

Tucholsky Wagner Zola Scott  
Turgenev Wallace Fonatne Sydon Freud Schlegel  
Twain Walther von der Vogelweide Fouqué Friedrich II. von Preußen  
Weber Freiligrath Frey  
Fechner Fichte Weiße Rose von Fallersleben Kant Ernst Richthofen Frommel  
Engels Fielding Hölderlin Eichendorff Tacitus Dumas  
Fehrs Faber Flaubert Eliasberg Eliot Zweig Ebner Eschenbach  
Feuerbach Maximilian I. von Habsburg Fock Ewald Vergil  
Goethe Elisabeth von Österreich London  
Mendelssohn Balzac Shakespeare Rathenau Dostojewski Ganghofer  
Trackl Stevenson Lichtenberg Doyle Gjellerup  
Mommsen Thoma Tolstoi Lenz Hambruch Droste-Hülshoff  
Dach Thoma von Arnim Hägele Hanrieder Hauptmann Humboldt  
Karrillon Reuter Verne Rousseau Hagen Hauff Baudelaire Gautier  
Garschin Defoe Hebbel Hegel Kussmaul Herder  
Damaschke Descartes Schopenhauer Bebel Proust  
Wolfram von Eschenbach Darwin Dickens Grimm Jerome Rilke George  
Bronner Campe Horváth Aristoteles Voltaire Federer Herodot  
Bismarck Vigny Gengenbach Barlach Heine Grillparzer Georgy  
Storm Casanova Lessing Langbein Gilm Gryphius  
Chamberlain Tersteegen Gilm Grillparzer Georgy  
Brentano Claudius Schiller Lafontaine Kralik Iffland Sokrates  
Strachwitz Bellamy Schilling Raabe Gibbon Tschchow  
Katharina II. von Rußland Gerstäcker Raabe Gibbon Tschchow  
Löns Hesse Hoffmann Gogol Wilde Gleim Vulpius  
Luther Heym Hofmannsthal Klee Hölty Morgenstern Goedicke  
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# **After Waterloo: Reminiscences of European Travel 1815-1819**

Major W. E Frye

# Imprint

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To  
**V.A.M. S.R.**



## PREFACE

The knowledge of Major Frye's manuscript and the privilege of publishing it for the first time I owe to the kindness of two French ladies, the Misses G—. Their father, a well known artist and critic, used to spend the summer months at Saint Germain-en-Laye together with his wife, who was an English woman by birth. They had been for a long time intimately acquainted with Major Frye, who lived and ended his life in that quiet town. The Major's hostess, Mme. de W—, after his death in 1858, brought the manuscript to Mrs. G— and gave it to her in memory of her friend. It was duly preserved in the G— family, but remained unnoticed. The Misses G— rediscovered it in 1907, when it had been lying in a cupboard for upwards of half a century. On their showing it to me I thought it was interesting for many reasons, and worthy of introduction to the public. I hope the reader will share my opinion, which is also that of several English scholars and men of letters, to whom I communicated extracts from the manuscript.

The reminiscences are in the form of letters addressed to a correspondent who, however, is never named and of whose health, family and private circumstances not the slightest mention is to be found. So I am inclined to believe that he never existed, and that Major Frye chose to imitate President de Brosses and others who thus recorded their travelling experiences in epistolary form.

The manuscript—which will eventually be deposited in a public library—is entirely in Major Frye's large and legible hand; at some later time it was evidently revised by himself, but many names which I have endeavoured to complete were left in blank or only indicated by initials. There are three folio volumes, bound in paper boards. In this edition it has been thought advisable to leave out a certain number of pages devoted to theatricals, of which Major Frye was a great votary, and also some lengthy descriptions of landscapes, museums and churches, the interest of which to modern readers does not correspond to the space occupied by them. For the information contained in the footnotes I am indebted to many corre-

spondents, English, French, Swiss, Belgian and Italian, to whom I here express my hearty thanks. I am under special obligation to Sir Charles Dilke, Mr Oscar Browning, Professor Novati, Professor Corrado Ricci, Commandant Espérandieu, Professor Cumont, Professor Stilling and Mr Höchberg.

Major Frye's tombstone is in the cemetery of Saint Germain, and reads thus: "To the memory of Major William Edward Frye, who departed this life the 9th day of October, 1858." On the same stone has been added in French: "Perceval Edmond Litchfield, décédé le 15 Avril, 1888." About P.E. Litchfield I know nothing; he must have been the Major's intimate friend during the last period of his life.

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W.E. Frye was born Oct. 29, 1784, and received his education at Eton (1797-9) in the time of the French Revolution. "The system was," he says, "to drill into the heads of the boys strong aristocratic principles and hatred of democracy and of the French in particular." The effect produced on the youth was the reverse of that intended. From 1799 to 1822 he belonged to the British army: here is an abstract of his services:

Ensign, 2nd Foot, 5th August, 1799.

Lieutenant, 2nd Foot, 7th March, 1800.

Half-pay, 4th Foot, 14th April, 1808.

Lieutenant, 24th Foot, 8th December, 1804.

Captain, 56th Foot, 18th April, 1805.

3rd Ceylon Regt., 15th Feb., 1810.

Half-pay, 3rd Foot, 7th March, 1816.

4th Foot, 24th Feb., 1820.

Brevet-Major, 12th August, 1819.

Sold out, 15th August, 1822.

In 1799, Frye took a part in the British Expedition to Holland. In 1801 he was in Egypt with Lord Abercrombie's army and received the medal for war service. His career in India lasted six years and gave him occasion to visit the three presidencies and Ceylon. In 1814 he returned on furlough to Europe and was in Brussels during the Waterloo campaign. The subsequent years—1815 to 1819—he employed visiting Western Europe, as appears from his reminis-

cences. I have read letters of his which prove that he lived in Paris from 1830 to 1832. Later, about 1848, he took an apartment in Saint Germain, and died there in 1858.

