

英国作家生平丛书

THE BRITISH LIBRARY
writers' lives

William Wordsworth

威廉·华兹华斯

STEPHEN HEBRON



To the Printer
(after the Poem (in the set under the title
of "Hoods of my own mind") beginning "
"The Cock is crowing" please to insert
the two following properly numbered & under
the succeeding according to)

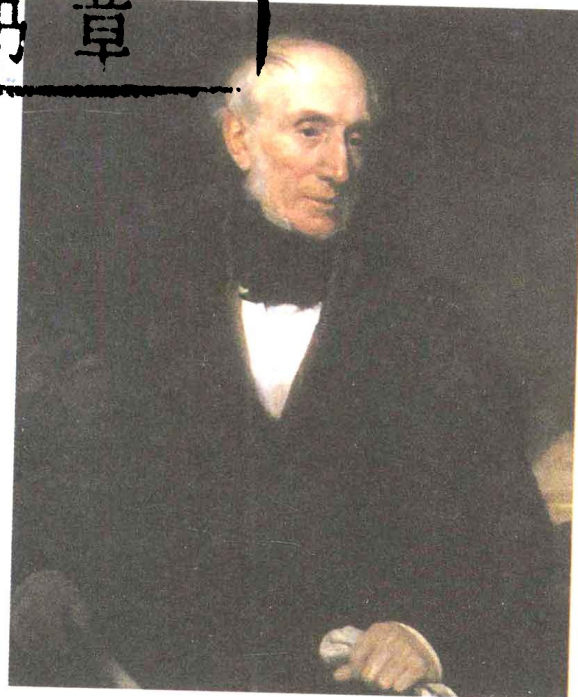
~~I wandered like a cloud~~
I wandered lonely as a Cloud
That floats on high o'er Vales and Hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host of dancing Daffodils,
Beside the Lake beneath the trees,
Ten thousand dancing in the breeze.

The Waves beside them danced, but they
Outdid the sparkling Waves in glee—
A Poet could not but be gay
In such a laughing company:
I gazed—and gazed—but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought.

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总序

普通中国读者，包括英语专业的学生，对于英国文学的了解一般只限于个别经典作品，而对作家其人其事及其整个文学创作情况所知甚少。其中部分的原因是文学史家们编写的英国文学史往往注重介绍作品的情节内容，对作家的生活经历、作品的具体创作过程着墨不多。上海外语教育出版社从英国大英图书馆出版社(The British Library)引进出版“英国作家生平丛书”，弥补了这方面的缺憾。该丛书以图文并茂的形式讲述莎士比亚等14位英国著名作家的生平故事，同时穿插介绍他们的作品，有助于充实读者对英国文学的认识。


英国文学源远流长，经历了长期复杂的发展演变过程。在这个过程中，文学本体以外的各种现实的、历史的、政治的、文化的力量对文学发生着影响，而作家个体的独特生活遭遇也是造就文学杰作的一个重要因素。“英国作家生平丛书”对14位名家的传记式介绍，充分展示了这一点。戏剧方面，莎士比亚是英国文艺复兴时期最杰出的剧作家，他当过演员，其作品思想内容深刻、艺术表现手法精湛，历经几个世纪长演不衰。诗歌方面，浪漫主义诗人华兹华斯、柯勒律治、拜伦、济慈的不同身世对他们的诗歌创作及艺术风格产生深刻影响；维多利亚时代诗人伊丽莎白·巴雷特和罗伯特·布朗宁的爱情故事是英国文坛的一段佳话。小说方面，狄更斯是19世纪英国最伟大的小说家，他的许多小说以孤儿为主人公，这与作家童年时代的一段不幸经历有关；康拉德来自波兰，将自己奇特的身世背景和航海经历交融在字里行间；女作家奥斯丁、玛丽·雪莱、勃朗特姐妹、伍尔夫以女性特有的视角和敏锐的观察描摹人性与社会，思考妇女的生存状况，她们的小说无论在思想主题、题材表现方面，还是在叙述手法上，都有创新，对推动英国文学的发展作出了突出贡献。

