." He died in 1798; and has left sons (now perhaps grandsons or great-grandsons), who continue estimable in like situations under the Prussian Government.

One of Fromme's useful gifts, the usefulest of all for us at present, was "his wonderful talent of exact memory." He could remember to a singular extent; and, we will hope, on this occasion, was unusually conscientious to do it. For it so happened, in July, 1779 (23d July), Friedrich, just home from his troublesome Bavarian War, [Had arrived at Berlin May 27th (Rodenbeck, iii. 201).] and again looking into everything with his own eyes, determined to have a personal view of those Moor Regions of Fromme's; to take a day's driving through that RHYN-LUCH which had cost him so much effort and outlay; and he ordered Fromme to attend him in the expedition. Which took effect accordingly; Fromme riding swiftly at the left wheel of Friedrich's carriage, and loudly answering questions of his, all day.—Directly on getting home, Fromme consulted his excellent memory, and wrote down everything; a considerable Paper,—of which you shall now have an exact Translation, if it be worth anything. Fromme gave the Paper to Uncle Gleim; who, in his enthusiasm, showed it extensively about, and so soon as there was liberty, had it "printed, at his own expense, for the benefit of poor soldiers' children." ["Gleim's edition, brought out in 1786, the year of Friedrich's death, is now quite gone,—the Book undiscoverable. But the Paper was reprinted

in an ANEKDOTEN-SAMMLUNG (Collection of Anecdotes, Berlin, 1787, 8tes STUCK, where I discover it yesterday (17th July, 1852) in a copy of mine, much to my surprise; having before met with it in one Hildebrandt's ANEKDOTEN-SAMMLUNG (Halberstadt, 1830, 4tes STUCK, a rather slovenly Book), where it is given out as one of the rarest of all rarities, and as having been specially 'furnished by a Dr. W. Korte,' being unattainable otherwise! The two copies differ slightly here and there,—not always to Dr. Korte's advantage, or rather hardly ever. I keep them both before me in translating" (MARGINALE OF 1852)].

"The RHYN" or Rhin, is a little river, which, near its higher clearer sources, we were all once well acquainted with: considerable little moorland river, with several branches coming down from Ruppin Country, and certain lakes and plashes there, in a southwest direction, towards the Elbe valley, towards the Havel Stream; into which latter, through another plash or lake called GULPER SEE, and a few miles farther, into the Elbe itself, it conveys, after a course of say 50 English miles circuitously southwest, the black drainings of those dreary and intricate Peatbog-and-Sand countries. "LUCH," it appears, signifies LOCH (or Hole, Hollow); and "Rhyn-Luch" will mean, to Prussian ears, the Peatbog Quagmire drained by the RHYN.—New Ruppin, where this beautiful black Stream first becomes considerable, and of steadily black complexion, lies between 40 and 50 miles northwest of Berlin. Ten or twelve miles farther north is REINSBERG (properly RHYNSBERG), where

Friedrich as Crown-Prince lived his happiest few years. The details of which were familiar to us long ago,—and no doubt dwell clear and soft, in their appropriate "pale moonlight," in Friedrich's memory on this occasion. Some time after his Accession, he gave the place to Prince Henri, who lived there till 1802. It is now fallen all dim; and there is nothing at New Ruppín but a remembrance.

To the hither edge of this Rhyn-Luoh, from Berlin, I guess there may be five-and-twenty miles, in a northwest direction; from Potsdam, whence Friedrich starts to-day, about, the same distance north-by-west; "at Seelenhorst," where Fromme waits him, Friedrich has already had 30 miles of driving,—rate 10 miles an hour, as we chance to observe. Notable things, besides the Spade-husbandries he is intent on, solicit his remembrance in this region. Of Freisack and "Heavy-Peg" with her didactic batterings there, I suppose he, in those fixed times, knows nothing, probably has never heard: Freisack is on a branch of this same Rhyn, and he might see it, to left a mile or two, if he cared.

But Fehrbellín ("Ferry of BelleEN"), distinguished by the shining victory which "the Great Elector," Friedrich's Great-Grandfather, gained there, over the Swedes, in 1675, stands on the Rhyn itself, about midway; and Friedrich will pass through it on this occasion. General Ziethen, too, lives near it at Wusterau (as will be seen): "Old Ziethen," a little stumpy man, with hanging brows and thick pouting lips; unbeautiful to look upon, but pious, wise, silent, and with a terrible blaze of fighting-talent



in him; full of obedience, of endurance, and yet of unsubduable "silent rage" (which has brooked even the vocal rage of Friedrich, on occasion); a really curious old Hussar General. He is now a kind of mythical or demigod personage among the Prussians; and was then (1779), and ever after the Seven-Years War, regarded popularly as their Ajax (with a dash of the Ulysses superadded),—Seidlitz, another Horse General, being the Achilles of that service.

