Title: Carnegie
Author: Peter Krass
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chapter 1

Flesh and Blood

On a bleak twenty-fifth day of November in 1835, a quixotic clan gathered in the one-room ground floor of a weaver's cottage in Dunfermline, Scotland, to await the arrival of its newest member. That day, Andrew Carnegie—or Andra as his relatives would call him—was born into a large family of political activists, radicals, and eccentrics. These blood relations, with all their passions and idiosyncrasies, would inspire and haunt Andra; they would infuse him with proletarian social and political convictions that would create merciless internal conflict as he came to embody the quintessential American rags-to-riches story.

The first in the family tree on record to protest the British monarchy and the oppressive living conditions suffered by the working class was James Carnegie, Andra's great-grandfather, who was of Celtic blood.[1] A shadowy figure in family lore, James had settled in Pattiemuir, just north of Edinburgh, where he leased land for farming and took up weaving. The village encompassed about a dozen cottages with red-tiled or thatched roofs nestled among softly rolling pastureland. During the Meal Riots of 1770, which followed a bad harvest, he was arrested for sedition against the local gentry who controlled the land and bore the blame for the food shortages. While he was in prison, a mysterious lady visited him and gave him a jewel-encrusted snuffbox, which prompted rumors that the Carnegie lineage was of a more exulted rank than mere peasant weaver. The earls of Northesk and of Southesk both bore the name Carnegie, but the family proudly denied any connection. Although James escaped conviction and quietly returned to his family, the name Carnegie, a Gaelic compound word meaning "fort at the gap," would be forever associated with the radical element.

James's oldest son and Andra's grandfather, Andrew Carnegie, was more of an eccentric than a radical. Also a natural leader, he was more blithe than his father and lived by the Scottish proverb "Be happy while you're living, for you're a long time dead"—a trait he bequeathed to Andra, who later reflected,

"I think my optimistic nature, my ability to shed trouble and to laugh through life, making 'all my ducks swans,' as friends say I do, must have been inherited from this delightful old masquerading grandfather whose name I am proud to bear."[2] Grandfather Carnegie relished consorting with the hamlet's men either at the smithy or the Black Bull Inn. In order to instigate political and social debate, he founded Pattiemuir College, which was no more than a single-room cottage in the village center were the men gathered weekly to argue over the important issues of the day.[3] Grandfather Carnegie was dubbed the Professor, as were most of his cohorts, and considering that the so-called professors far outnumbered the students, whispers in town that rumored the college to be "a drinking place" were not unfounded.[4]

To initiate the meetings, Grandfather Carnegie would climb upon his throne and, lifting his dram of malt whiskey, toast the common man's king of poets, Robert "Rabbie" Burns, or some other Scottish icon. Although the temperance movement was actively attempting to put an end to public and private drinking, the ability to imbibe, otherwise known as "quaffing the goblet" or "chasing the rosy hours," said a good deal about a man, and these men had much to say. After a benedictory toast, he would instigate heated debate by reading the news from either the London *Times* or the *Edinburgh Scotsman.* Topics ranged from theological matters to corruption in Parliament to factory reform. Regardless of the issue, whether national or foreign, Professor Andrew proved to be the expert. He was celebrated for his power of persuasion, his passion for debate, his skilled storytelling, his devotion to democratic ideals, and his righteous indignation (particularly true after a few drams at the college)—all traits that later manifested themselves in Andra, who would become renowned for his grandiloquence and derive exceptional pleasure from startling people with his wild stories and radical ideals.[5]

As a second-generation weaver, Grandpa Carnegie accompanied his father, James, to cities such as Dunfermline and Edinburgh to sell their linens. During one such excursion to the nearby coastal town of Limekilns, he became smitten with Elizabeth Thom, the daughter of a customer. Their courtship began in earnest, but there was a major obstacle: Elizabeth's wealthy father, a sea captain and shipowner, wanted his precious daughter to have nothing to do with a village weaver who offered no sign of being "specially successful in the acquisition of worldly gear."[6] (Here the characters of Grandpa Carnegie and his namesake Andra diverged completely; Andra would prove himself a prodigal capitalist.) Despite the wizened captain withdrawing Elizabeth's dowry, she and Andrew married for love, eventually producing ten children.