“英国作家生平丛书”原版由大英图书馆出版社出版，体现出图书馆出版物的特点。书中配有大量的插图，有些是珍贵的手稿，有些是罕见的照片，有些是博物馆或美术馆珍藏的油画和素描，让读者有幸一睹作家的风采，产生直观的感觉。这些插图带有不同时代的印记，营造出浓厚的历史感。丛书的作者均为专业领域里有着较深造诣的学者，对史料的掌握系统全面，他们用生动的语言娓娓讲述作家生平事迹，点评具体文学作品，书末还附有供读者进一步阅读的书单，推荐了有代表性的文献，对英语专业学生撰写课程论文或毕业论文很有帮助。

“英国作家生平丛书”内容有趣，插图精美，文字简洁，兼顾普及性和专业性，是学习和了解英国文学的良师益友。

王守仁
南京大学

导 读



威廉·华兹华斯 (William Wordsworth, 1770-1850) 是 19 世纪英国著名的湖畔派浪漫主义诗人之一，英国桂冠诗人。他早年受启蒙主义思想，尤其是卢梭的“唯情”论和“回归自然”学说影响。1791 年，他前往法国，在平等、博爱、自由等口号的鼓舞下，对法国大革命产生了不少幻想。不过，在政治上，他基本倾向于温和的资产阶级革命。英法战争爆发后，他的革命激情消退，“归隐”湖畔，倾心于诗歌创作，并开始构建自己的诗歌创作理论。他与柯勒律治共同出版的《抒情歌谣集》及其《序曲》，为英国浪漫主义诗歌的创作和批评定下了基调。

华兹华斯于 1770 年 4 月 7 日出生于英国湖区西北角的一个名叫考克茅斯的小镇，在家排行第二。他的父亲约翰·华兹华斯是一名律师，受聘于该地区最有势力的詹姆士·劳瑟爵士。父亲为料理劳瑟爵士的业务四处奔波，因而童年时代的威廉和家中其他几个孩子不得不经常去外祖父母家里小住，这让孩子们非常不开心。1778 年，在威廉 8 岁生日前，母亲去伦敦拜会朋友时偶染风寒，两个月后不幸去世。翌年，威廉和他的哥哥理查德被送到离家乡 30 里外的一个坐落在湖区中心的文法学校读书。1779 年的湖区还是一个较封闭的地区，美轮美奂的湖光山色与勤恳劳作的农民、鞋匠、铁匠、牧羊人、面包师、建筑工匠等共同构成了一幅秀美、静谧的风俗画卷。这一时期的生活对他以后的创作产生了很大的影响：他不仅领略了大自然的恬静与美好、小镇里的和谐与素朴，而且还在老师的指导下，开始了他的诗歌创作。

华兹华斯关于诗歌创作的理念主要见诸于他分别于 1789 年、1800 年和 1815 年为《抒情歌谣集》(Lyrical Ballads, 1789) 所写的《序曲》(The

Prelude) 中。他在 1815 年版的《序曲》中明确地提出了写诗所需要的五种能力,即观察和描绘的能力、感受的能力、沉思的能力、想象和幻想的能力以及虚构的能力。从某种意义上说,他对这五种能力的提出与阐述,开创了英国诗歌创作和批评的先河,具有里程碑的意义,对同代诗人(如拜伦和雪莱)和以后的英国诗歌创作都产生了很大的影响。

华兹华斯脍炙人口的诗作名篇很多,除收录在《抒情歌谣集》中的诗作外,还有《黄昏漫步》(*An Evening Walk*, 1793)、《倾圮的小屋》(*The Ruined Cottage*, 1797)、《两卷本诗集》(*Poems in Two Volumes*, 1807)、《漫游》(*The Excursion*, 1814)、《彼得·贝尔》(*Peter Bell*, 1819)、《代顿河组诗》(*River Duddon*, 1820)等。华兹华斯在许多诗作中热情讴歌自然的美好,规劝世人向善和回归自然;另外,他还在诗作中表达了对普通劳动人民艰难生活的同情和对近代工业文明的厌恶。从华兹华斯细腻、清新的诗作中流泻出的美好情愫,感动并影响了一代又一代读者。华兹华斯的诗歌《水仙》、《丁登寺》以及《早春吟》等名篇已被译成中文,为国内读者所熟知。^①

