

The below autobiography, which was encouraged and copyrighted  
by Louise Whitfield Carnegie, tells the story of their life.  
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## **Preface**

After retiring from active business my husband yielded to the earnest solicitations of friends, both here and in Great Britain, and began to jot down from time to time recollections of his early days. He soon found, however, that instead of the leisure he expected, his life was more occupied with affairs than ever before, and the writing of these memoirs was reserved for his play-time in Scotland. For a few weeks each summer we retired to our little bungalow on the moors at Aultnagar to enjoy the simple life, and it was there that Mr. Carnegie did most of his writing. He delighted in going back to those early times, and as he wrote he lived them all over again. He was thus engaged in July, 1914, when the war clouds began to gather, and when the fateful news of the 4th of August reached us, we immediately left our retreat in the hills and returned to Skibo to be more in touch with the situation.

These memoirs ended at that time. Henceforth he was never able to interest himself in private affairs. Many times he made the attempt to continue writing, but found it useless. Until then he had lived the life of a man in middle life — and a young one at that — golfing, fishing, swimming each day, sometimes doing all three in one day. Optimist as he always was and tried to be, even in the face of the failure of his hopes, the world disaster was too much. His heart was broken. A severe attack of influenza followed by two serious attacks of pneumonia precipitated old age upon him.

It was said of a contemporary who passed away a few months before Mr. Carnegie that "he never could have borne the burden of old age." Perhaps the most inspiring part of Mr. Carnegie's life, to those who were privileged to know it intimately, was the way he bore his "burden of old age." Always patient, considerate, cheerful, grateful for any little pleasure or service, never thinking of himself, but always of the dawning of the better day, his spirit ever shone brighter and brighter until "he was not, for God took him."

Written with his own hand on the fly-leaf of his manuscript are these words: "It is probable that material for a small volume might be collected from these memoirs which the public would care to read, and that a private and larger volume might please my relatives and friends. Much I have written from time to time may, I think, wisely be omitted. Whoever arranges these notes should be careful not to burden the public with too much. A man with a heart as well as a head should be chosen."

Who, then, could so well fill this description as our friend Professor John C. Van Dyke? When the manuscript was shown to him, he remarked, without having read Mr. Carnegie's notation, "It would be a labor of love to prepare this for publication." Here, then, the choice

was mutual, and the manner in which he has performed this "labor" proves the wisdom of the choice — a choice made and carried out in the name of a rare and beautiful friendship.

Louise Whitfield Carnegie  
New York, April 16, 1920

### **Editor's Note**

The story of a man's life, especially when it is told by the man himself, should not be interrupted by the hecklings of an editor. He should be allowed to tell the tale in his own way, and enthusiasm, even extravagance in recitation should be received as a part of the story. The quality of the man may underlie exuberance of spirit, as truth may be found in apparent exaggeration. Therefore, in preparing these chapters for publication the editor has done little more than arrange the material chronologically and sequentially so that the narrative might run on unbrokenly to the end. Some footnotes by way of explanation, some illustrations that offer sight-help to the text, have been added; but the narrative is the thing.

This is neither the time nor the place to characterize or eulogize the maker of "this strange eventful history," but perhaps it is worth while to recognize that the history really was eventful. And strange. Nothing stranger ever came out of the Arabian Nights than the story of this poor Scotch boy who came to America and step by step, through many trials and triumphs, became the great steel master, built up a colossal industry, amassed an enormous fortune, and then deliberately and systematically gave away the whole of it for the enlightenment and betterment of mankind. Not only that. He established a gospel of wealth that can be neither ignored nor forgotten, and set a pace in distribution that succeeding millionaires have followed as a precedent. In the course of his career he became a nation-builder, a leader in thought, a writer, a speaker, the friend of workmen, schoolmen, and statesmen, the associate of both the lowly and the lofty. But these were merely interesting happenings in his life as compared with his great inspirations his distribution of wealth, his passion for world peace, and his love for mankind.