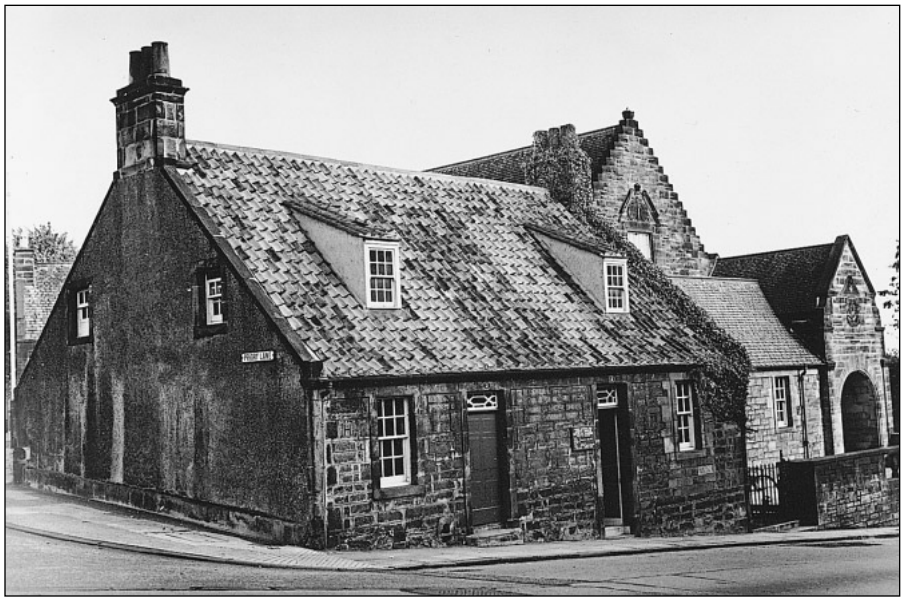
Andrew and Elizabeth's seventh child was William, born on June 19, 1804, the future father of the world's most rapacious steel master. The flaxen-haired boy with blue eyes bright against his milk-pale skin became a third-generation weaver and eventually specialized in damask, a craft involving the use of a lustrous fabric such as cotton, linen, or silk to create flat patterns in a satin weave. The patterns were intricate and beautiful, and William produced spectacular tablecloths as his feet worked the treadles and his hands

deftly moved the shuttle from side to side. At that time, Dunfermline, two miles north, was the center for the damask trade. William, realizing an independent life in Pattiemuir would put few shillings in his pocket, journeyed there circa 1830, his father to follow.[7] It was a brave act moving from a mere hamlet to a burgh of more than ten thousand people, but William was young and ambitious.

Nicknamed "Auld Grey Toun" because all the buildings were constructed of gray sandstone, the seemingly dour Dunfermline nevertheless had a certain romantic lure that pervaded the inhabitants' spirits, including that of Andra. It stood on high ground overlooking the Firth of Forth, a long, narrow bay backed by the silhouette of the Pentland Hills beyond, and had once been the capital of Scotland. Rich with tradition and treasure, at the start of the fourteenth century Dunfermline's "Abbey and Monastery buildings stood unrivalled in Scotland for their extent and 'noble adornments,'" according to town historian Ebenezer Henderson.[8] On his death in 1329, King Robert the Bruce was buried in the center of the abbey, surrounded by past kings and queens, including Queen Margaret, the patron saint of Scotland. But in the mid-1400s, the capital was relocated to Edinburgh, a far more powerful military seat, with its imposing fortress and ability to protect the royal family. When William Carnegie made his way to Dunfermline, the majestic monastery and royal palace were but ruins, though the air of nobility and pride remained, the noble ghosts of William Wallace and the Robert the Bruce alive in the streets.

William rented half of a cottage duplex on the corner of Moodie Street and Priory Lane, paying between $15 and $20 a year. He set up his loom on the main floor, the room's dimensions a mere eight paces by six, and his living quarters in the cramped attic above. He shared the stairs with the other renters, along with the privy out back. While Captain Thom had thumbed his nose at William's father, in Dunfermline the damask handloom weaver was considered aristocracy, the nobility of the working class and relatively prosperous, in stark contrast to the suffering tenant farmers, coal miners, and factory workers who were paid starvation wages.[9]

Recognized as a sober and skilled weaver, William Carnegie quickly made friends, including the Morrison family, who lived up the street. He became smitten with Margaret Morrison, who was born on June 19, 1810, the third of six children. Her father, Thomas, was a political activist, reminding William of his own radical heritage. Like all Morrison women, Margaret had a stout body and strong, dark facial features, her square chin and high cheekbones prominent in what was otherwise a plain face. As a polite Scotsman would say, she was a "wiselik" girl, or "She's better than she's bonny." In other words, she was a woman with character. Considering her mother died when Margaret was just four, she had little choice but to become strong-willed, and it was her penetrating eyes with heavy, almost seductive lids that first captivated



The Dunfermline, Scotland, cottage in which Andrew Carnegie was born in 1835. The Carnegie family shared "the duplex" with another family. (Courtesy of the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh)

William. No fool, he recognized an efficient woman of good stock, and in December 1834 he took her hand in marriage. Although Andra was named after his paternal grandfather and had his father's blond hair and blue eyes, he would inherit his mother's resoluteness and tenacity, as well as the fiercely independent fighting spirit of his maternal ancestors.