这部介绍华兹华斯的传记按照时间顺序,较为详细地介绍了华兹华斯的生平和创作。除此之外,该书的编者还在书中配有许多具有史料价值的图片,为我们深入研究华兹华斯的个人生活、作品手稿、出版情况、风土人情、社会风貌等提供了宝贵的视觉资料。

乔国强

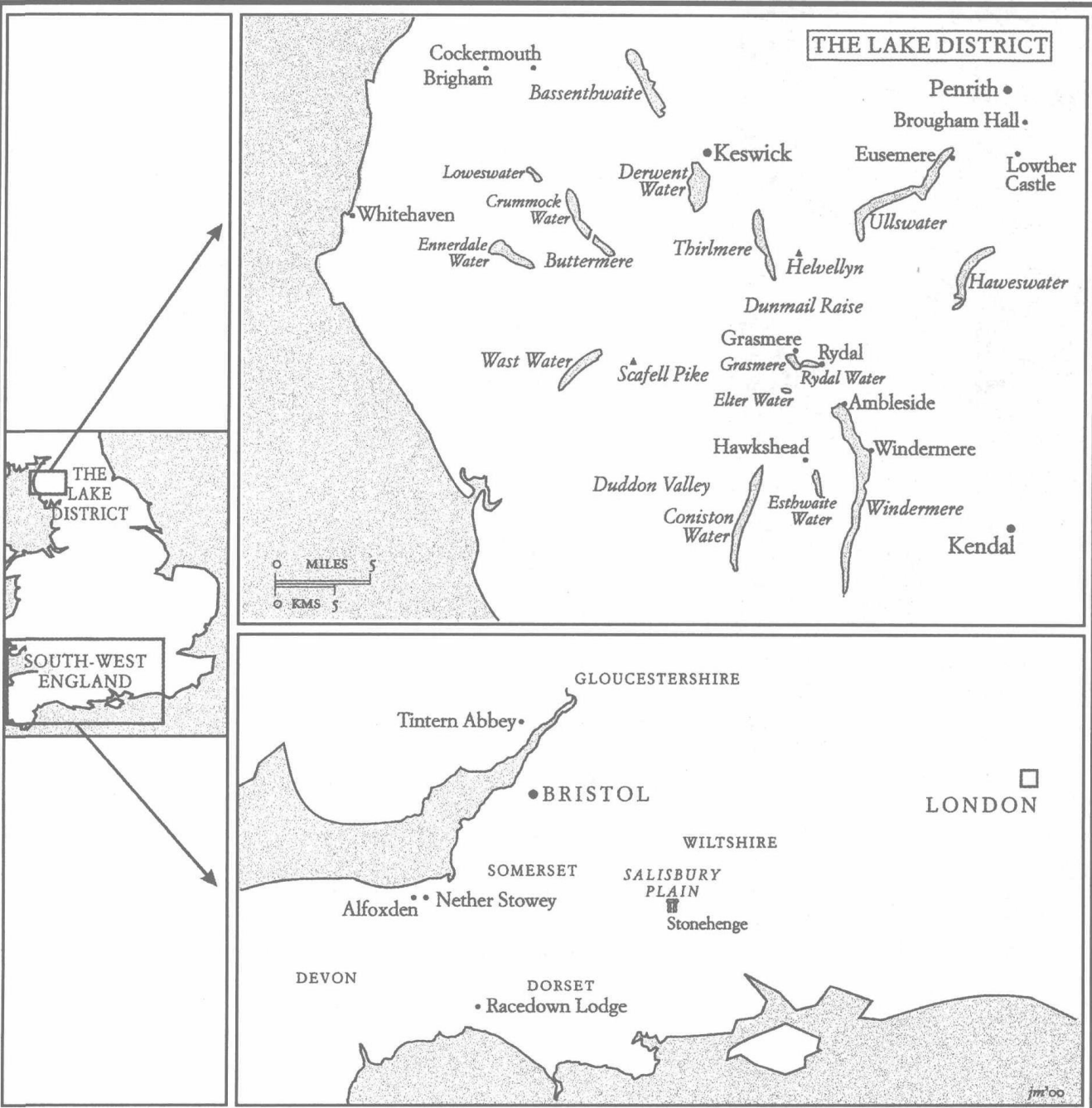
上海外国语大学

① 见威廉·华兹华斯:《华兹华斯抒情诗选》,黄果忻译,上海:上海译文出版社,2000年版;谢耀文译,南京:译林出版社,1991年版;杨德豫译,长沙:湖南文艺出版社,1996年版等。



William Wordsworth

Map showing places in England associated with Wordsworth and his friends and family.