Perhaps we are too near this history to see it in proper proportions, but in the time to come it should gain, in perspective and in interest. The generations hereafter may realize the wonder of it more fully than we of today. Happily it is preserved to us, and that, too, in Mr. Carnegie's own words and in his own buoyant style. It is a very memorable record a record perhaps the like of which we shall not look upon again.

*John C. Van Dyke*  
New York, August, 1920

### **Coaching Trip and Marriage**

The Freedom of my native town (Dunfermline) was conferred upon me July 12, 1877, the first Freedom and the greatest honor I ever received. I was overwhelmed. Only two signatures

upon the roll came between mine and Sir Walter Scott's, who had been made a Burgess. My parents had seen him one day sketching Dunfermline Abbey and often told me about his appearance. My speech in reply to the Freedom was the subject of much concern. I spoke to my Uncle Bailie Morrison, telling him I just felt like saying so and so, as this really was in my heart. He was an orator himself and he spoke words of wisdom to me then.

"Just say that, Andra; nothing like saying just what you really feel."

It was a lesson in public speaking which I took to heart. There is one rule I might suggest for youthful orators. When you stand up before an audience reflect that there are before you only men and women. You should speak to them as you speak to other men and women in daily intercourse. If you are not trying to be something different from yourself, there is no more occasion for embarrassment than if you were talking in your office to a party of your own people — none whatever. It is trying to be other than one's self that unmans one. Be your own natural self and go ahead. I once asked Colonel Ingersoll, the most effective public speaker I ever heard, to what he attributed his power. "Avoid elocutionists like snakes," he said, "and be yourself."



AN AMERICAN FOUR-IN-HAND IN BRITAIN

I spoke again at Dunfermline, July 27, 1881, when my mother laid the foundation stone there of the first free library building I ever gave. My father was one of five weavers who founded the earliest library in the town by opening their own books to their neighbors. Dunfermline named the building I gave "Carnegie Library." The architect asked for my coat of arms. I informed him I had none, but suggested that above the door there might be carved a rising sun shedding its rays with the motto: "Let there be light." This he adopted.

We had come up to Dunfermline with a coaching party. When walking through England in the year 1867 with George Lauder and Harry Phipps I had formed the idea of coaching from Brighton to Inverness with a party of my dearest friends. The time had come for the long-

promised trip, and in the spring of 1881 we sailed from New York, a party of eleven, to enjoy one of the happiest excursions of my life. It was one of the holidays from business that kept me young and happy — worth all the medicine in the world.

All the notes I made of the coaching trip were a few lines a day in twopenny pass-books bought before we started. As with "Round the World," I thought that I might some day write a magazine article, or give some account of my excursion for those who accompanied me; but one wintry day I decided that it was scarcely worth while to go down to the New York office, three miles distant, and the question was how I should occupy the spare time. I thought of the coaching trip, and decided to write a few lines just to see how I should get on. The narrative flowed freely, and before the day was over I had written between three and four thousand words. I took up the pleasing task every stormy day when it was unnecessary for me to visit the office, and in exactly twenty sittings I had finished a book. I handed the notes to Scribner's people and asked them to print a few hundred copies for private circulation. The volume pleased my friends, as "Round the World" had done. Mr. Champlin one day told me that Mr. Scribner had read the book and would like very much to publish it for general circulation upon his own account, subject to a royalty.

The vain author is easily persuaded that what he has done is meritorious, and I consented. [Every year this still nets me a small sum in royalties. And thirty years have gone by, 1912.] The letters I received upon the publication of it were so numerous and some so gushing that my people saved them and they are now bound together in scrapbook form, to which additions are made from time to time. The number of invalids who have been pleased to write me, stating that the book had brightened their lives, has been gratifying. Its reception in Britain was cordial; the "Spectator" gave it a favorable review. But any merit that the book has comes, I am sure, from the total absence of effort on my part to make an impression. I wrote for my friends; and what one does easy, one does well. I reveled in the writing of the book, as I had in the journey itself.