The bellicose Morrison spirit was due to their Norse blood, their Viking ancestors having invaded northern Scotland and conquered the people there in the ninth and tenth centuries. They then migrated south. Some seven hundred years later found Thomas Morrison's father, John, to be a prosperous leather merchant in Edinburgh. Thomas married Ann Hodge, the daughter of a wealthy Edinburgh merchant, and was running the family's leather business when, according to family legend, he made some speculative investments and lost both the business and his wife's inheritance.[10] He moved the family to Dunfermline to begin anew, to rebuild his life. There he became a respectable cobbler, a trade he had learned as a boy.

Although a widower since 1814, Thomas found the time to pursue political activities, and derived great satisfaction in haranguing audiences about his favorite topic, land reform. It was time for the monarchy, the lords, and the privileged few to relinquish the land they had controlled since the beginning of the feudal system. In one torrid lecture, "Rights of Land," he delivered his core doctrine: "Our rule is *Each shall possess; all shall enjoy;* Our principle, *universal and equal right;* and our 'law of the land' shall be *Every*

man a lord; every woman a lady; and *every child an heir*."[11] His brooding black eyes would stare out at the crowd, and his wild outcropping of sable hair would shake as he gestured wildly with each point he shouted, his strong jaw jutting outward. His extravagant use of body language—a thrown-out chest, rollicking lips, violent hand motions—were so identically reproduced in Andra that it unnerved his relatives. As for Thomas Morrison's politics, they were embraced by the entire clan, including Andra, who came to despise inherited privilege and aristocratic tendencies in any form.

To further his political agenda, Morrison organized a Dunfermline political union of fellow radicals in the 1820s, which had the adopted battle cry "Agitation is the order of the day—the night of monastic ignorance is passed."[12] He also founded *The Precursor,* a newspaper "devoted to the interests of the Tradesmen and Mechanics in particular," but it was considered so provocative that only a radical printer in Edinburgh would set it in type.[13] Whether it was a readership too timid to buy the paper or the cost of sending each manuscript the sixteen miles to Edinburgh via horse-drawn carriage, the newspaper was declared defunct after just three issues. Enthusiasm unabated, Morrison took up his pen against the district's representative to Parliament, the Tory nobleman Lord Dalmeny, and in an audacious stream of correspondence he advised and criticized Dalmeny on everything from his support of the monarchy to his grammar. A land reform evangelist until the end, Thomas Morrison died on the road in 1837, haranguing the public and collecting money to continue his mission.

There was good cause for Morrison's land reform agitation, as well as the general desire for revolution that pervaded Britain's working class: the country's deteriorating economic and living conditions had become unbearable. While Andra was yet too young to comprehend his immediate world, he was a creature of his environment, and these threads of history would be woven into the fabric of his soul. Social conditions, now and in the future, would shape his moral convictions.

No longer ignorant, voiceless peasants taking swipes at the monarchy by poaching deer on the nobility's properties, the members of the disenfranchised working class were becoming more vocal, organizing themselves into trade unions, demanding reduced work hours and reasonable wages, and their leaders were inserting themselves into the political fray. Several issues in particular stirred the public's ire, but, foremost, the middle and lower classes demanded the seemingly basic rights to vote, which would give them representation in Parliament, and to own property. Another thorn was the Corn Laws, which artificially supported the price of corn and wheat to benefit the farmers. The majority of the working class, however, lived in factory and mining towns where they couldn't grow their own food and were forced to pay the artificially inflated prices or face starvation. It became difficult to earn a living wage and conditions continued to deteriorate, a situation described so

depressingly well by Charles Dickens in such classics as *Oliver Twist* (1838). These problems were not just political; they were also the side effects of the Industrial Revolution, a revolution that was beyond the control of politicians.

Great Britain had taken an early lead in the Industrial Revolution. The isles, with rich coalfields to provide fuel for steam engines, many natural waterways for cheap transportation, and a booming international trade with its colonies, was ideally suited for a transformation from an agricultural-based economy to a manufacturing-based economy, from a handicraft system to a factory system. As country folk, in search of steady jobs, migrated to the cities in increasing numbers, the transition proved painful because already poor living conditions in urban centers were exacerbated by a population explosion. Contributing to this unprecedented growth were the Irish, who, seeking work, arrived in waves. Thus, employers had such a large labor pool to select from that they were able to dictate low wages and long hours, further suppressing the working poor.[14] Disillusioned and embittered, the working class formed both trade and political unions to exert pressure, and activism increased dramatically.