The date of this drive through the moors being "23d July, 1779," we perceive it is just about two months since Friedrich got home from the Bavarian War (what they now call "POTATO WAR," so barren was it in fighting, so ripe in foraging); victorious in a sort;—and that in his private thought, among the big troubles of the world on both sides of the Atlantic, the infinitesimally small business of the MILLER ARNOLD'S LAWSUIT is beginning to rise now and then. [Supra 415, 429. Preuss, i. 362; &c. &c.]

Friedrich is now 67 years old; has reigned 39: the Seven-Years War is 16 years behind us; ever since which time Friedrich has been an "old man,"—having returned home from it with his cheeks all wrinkled, his temples white, and other marks of decay, at the age of 51. The "wounds of that terrible business," as they say, "are now all healed," perhaps above 100,000 burnt houses and huts rebuilt, for one thing; and the "ALTE FRITZ," still brisk and wiry, has been and is an unweariedly busy man in that affair, among others. What bogs he has tapped and dried, what canals

he has dug, and stubborn strata he has bored through,—assisted by his Prussian Brindley (one Brenkenhof, once a Stable-boy at Dessau);—and ever planting "Colonies" on the reclaimed land, and watching how they get on! As we shall see on this occasion,—to which let us hasten (as to a feast not of dainties, but of honest SAUERKRAUT and wholesome herbs), without farther parley.

Oberamtmann Fromme (whom I mark "Ich") LOQUITUR: "Major-General Graf von Gortz," whom Fromme keeps strictly mute all day, is a distinguished man, of many military and other experiences; much about Friedrich in this time and onwards. [Supra, 399.] Introduces strangers, &c.; Bouille took him for "Head Chamberlain," four or five years after this. He is ten years the King's junior; a Hessian gentleman;—eldest Brother of the Envoy Gortz who in his cloak of darkness did such diplomacies in the Bavarian matter, January gone a year, and who is a rising man in that line ever since. But let Fromme begin:—[*Anekdoten und Charakterzüge aus dem Leben Friedrich des Zweyten* (Berlin, bei Johann Friedrich Unger, 1787), 8te Sammlung, ss. 15-79.]

"On the 23d of July, 1779, it pleased his Majesty the King to undertake a journey to inspect those" mud "Colonies in the Rhyn-Luch about Neustadt-on-the-Dosse, which his Majesty, at his own cost, had settled; thereby reclaiming a tract of waste moor (EINEN ODEN BRUCH URBAR MACHEN) into arability, where now 308 families have their living.

"His Majesty set off from Potsdam about 5 in the morning,"

in an open carriage, General von Gortz along with him, and horses from his own post-stations; "travelled over Ferlaudt, Tirotz, Wustermark, Nauen, Konigshorst, Seelenhorst, Dechau, Fehrbellin," [See Reimann's KREIS-KARTEN, Nos. 74,73.] and twelve other small peat villages, looking all their brightest in the morning sun,— "to the hills at Stollen, where his Majesty, because a view of all the Colonies could be had from those hills, was pleased to get out for a little," as will afterwards be seen.— "Therefrom the journey went by Hohen-Nauen to Rathenau:" a civilized place, "where his Majesty arrived about 3 in the afternoon; and there dined, and passed the night. —Next morning, about 6, his Majesty continued his drive into the Magdeburg region; inspected various reclaimed moors (BRUCHE), which in part are already made arable, and in part are being made so; came, in the afternoon, about 4, over Ziesar and Brandenburg, back to Potsdam,—and did not dine till about 4, when he arrived there, and had finished the Journey." His usual dinner-hour is 12; the STATE hour, on gala days when company has been invited, is 1 P.M.,—and he always likes his dinner; and has it of a hot peppery quality!

"Till Seelenhorst, the Amtsrath Sach of Konigshorst had ridden before his Majesty; but here," at the border of my Fehrbellin district, where with one of his forest-men I was in waiting by appointment, "the turn came for me. About 8 o'clock A.M. his Majesty arrived in Seelenhorst; had the Herr General Graf von Gortz in the carriage with him," Gortz, we need n't

say, sitting back foremost:—here I, Fromme, with my woodman was respectfully in readiness. "While the horses were changing, his Majesty spoke with some of the Ziethen Hussar-Officers, who were upon grazing service in the adjoining villages [all Friedrich's cavalry went out to GRASS during certain months of the year; and it was a LAND-TAX on every district to keep its quota of army-horses in this manner,—AUF GRASUNG]; and of me his Majesty as yet took no notice. As the DAMME," Dams or Raised Roads through the Peat-bog, "are too narrow hereabouts, I could not, ride beside him," and so went before? or BEHIND, with woodman before? GOTT WEISS!" In Dechau his Majesty got sight of Rittmeister von Ziethen," old Ajax Ziethen's son, "to whom Dechau belongs; and took him into the carriage along with him, till the point where the Dechau boundary is. Here there was again change of horses. Captain von Rathenow, an old favorite of the King's, to whom the property of Karvesee in part belongs, happened to be here with his family; he now went forward to the carriage:—

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