The year 1886 ended in deep gloom for me. My life as a happy careless young man, with every want looked after, was over. I was left alone in the world. My mother and brother passed away in November, within a few days of each other, while I lay in bed under a severe attack of typhoid fever, unable to move and, perhaps fortunately, unable to feel the full weight of the catastrophe, being myself face to face with death.

I was the first stricken, upon returning from a visit in the East to our cottage at Cresson Springs on top of the Alleghanies where my mother and I spent our happy summers. I had been quite unwell for a day or two before leaving New York. A physician being summoned, my trouble was pronounced typhoid fever. Professor Dennis was called from New York and he corroborated the diagnosis. An attendant physician and trained nurse were provided at once. Soon after my mother broke down and my brother in Pittsburgh also was reported ill.

I was despaired of, I was so low, and then my whole nature seemed to change. I became reconciled, indulged in pleasing meditations, was without the slightest pain. My mother's

and brother's serious condition had not been revealed to me, and when I was informed that both had left me forever it seemed only natural that I should follow them. We had never been separated; why should we be now? But it was decreed otherwise.

I recovered slowly and the future began to occupy my thoughts. There was only one ray of hope and comfort in it. Toward that my thoughts always turned. For several years I had known Miss Louise Whitfield. Her mother permitted her to ride with me in the Central Park. We were both very fond of riding. Other young ladies were on my list. I had fine horses and often rode in the Park and around New York with one or the other of the circle. In the end the others all faded into ordinary beings. Miss Whitfield remained alone as the perfect one beyond any I had met. Finally I began to find and admit to myself that she stood the supreme test I had applied to several fair ones in my time. She alone did so of all I had ever known. I could recommend young men to apply this test before offering themselves. If they can honestly believe the following lines, as I did, then all is well:

"Full many a lady  
I've eyed with best regard: for several virtues  
Have I liked several women, never any  
With so full soul, but some defect in her  
Did quarrel with the noblest grace she  
And put it to the foil; but you, O you,  
So perfect and so peerless are created  
Of every creature's best."

In my soul I could echo those very words. Today, after twenty years of life with her, if I could find stronger words I could truthfully use them.

My advances met with indifferent success. She was not without other and younger admirers. My wealth and future plans were against me. I was rich and had everything and she felt she could be of little use or benefit to me. Her ideal was to be the real helpmeet of a young, struggling man to whom she could and be indispensable as her mother had been to her father. The care of her own family had largely fallen upon her after her father's death when she was twenty-one. She was now twenty-eight; her views of life were formed. At times she seemed more favorable and we corresponded. Once, however, she returned my letters saying she felt she must put aside all thought of accepting me.

Professor and Mrs. Dennis took me from Cresson to their own home in New York, as soon as I could be removed, and I lay there some time under the former's personal supervision. Miss Whitfield called to see me, for I had written her the first words from Cresson I was able to write. She saw now that I needed her. I was left alone in the world. Now she could be in every sense the "helpmeet." Both her heart and head were now willing and the day was fixed. We were married in New York April 22, 1887, and sailed for our honeymoon which was passed on the Isle of Wight.

Her delight was intense in finding the wild flowers. She had read of Wandering Willie, Heartsease, Forgetme-nots, the Primrose, Wild Thyme, and the whole list of homely names that had been to her only names till now. Everything charmed her. Uncle Lauder and one of my cousins came down from Scotland and visited us, and then we soon followed to the residence at Kilgraston they had selected for us in which to spend the summer. Scotland captured her. There was no doubt about that. Her girlish reading had been of Scotland — Scott's novels and "Scottish Chiefs" being her favorites. She soon became more Scotch than I. All this was fulfilling my fondest dreams.

We spent some days in Dunfermline and enjoyed them much. The haunts and incidents of my boyhood were visited and recited to her by all and sundry. She got nothing but flattering accounts of her husband which gave me a good start with her.