Nationalistic-minded Scotland raised a collective cry of protest as industrial towns such as Dunfermline, Glasgow, and the mining towns that sprang up around the expansive central coalfields suffered more than most. The police superintendent of Glasgow, reporting on his own city streets, observed, "There is concentrated everything that is wretched, dissolute, loathsome, and pestilential. These places are filled by a population of many thousands of miserable creatures. The houses in which they live are unfit even for sties . . . dunghills lie in the vicinity of the dwellings; and from the extremely defective sewerages, filth of every kind constantly accumulates."[15] Thirty-nine miles to the northeast of Glasgow, Dunfermline was certainly not immune to the pestilential conditions. In the coalfields that ringed the town, visitors discovered the squalid conditions of Glasgow, with women and girls working alongside men and boys in the pits. Sanitary conditions were deplorable. Not only was clean water scarce, but miners were creatures of superstition and preferred not to bathe, perhaps hoping their filth would keep death at a distance.

On the more immediate outskirts of Dunfermline, tenant farmers were equally destitute. A prominent radical activist and friend of the Morrison family, William Cobbett, described the living conditions of the farmer he encountered on his way visit to the Morrison household: "I found the 'bothie' to be a shed, with a fire-place in it to burn coals in, with one doorway, and one little window. The floor was the ground. There were three wooden bedsteads nailed together like the berths in a barrack-room, with boards for the bottom of them. The bedding seemed to be very coarse sheeting with coarse woolen things at the top; and all seemed to be such as similar things must be when there is nobody but men to look after them. . . . There was no backdoor to the place, and no privy."[16] A wry observation made more than once was that the cows were housed as well as the men and the pigs ate better. The factories in Dunfermline proper also offered horrific scenes; even government

commissions found them filthy and ill ventilated.[17] As in the coal mines, here, too, children labored. One commission inspector reported on eleven-year-old Margaret Methven, whose "feet and legs often swell and give her pain" from the long hours, her workday beginning at a quarter before 6 a.m. and lasting until 8 p.m., with half an hour for dinner.[18]

Cholera and typhus were a constant threat in the overpopulated town of Dunfermline, with its narrow streets and inadequate housing. When a cholera epidemic swept across Europe in 1832, the townspeople fearfully tracked its progress in the newspapers. The disease found its way to northeastern England in February of that year, and on September 2 it struck its first Dunfermline victim.[19] Not long after, the dead cart rumbling through the streets became a familiar sight, but behind it trailed no mourners for fear of being infected. Such were the conditions of the new industrial society, characterized by glorious advances in technology and mass production, overcrowding, squalor, and an acute sense of mortality—for the working class, a bleak, Dickensian place that held out little hope to their children. This was the world, country, and town into which Andrew Carnegie was born.

The boy was the offspring of Celtic and Norse blood, and from both the Carnegie and the Morrison sides little Andra would take a piece for himself. From his mother and father, his aunts and uncles he would learn of family traditions and legends, some more embellished than others. Fate would play a prominent role in his own legend, too, for that cold, foggy November day of his birth was a day for Shakespeare's witches to rule on the heath, stirring their cauldron and prophesying the future as they did for the ambitious Scotsman Macbeth. "All hail, Macbeth," they cried, "that shalt be king hereafter!"[20] The seed was planted for Macbeth to kill his king, and a battle between determinism and freewill ensued. Carnegie would face the same battle for control, reckoning with forces that began with his birthplace. "No bright child of Dunfermline can escape the influence of the Abbey, Palace, and Glen," he reflected. "These touch him and set fire to the latent spark within, making him something different and beyond what, less happily born, he would have become."[21] He believed in fate, and fate would indeed light that "latent spark within." The stage was set.

At the pulpit in the austere church in Dunfermline, the minister spoke of sin. His stern voice lost in its profundity, he preached the standard Calvinistic doctrine that mankind is spiritually incapacitated by sin, having been born into the original sin of Adam and Eve. He used these thorny words: *infant damnation*. Will Carnegie could take no more of this Presbyterian diatribe—how could his slaphappy baby, his wee Andra, be living in sin?—and he admonished the minister, declaring, "If that be your religion and that your God, I seek a better religion and a nobler God." That was the family story of Will's break with the church, a story Andra cherished his entire life.[22] It would also lead to young Andra growing up in a house divided on religious

matters. As a result, he would become devoutly agnostic, preferring to seek immortality in his temporal life than concerning himself with theological thereafters.

