

Thomas Carlyle's Birthplace for schools

Thomas Carlyle, critic, historian and moralist was born on 4 December 1795 - a year before Burns died. He was the eldest of a large family and was sent to Edinburgh at the age of 14 to study for the Ministry. It took him three days to walk the 84 miles to Edinburgh! Although much of his adult life was spent in London, his values and beliefs in moral fidelity, hard work and social equality were formed in Scotland.

The house was built over a cobbled pond by his father and uncle, both stonemasons, probably in 1791. Some of Carlyle's personal possessions, such as letters, his hat, walking-stick, and tobacco-cutter are on display. In the bedroom where he was born, his little crib still stands together with a box bed and a sofa which came from the Carlyle house in London at 24 Cheyne Row. Downstairs is a low-ceilinged kitchen with open fire range, stone flagged floor, cloutie (cloth) rugs, furniture and cooking utensils - typical of a craftsman of the period.

Ecclefechan remained a constant factor in Thomas Carlyle's life, and at his death, his instructions were to refuse a place in Westminster abbey and be buried in the local churchyard a few hundred yards from the place of his birth.

● education programme

Carlyle's Birthplace is an important primary resource that offers cross-curricular learning opportunities for key areas of the 5-14 Curriculum

a site visit offers

- Curriculum linked tours: Houses & Homes (A/B); Victorian Life (A/B); Victorian Life & Thomas Carlyle (C/D), including a tour of the house and village.

classroom resources

- teaching pack to complement visit (available on request)

● practical information

planning your visit

- pre-booking is essential
- maximum class size in property: 20 with a ratio of 1 teacher/adult to 10 children
- cost for school parties: children £1 - accompanying adults admitted free of charge
- Educational Membership of the National Trust for Scotland allows free entry to all NTS properties
- preparation: we welcome a free preparatory visit by the teacher. Children should be made aware that they are going to visit an old house furnished in the 18th-century style to find out about the past.

● for more information contact

Property Manager • Fiona Auchterlonie
The Arched House • Ecclefechan • Lockerbie • Dumfries & Galloway • DG11 3DG
telephone (01576) 300666

Regional Education Officer (South) • Vanessa Dolman
telephone (01721) 726010 • fax (01721) 726000