Major Frye was a very distinguished linguist; besides knowing Greek and Latin, he understood almost all European languages, and was capable of writing correctly in French, Italian and German. The Misses G— — have shown me a rare book published by him at Paris in 1844 under the following title:

"Trois chants de l'Edda. Vaftrudnismal, Thrymsquidal, Skirnismal, traduits en vers français, accompagnés de notes explicatives des mythes et allégories, et suivis d'autres poèmes par W.E. Frye, ancien major d'infanterie au service d'Angleterre, membre de l'Académie des Arcadiens de Rome. Se vend à Paris, pour l'auteur, chez Heideloff & Cie, Libraires, 18 Rue des Filles St. Thomas. 1844" (In 8vo, xii, 115 pp.)

At the end of that volume are translations by Major Frye of several Northern poems—in German, Italian and English verse—from the Danish and the Swedish; then come two sonnets in French verse, the one in honour of Lafayette, the other about the Duke of Orléans, whose premature death he compares with that of the Northern hero of the Edda, Balder. A part of Frye's translation of the Edda, before appearing in book form, had been published in *l'Echo de la Littérature et des Beaux Arts*, a periodical edited by the Major's friend, M. de Belenet.

Frye loved poetry, though his ideas on the subject were rather those of the eighteenth century than our own. It is interesting to find an English officer reading Voltaire, Gessner, Ariosto, and quoting them from memory (which explains that some of his quotations had to be corrected). The sentimental vein of Rousseau's generation still flows and vibrates in him, as when he says that he has never been able to read the letters of Wolmar to St Preux in Rousseau's *Nouvelle Héloïse* without shedding tears. German minor poetry, now quite forgotten, attracted him almost as much as the great pages of Schiller, Bürger, and Goethe. The Misses G. possess a manuscript translation in three volumes, in the Major's own hand, of Wieland's *Agathodemon* done into English. This he evidently intended to publish, as he had written the title-page which is worded as follows:

"Agathodemon, a philosophical romance translated from the German of Wieland  
by W.E. Frye, member of the Academy degli Arcadi in Rome, and of the Royal  
Society of Northern Antiquarians of Copenhagen, ex-major of infantry in His  
British Majesty's service."

Frye describes with accuracy, and shows much appreciation of fine scenery and architecture. His judgements in painting and sculpture are sincere, though often betraying the autodidact and amateur. He loved music, especially Rossini's operas which were then beginning their long career of triumph. Theatricals of all sorts, especially ballets, had a great attraction for him and elicited his enthusiastic comments. In comparing tragedies and comedies which he had seen performed in different countries, he gave repeated proofs of his knowledge and critical insight. We can take him as a good example of that intelligent class of English travellers whose intercourse with the Continental *litterati* has so well contributed to establish the good reputation of British culture and refined appreciation of the arts.

The chief interest of Frye's reminiscences lies, however, in quite another direction. He was a friend of liberty, a friend of France, an admirer of Napoleon, and a hater of the Tory régime which brought about Napoleon's downfall. "France's attempts at European domination, in the Napoleonic era, are graciously described as but so many efforts towards spreading the light of civilization over Europe." These words, written about a quite recent work and à propos of the "Entente cordiale," apply perfectly to Frye's reminiscences. Travelling immediately before and after the Emperor's collapse, he found that everywhere, excepting in Tuscany, the French domination was regretted, because the ideals of liberty and equality had shone and vanished with the tricolour flag. He admires the French people, though not the *Ultras* and bigots, and has fine words of praise for the French army: "Yes, the French soldier is a fine fellow. I have served against them in Holland and in Egypt, and I will never flinch from rendering justice to their exemplary conduct and lofty valour." He takes trouble to refute the exaggerated reports which were then

circulated all over Europe about the cruelties and vandalism practised by the French: "If the French since the Revolution have not always fought for liberty, they have done so invariably for science; and wherever they carried their victorious arms abuses were abolished, ameliorations of all kinds followed and the arts of life were improved. Our government, since the accession of George III, has never raised its arm except in favour of old abuses, to uphold despotism and unfair privileges or to establish commercial monopoly."

Sometimes, indeed, speaking of his own country and its government, Major Frye uses very hard words, which might seem unpatriotic if we did not know, from many other memoirs and letters, to what a terrible strain orthodox Toryism, coupled with bigotry and hypocrisy, had put the patience of liberal Englishmen at that period. He called the British government "the most dangerous, artful, and determined enemy of all liberty,"—"England," he says, "has been always ready to lend a hand to crush liberty, to perpetuate abuses and to rivet the fetters of monarchical, feudal and ecclesiastical tyranny." And later on he inveighs against the English merchants, who "contributed with their gold to uphold the corrupt system of Pitt and to carry on unjust, unreasonable and liberticide wars."

Whatever may be the final judgement of history on the Tory principles in politics in the days of the Congress of Vienna, Major Frye's love of liberty and intellectual progress entitle him to the sympathy of those who share his generous feelings and do not consider that personal freedom and individual rights are articles for home use only. Since Frye wrote, the whole of Europe, excepting perhaps Russia, has reaped the benefits of the French Revolution, and reduced, if not suppressed, what the Major called "kingcraft and priestcraft." He did not attempt to divine the future, but the history of Europe in the nineteenth century has been largely in accordance with his desires and hopes. It is not a small merit for a writer, in the midst of one of the most rabid reactions that the world has known, to have clung with such tenacity to ideals, the complete victory of which may now be contemplated in the near future.

**S.R.**



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