Will's rejection of the Presbyterian Church of Scotland, which was based on John Calvin's doctrines, was not unusual; most radicals of that time considered the church to be part of the Tory-Anglican establishment that had opposed voter reform in 1832. Another factor influencing Will was that Calvin's God was not a benevolent God, nor a particularly judicious one in light of the fact that Calvinism denies the will of the individual, as well as blesses and condemns people indiscriminately. Will did not want his child growing up handicapped by such deterministic principles. No doubt, Margaret was pleased by her husband's choice because her family had forsaken the church years ago, and she herself was taken with the impassioned William Ellery Channing, the American minister who wrote a biography of Henry David Thoreau and advocated Unitarianism. (This Protestant sect believes that God is one person, not part of a Trinity, and trusts in the moral abilities of the individual.) Although Unitarianism had existed in Transylvania since the 1560s, it was Channing who did much to popularize the church's beliefs in the early 1800s. Not only did Channing preach that the Calvinist God was corrupt, which was welcomed by the radical Morrisons, but he greatly elevated mankind's state from depravity. He believed that man and woman followed a divine pattern in their own spiritual evolution, and the greatest good was that mankind could "hold intellectual and moral affinity with the Supreme Being."[23] Margaret took delight in this viewpoint, and she imagined such greatness for her Andra; he would not submit to the Calvinist's wanton deity, but walk with God. Still, she did not attend any Unitarian church services, not with housework and cooking to be done; as a Scottish woman, she could never shirk her Calvin-based puritan streak.

Not convinced Unitarianism was the answer, Will elected to join the Swedenborgian church, a very small congregation attended by other members of the Carnegie and Morrison families. The church was based on the teachings of Emanuel Swedenborg, a Swedish scientist, theosophist, and mystic, who, after a tranquil career of studying mathematics and the natural sciences, experienced a mystic illumination in 1745. Based on his vision, he constructed three realms of existence: the divine mind, the spiritual world, and the natural world, corresponding to love, wisdom, and use, respectively. And each could be found in both God and humankind. Life was a shared experience with God, according to Swedenborg, who believed divinity equated to eternal love. This was the benevolent God Will sought, regardless of whether Swedenborg was a theosophist quack with delusions of being a prophet. Truth be known, Will was a bit of a dreamer, too, who was liable to forsake the loom for religious meditation. Neighbors referred to him as a "thawless chiel" on occasion, suggesting he was dreamy and impractical.[24]

Although both churches believed humankind was not born in a depraved state, nor were individuals predestined for salvation or damnation, Will and

Margaret didn't share the other's enthusiasm for their respective religions. Impressed upon Andra were beliefs from each religious practice, which would manifest themselves later in life; and while the Carnegie family denied the Presbyterian Church a place in their lives, Calvinism was so strong in Scotland that its spirit pervaded the family's soul, a spirit that included moral austerity and family piety, thrift, industry, and sobriety. Andra recalled that "the stern doctrines of Calvinism lay as a terrible nightmare upon me," but the nightmare later faded.[25] Faded, but not forgotten, especially when Andra achieved wealth and fame, for he came to believe he was one of Calvin's blessed, a sanctified trustee for all of civilization.

Now a confident master weaver, Will decided to take on apprentices and add looms; with the small, half cottage on Moodie Street no longer adequate, he moved the family to larger quarters on Edgar Street, overlooking a park and lush green. On the bottom floor of the Edgar Street home Will installed four looms; the family still lived above the workshop, but this time in a spacious apartment, not a cramped attic. Far more driven than her husband by material gain, a temporarily satisfied Margaret looked forward to the time when they would reach the social status of others in the Morrison clan, especially her older sister Seaton, who had married George Lauder, a well-to-do merchant with a shop on High Street. At Edgar Street, Andra found new entertainment for himself besides flinging porridge about: he discovered money. When allowed, he would take all the pennies his mother had diligently saved in her cash box and stack them up, only to swat them down. A neighborhood lad, John Kirk, who used to baby-sit occasionally for Margaret, later recalled the game: "The ploy he seemed to like best was tae get haud o' as mony pennies as he could, build them up on the tap o' each ither, an' then knock them o'er wi' his haund."[26]

Life was grand for a year, and then pennies were no longer playthings. Due to a business downturn in 1837, the growth of the damask trade quickly reversed, exacerbated by the fact that not only was there less work, but the number of looms in Dunfermline had reached a saturation point, almost doubling in the previous twenty years.[27] Weavers employed in shops were paid off and let go; hundreds were without work, with the unemployment rate among weavers nearing 30 percent, making it necessary to start a relief fund. Compounding the distress, influenza and typhus fever struck Dunfermline, and there was also a poor harvest.[28] All William could do was go to his closet to pray, which was his habit, but the damask trade would never be the same.

