CLASSICS LIBRARY · STORY MAP

The Life of John Sterling

Thomas Carlyle · *1851 · Carlyle's English*

John Sterling was born at Kaimes Castle, a kind of dilapidated baronial residence to which a small farm was then attached, rented by his Father, in the Isle of Bute, on the 20th July, 1806. Both his parents were Irish by birth, Scotch by extraction, and became, as he himself did, essentially English by long residence and habit. Thomas Carlyle, 1851, PG #1085. For grades 10–12. Quote Carlyle. This is not the Life of Schiller. The book is longer than one map.

THE CENTRAL QUESTION

How should a school read Carlyle's Life of John Sterling as he begins it—at Kaimes Castle, a dilapidated baronial residence with a small farm, in the Isle of Bute, on the 20th of July, 1806—rather than as a later essay on friendship only, or as the Schiller life already in this library?

"John Sterling was born at Kaimes Castle, a kind of dilapidated baronial residence to which a small farm was then attached, rented by his"

The birth, opening of the life

John Sterling was born at Kaimes Castle, a kind of dilapidated baronial residence to which a small farm was then attached, rented by his Father, in the Isle of Bute, on the 20th July, 1806. Both his parents were Irish by birth, Scotch by extraction, and became, as he himself did, essentially English by long residence and habit. Of John himself, Carlyle will say, Scotland has little or nothing to claim except the birth and genealogy, for he left it early. Teach that beginning, for grades 10–12. This is Carlyle, 1851, Project Gutenberg #1085, a particular life of a friend, not the 1825 Life of Schiller. Quote Carlyle, not a later memoir only. The book is longer than one map.

KEY CHARACTERS

John Sterling
Born at Kaimes Castle, in the Isle of Bute, on the 20th of July, 1806, whose life Carlyle undertakes

His father, the tenant of the farm
Who rented the dilapidated baronial residence to which the small farm was attached

His parents
Irish by birth, Scotch by extraction, who became, as he did, essentially English by long residence and habit

Thomas Carlyle
The author of this 1851 life, a friend writing a particular life, not a later legend only

HOW TO BEGIN THIS LIFE

> *"John Sterling was born at Kaimes Castle, a kind of dilapidated baronial residence to which a small farm was then attached, rented by his"*
>
> The birth

> *"Both his parents were Irish by birth, Scotch by extraction; and became"*
>
> The birth

Grades 10–12
Read the full text free at classicslaunch.org.

01

Kaimes Castle, a Small Farm

THE BIRTH

John Sterling was born at Kaimes Castle, a kind of dilapidated baronial residence to which a small farm was then attached. The life begins in a worn house, and a farm, not in a legend.

- Keep "Kaimes Castle" and "dilapidated baronial residence."
- 10–12.
- Quote Carlyle, 1851.
- Not a later essay only.

> *"John Sterling was born at Kaimes Castle, a kind of dilapidated baronial residence to which a small farm was then attached, rented by his"*
>
> The birth, opening of the life

02

The Isle of Bute, 20 July 1806

THE BIRTH

Rented by his Father, in the Isle of Bute, —on the 20th July, 1806. The place and the date are exact. Keep this file's dash and dating.

- Keep "Isle of Bute" and "20th July, 1806."
- 10–12.
- The father is the tenant; the house is not a palace.
- Quote this English.

> *"rented by his Father, in the Isle of Bute,--on the 20th July, 1806. Both his"*
>
> The birth, opening of the life

03

Irish by Birth, Scotch by Extraction

THE PARENTS

Both his parents were Irish by birth, Scotch by extraction, and became, as he himself did, essentially English by long residence and habit. The opening already traces a crossing of places.

- Keep "Irish by birth, Scotch by extraction," and "essentially English by long residence and habit."
- 10–12.
- Do not flatten the family into a single later label.
- Quote Carlyle.

> *"Both his parents were Irish by birth, Scotch by extraction; and became"*
>
> The birth, opening of the life

04

What Scotland May Claim

THE BIRTH

Of John himself, Scotland has little or nothing to claim except the birth and genealogy, for he left it early. If you teach that sentence, quote it; it follows close upon the parents.

- Keep Carlyle's limit: birth and genealogy, not a later national claim.
- 10–12.
- A particular life.
- The later friendship and illness are not this first page.

> *"and became, as he himself did, essentially English by long residence and habit. Of John"*
>
> The birth, opening of the life

05

Carlyle, 1851, Not the Schiller Life

THE EDITION

Project Gutenberg #1085 is The Life of John Sterling, 1851. The Life of Friedrich Schiller is another hosted Carlyle book. Quote this life when you are in it. For grades 10–12. A particular friend, told at length; one map cannot teach the whole book.

- Name 1851, and Sterling.
- Not a general essay on friendship only.
- Not the Schiller life.
- Quote Carlyle.

> *"John Sterling was born at Kaimes Castle, a kind of dilapidated baronial residence to which a small farm was then attached, rented by his"*
>
> The birth, opening of the life

A worn house, and a farm | An island birth, exactly dated | A family crossing places | A friend, writing a life | Carlyle's 1851 English

What to watch for as you read

GRADES 10–12

1. Born at Kaimes Castle, a dilapidated baronial residence with a small farm, in the Isle of Bute, 20 July 1806. Keep "Kaimes."
2. Parents Irish by birth, Scotch by extraction, essentially English by long residence and habit. Keep all three.
3. This is Carlyle's 1851 Life of John Sterling, PG #1085, for grades 10–12—not the 1825 Life of Schiller.
4. A particular life, longer than one map. Quote Carlyle, not a later memoir only.

Quotations are verbatim from the Carlyle's English, Project Gutenberg #1085, the public-domain text hosted at classicslaunch.org/works/life-of-john-sterling/. Citations give book and chapter (or canto and line) so every line can be checked.