MRS. ANDREW CARNEGIE

I was presented with the Freedom of Edinburgh as we passed northward — Lord Rosebery making the speech. The crowd in Edinburgh was great. I addressed the working-men in the largest hall and received a present from them as did Mrs. Carnegie also a brooch she values highly. She heard and saw the pipers in all their glory and begged there should be one at our home — a piper to walk around and waken us in the morning and also to play us in to dinner. American as she is to the core, and Connecticut Puritan at that, she declared that if condemned to live upon a lonely island and allowed to choose only one musical instrument, it would be the pipes. The piper was secured quickly enough. One called and presented credentials from Cluny McPherson. We engaged him and were preceded by him playing the pipes as we entered our Kilgraston house.

We enjoyed Kilgraston, although Mrs. Carnegie still longed for a wilder and more Highland home. Matthew Arnold visited us, as did Mr. and Mrs. Blaine, Senator and Mrs. Eugene Hale, and many friends. Mrs. Carnegie would have my relatives up from Dunfermline, especially the older uncles and aunties. She charmed every one. They expressed their surprise to me that she ever married me, but I told them I was equally surprised. The match had evidently been predestined.

We took our piper with us when we returned to New York, and also our housekeeper and some of the servants. Mrs. Nicoll remains with us still and is now, after twenty years' faithful service, as a member of the family. George Irvine, our butler, came to us a year later and is also as one of us. Maggie Anderson, one of the servants, is the same. They are devoted people, of high character and true loyalty.

The next year we were offered and took Cluny Castle. Our piper was just the man to tell us all about it. He had been born and bred there and perhaps influenced our selection of that residence where we spent several summers.

On March 30, 1897, there came to us our daughter. As I first gazed upon her Mrs. Carnegie said, "Her name is Margaret after your mother. Now one request I have to make." "What is it, Lou?" "We must get a summer home since this little one has been given us. We cannot rent one and be obliged to go in and go out at a certain date. It should be our home." "Yes," I agreed.

"I make only one condition." "What is that?" I asked.

"It must be in the Highlands of Scotland." "Bless you," was my reply. "That suits me. You know I have to keep out of the sun's rays, and where can we do that so surely as among the heather? I'll be a committee of one to inquire and report." Skibo Castle was the result.

It is now twenty years since Mrs. Carnegie entered and changed my life, a few months after the passing of my mother and only brother left me alone in the world. My life has been made so happy by her that I cannot imagine myself living without her guardianship. I thought I knew her when she stood Ferdinand's test, but it was only the surface of her qualities I had seen and felt. Of their purity, holiness, wisdom, I had not sounded the depth. In every emergency of our active, changing, and in later years somewhat public life, in all her relations with others, including my family and her own, she has proved the diplomat and peace-maker. Peace and good-will attend her footsteps wherever her blessed influence extends. In the rare instances demanding heroic action it is she who first realizes this and plays the part.



MARGARET CARNEGIE AT FIFTEEN

The Peace-Maker has never had a quarrel in all her life, not even with a schoolmate, and there does not live a soul upon the earth who has met her who has the slightest cause to complain of neglect. Not that she does not welcome the best and gently avoid the undesirable none is more fastidious than she but neither rank, wealth, nor social position affects her one iota. She is incapable of acting or speaking rudely; all is in perfect good taste. Still, she never lowers the standard. Her intimates are only of the best. She is always thinking how she can do good to those around her planning for this one and that in case of need and making such judicious arrangements or presents as surprise those cooperating with her.

I cannot imagine myself going through these twenty years without her. Nor can I endure the thought of living after her. In the course of nature I have not that to meet; but then the thought of what will be cast upon her, a woman left alone with so much requiring attention and I sometimes wish I had this to endure for her. But then she will have our blessed daughter in her life and perhaps that will keep her patient. Besides, Margaret needs her more than she does her father.

Why, oh, why, are we compelled to leave the heaven we have found on earth and go we know not where! For I can say with Jessica:

"It is very meet  
The Lord Bassanio live an upright life;  
For, having such a blessing in his lady,

He finds the joys of heaven here on earth."