Now more desperate to wield political power, the working class created formidable political unions that encompassed all workers in all geographic locations. Two organizations came to the forefront in early 1838: the London Working Men's Association (LWMA) and the Birmingham Political Union. The LWMA, with little fanfare, published its manifesto, *The People's Charter*, which was aimed at suffrage reform, beginning with "a vote for everyman

twenty-one years of age, of sound mind, and not undergoing punishment for crime."[29] It was the old story of fair representation for all.

In May, the Birmingham Political Union, with its power base in the industrial town of Birmingham, sent its most eloquent and electrifying speakers on tour—Dunfermline was on the itinerary—in support of the charter. The speakers also presented the union's National Reform Petition, which, like the charter, demanded voter and parliamentary reforms, and called for everyone to sign. By early June, the petition was adopted in Dundee, Dunfermline, Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Perth, among other towns, and as the movement picked up momentum the supporters became known as Chartists. The Chartists were to be the unifying power that was supposed to bring about the downfall of the British government.

Both William Carnegie and his brother-in-law Thomas Morrison Jr. enthusiastically took up the Chartists' mantle, which would impact Andra. Margaret's eldest brother, Thomas, a member of the town council since 1833 and nicknamed "the Bailie," was the carrier of the family's radical torch and quickly took a leadership role in Dunfermline's chapter of the London Working Men's Association. Like his father, he was an impressive sight when haranguing the public, a forceful and sometimes supernatural-appearing specter. A tremendous walking stick—"as big as a post"—thumping down city roads always announced his arrival. A lean, upright man, Morrison added to his imposing figure by always donning a long frock coat and a lum hat, a chimney-shaped headpiece. Public speakers opposing Morrison feared the sight of his piercing eyes and his bushy beard in the crowd because he was renowned as "a determined and clever heckler," showing contempt with a cuckoo singsong of "hear, hear, hear!" The *Dunfermline Journal*, a conservative newspaper, described his heckling as "most disgusting" and deplored how he could "laugh at the most sacred emotions of the human heart."[30] From Thomas, Andra would inherit a mocking, biting humor and a willingness to startle, stun, and otherwise disrupt his enemies.

When not humiliating the enemy or being chastised by the press, Thomas hosted other prominent British radicals and Chartists. Among them were those who espoused violence to achieve the charter; they were the physical force men who thirsted for armed revolution. Thomas, while a fiery character, did not advocate the use of physical force; instead he was a moral suasionist, believing that peaceful, logical discussion would effect change. Already a tenuous coalition as different tradesmen envisioned different goals, the Chartist movement would fracture over the point of violence versus pacifism. Decades later, Andra would also be faced with this basic choice between using physical force or peaceful persuasion in dealing with labor strikes like that at his Homestead steel mill in 1892; he would find himself and his lieutenants so divided on the issue that indecision would lead to tragedy. While strikes would be anathema to Andra, his uncle Thomas was not averse to calling for disruptive strikes, and helped establish a Cessation-from-Labour committee. Their purpose was "to go on strike and 'not to resume the production of

wealth until the People's Charter becomes law.'"[31] To not produce wealth was a prospect that did indeed intimidate the authorities, landowners, and sundry lords. Troops and cavalry were sent from Edinburgh to patrol Dunfermline and prevent seditious meetings, so the town's defiant Chartists held a meeting in nearby Torryburn—with Tom Morrison and his club at the podium.[32]

Often at his brother-in-law's side at many of the gatherings, Will developed into a forceful speaker, too, and little Andra, when attending the political rallies, would push through the thick human brush of legs and coats to see his father. Will also took up his pen for the cause, writing a bold letter to the editor of the *Edinburgh Monthly Democrat*, a newly founded Chartist newspaper, that was printed in the July 7, 1838, inaugural issue. He extolled Dunfermline's Chartist movement, noted that 6,106 citizens had signed the Chartist petition, and concluded, "The work goes on gloriously here."[33] Despite Will's optimism, the next spring the proposals in the Chartist petition were soundly rejected by the House of Commons, 235 votes to 46. Radical activity would thereafter become more desperate.

Andrew Carnegie was not yet three years old when the Chartist movement began in 1838, and he could hardly understand the social and economic dynamics behind it; however, the excitement it generated in his parents worried the boy. Childhood in the Carnegie home offered little enjoyment with Father at the loom ten to twelve hours a day, Mother laboring through chores, and the Carnegie-Morrison clan dedicating hours to planning the reform campaign. A voracious reader who cofounded a small library for weaver families, Will spent any other precious free minutes reading the papers and *Bentley's Miscellany*'s monthly installments of the latest Charles Dickens novel, such as *Oliver Twist* or *Nicholas Nickleby*.

The one sanctuary Andra could escape to for attention and boyhood pleasures was his uncle George Lauder's grocery store on High Street. By instinct, he gravitated toward this surrogate father, who, after his wife Seaton's premature death, turned his attention to his son, George Jr., and Andra, hoping to forget his grief in their young enthusiasm. Andra spent many hours of the day with his uncle and his cousin George, and the boys, close in age, became like brothers. Unable to say each other's names as toddlers, George called his cousin by a piece of his last name, Naig, and Andrew, using a piece of no one knows what, called him Dod; the names stuck for their entire lives. When there were no customers, Uncle Lauder, as the family called him, would pull up a couple of crates and, in a hushed tone, recount stories of Scotland's history, including the boys' favorite—the heroic exploits of William Wallace. Wallace emerged from obscurity to lead Scottish forces against the ruthless English King Edward I, whose army was defeated on September 11, 1297. Anointed guardian of Scotland, Wallace later resigned and was eventually captured. For his crimes he was hanged, decapitated, his head mounted on London Bridge, his internal organs burned, and his body cut into four parts

to be displayed in Scotland as a gentle reminder to not question the king's authority. No doubt, Uncle Lauder edited the story a bit to soften the blow. The message imparted was that a commoner had risen up to become the guardian of Scotland, comparable to being king, and so, too, could the boys elevate themselves to greatness. Wallace upset the natural order, the hierarchy of the social class, and for Andra, "everything heroic centered in him."[34]

The exploits of King Robert the Bruce, who won Scotland's independence on the heels of Wallace's heroics, were also favorites of the boys: how his three brothers were captured and executed; how his wife was held prisoner for eight years; how he risked his wealth and estates for all-out war against the English; how he single-handedly slew three would-be ambushers; how he made and broke alliances to secure victory; and how he mingled with all his soldiers to win loyalty. These stories were dramatic lessons for Dod and Naig to be applied later in life, and to ensure the boys remembered their history, Uncle Lauder offered pennies as rewards for memorizing facts. It worked. A neighbor recalled that Andra developed a spongelike memory; for one of the girls he played with he would commit to memory favorite songs and poetry, then stand on the kitchen chair and recite them back.[35] His power of memorization and fine public performing would serve him well, and he later wrote that his uncle's "influence over me cannot be overestimated."[36] At this early age, Andra also associated the monetary rewards with success, the only measurement he would know how to use as an adult.

Outside of Uncle Lauder's shop, the ruins of the Meal Mill on Monastery Street became the boys' castle for imaginary sieges and battles, the dam of an old barley mill made for a moat and drawbridge—until the stagnant water became dangerously polluted—and the hilly, cobbled streets lined with single-story cottages with red-tiled roofs were also the playground.[37] The preferred games were marbles, or "plounkie," and grounders. Athletic competition, such as high jumping and racing base, was popular, too, for the blue-collar boys who couldn't afford more luxurious sporting events such as foxhunting or dressage or cricket. The absolute favorite, however, was cavalry fighting, in which Andra would perch on the shoulders of a stronger lad and try to knock off a similarly mounted antagonist. Blood and broken bones were not unknown, and the games instilled in the young men a will to win.[38] Competition, violence, bloodshed, and even death, it seems, could not be ignored; they were everywhere in Andra's life, from Scottish history to the coal mines ringing Dunfermline to the streets on which he walked.

There was one place, an oasislike paradise in Dunfermline, where Andra was banned from playing—the Pittencrieff estate and its parklike grounds. Owned by the Hunt family, Pittencrieff was the largest estate in town, the property encompassing the historically important ruins of the mythical monastery and palace, along with more than sixty acres of grand lawns, high hills, deep woods, and beautiful views of the firth. Although the Hunts were an inhospitable bunch, protecting their estate with formidable stone walls and iron gates, every May, in an annual display of generosity, the family

would open the grounds to the public, except to those descended from Thomas Morrison Sr. The radical had publicly fought with James Hunt over greater access to Dunfermline's heritage—the ruins—and a spiteful Hunt barred all Morrisons and descendants from ever stepping on the property. With Uncle Thomas still riling the Hunt family, the feud continued a generation later, and Andra could only daydream of magic among the ruins. One day he would exact revenge and procure the estate.

As Andra grew older and prepared to become a fourth-generation weaver, work became part of his daily routine. For hours, he'd watch his father weave, fascinated by the rhythmic movement and clatter of the handheld driver stick and the batten; and when needed, he fetched supplies, such as spools of yarn and buckets of water. Water was a scarce commodity in Dunfermline, so every morning queues formed at public wells to pump the day's first supply, a chore Andra enjoyed only because he could antagonize the old ladies. "The supply was scanty and irregular," he recalled. "Sometimes it was not allowed to run until late in the morning and a score of old wives were sitting around, the turn of each having been previously secured through the night by placing a worthless can in the line. This, as might be expected, led to numerous contentions in which I would not be put down even by these venerable old dames. I earned the reputation of being 'an awfu' laddie.' In this way I probably developed the strain of argumentativeness, or perhaps combativeness, which has always remained with me."[39] Never intimidated by the ladies' clucking reproaches, brash Andra, with flaxen hair and sturdy, stumpy legs, always ignored their cans and scurried to the front of the queue.

Occasional emergencies at Uncle Lauder's shop required Andra's help. Once, when Dod and Naig were about nine or ten years of age, Lauder bought one hundred pints of exceptionally ripe gooseberries that had to be peddled immediately. "Well Naig," Uncle Lauder said, "will you and Dod go to Crossgates with John Vock and his Cuddy Cart and sell these grosets for me?" It was a big job, but Andra was already displaying an aptitude for selling and performed admirably, according to Uncle Lauder, who in a letter to Andra, reflected, "This was a lesson in self reliance—and nobly did the lads acquit themselves."[40]

Self-reliance and independence: These were traits bred in young Andra's bone and because he was small in physical stature, reaching only five feet three inches in adulthood (five feet seven inches was the American adult male average), he had no choice but to rely on a quick wit to solve problems. As a boy, he showed this acumen when he started keeping rabbits. His father was good enough to build a rabbit hutch, but when it came to feeding the rabbits (who multiplied unmercifully, as rabbits are apt to do) Andra was on his own. To manage the task, the boy gathered his chums and made his first business deal: if they gathered dandelions and clover to feed the frisky rabbits, he would name a rabbit after each of them. Playing upon vanity, the

manipulative Andra learned at a young age, was a clever means to motivate others and to profit. It was a technique he used time and again to secure his desires.

As for a formal education, which was then voluntary, doting Will and Margaret promised their only child they would not ship him off to school until he was quite ready. By the time he reached age seven and was still showing no inclination to attend school, Will and Margaret were regretting their promise. Finally, they approached Robert Martin, head of the nearby Rolland School, and asked him to take Andra on a little outing to discuss the merits of schooling. To his parents' relief, the eight-year-old boy took to Mr. Martin and was enrolled in the school at a cost of a few pennies a week. Between 150 and 180 students attended the Rolland School, the entire flock in a single room. The master taught the lessons to the older students, who in turn helped the younger with studies that included spelling, memorizing, doing sums in arithmetic, and writing in copybooks. The students would form a semicircle around the teacher to "say their lessons," a duty the demonstrative Andra excelled at—and a good thing, too, because "Snuffy" Martin, as the headmaster was secretly called, was a taskmaster. If one of his cretinous charges misbehaved, he threw a leather strap at the perpetrator. The child then brought the strap to Snuffy and took a smart whack on the open palm.

Far from being a hooligan, Andra was a boy who tried too hard in the eyes of his peers and was nicknamed "Martin's Pet," a name snarled at him in passing. Although he despised the moniker, Andra couldn't help but be a diligent student. In his teacher, as he had in Uncle Lauder and as he would throughout his life, he astutely recognized another worthy mentor. Andra had the canny ability to latch on to both men and women from whom he could absorb wisdom and information and who could further his career. From Mr. Martin's perspective, he claimed that Andrew Carnegie was "one of the smartest lads who had ever passed through his school."[41] Besides the nickname Martin's Pet, the only other souring experience at school was having to recite a daily dose of two double verses of the Psalms. Due to his father and mother's rejection of traditional church, religion was not Andra's forte, immediately demonstrated on the first day of school when he was asked to recite a proverb. Proudly, he responded, "Take care of your pence, the pound will take care of themselves."[42] That particular proverb's source was Andra's mother, not the Good Book, and his classmates had a hearty laugh at his expense. It was only fitting that Margaret Carnegie held more power over her son than any god: she was the single greatest motivational force behind his success.