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Cockermouth and Hawkshead: 1770–1787

William Wordsworth was born on 7 April 1770 in Cockermouth, a small market town in the north-west corner of the English Lake District. He was the second son of John Wordsworth, a lawyer, and Ann Cookson. An elder brother, Richard, had been born two years earlier. His only sister, Dorothy, was born in 1771, and after her came two younger brothers, John in 1772, and Christopher in 1774.

Wordsworth always considered himself fortunate in his birthplace. For as a child in Cockermouth, he grew up around nature. His earliest memory was the gentle voice of the Derwent, ‘the fairest of all rivers’, that ran along the bottom of the garden, and which ‘loved / To blend his murmurs with my nurse’s song’. Later, as a five year-old, he would go swimming in the river, and make ‘one long bathing of a summer’s day’. At other times he would run ‘Over the sandy fields, leaping through groves / Of yellow grunsel’, or, ‘alone / Beneath the sky’, would ‘run abroad in wantonness, to sport, / A naked Savage, in the thunder shower’.

Life did, however, have its darker side. Wordsworth’s father worked as an attorney for Sir James Lowther, then the wealthiest, most powerful man in that part of England, and was often away from home touring his employer’s vast estates. This may explain why Wordsworth, his brothers and sister were frequently sent to stay with their maternal grandparents, William and Dorothy Cookson, in nearby Penrith. Wordsworth hated these visits, so different from the freedom of Cockermouth. ‘I was of a stiff, moody and violent temper’, he later recalled, ‘so much so that I remember going once into the attics of my grandfather’s house at Penrith, upon some indignity having been put upon me, with an intention of destroying myself with one of the foils which I knew was kept there. I took the foil in hand, but my heart failed.’

There was another, unforgettable episode at Penrith. One day Wordsworth and a servant, ‘Honest James’, rode out towards the Beacon, a signal stone on the summit of a hill above the town. The two became separated, and, dismounting,



Wordsworth led his horse over the bleak landscape and down into a quarry. This was, he suddenly realized, the spot where a murderer had once been executed, and in his mind he imagined the gallows, and the body of the murderer swinging in his iron case. Climbing out of the quarry in fright, he came upon a 'naked pool', and, before it, a girl with a pitcher on her head, struggling against the wind:

*It was, in truth,
An ordinary sight, but I should need
Colours and words that are unknown to man
To paint the visionary dreariness
Which, while I looked all round for my lost guide,
Did at that time invest the naked pool,
The beacon on the lonely eminence,
The woman, and her garments vexed and tossed
By the strong wind.*

Opposite page:

*Wordsworth's birthplace
in Cockermouth,
Cumbria, as it is today.*

*The National Trust
Photographic Library/
Magnus Reid*

There were many such events in Wordsworth's childhood – 'spots of time' he came to call them. In his imagination, he transformed these outwardly unremarkable events into moments of emotional intensity and lasting power.

In 1778, shortly before Wordsworth's eighth birthday, everything changed. At the beginning of the year his mother went to London to visit a friend. There she became ill, apparently after sleeping in a damp bed, and less than two months later she was dead. 'Early died / My honoured mother', Wordsworth wrote many years later, 'she who was the heart / And hinge of all our learnings and our love'. With her death, the existence that he knew and loved at Cockermouth came to an end. Dorothy, his constant friend and companion, was sent to live with cousins in Halifax, a hundred miles away in Yorkshire. They were not to see each other again for nine years. Then, in May 1779, he and his brother Richard were sent to the grammar school at Hawkshead, a village thirty miles to the south, in the heart of the Lake District.

If Wordsworth considered himself lucky to have been born at Cockermouth, then he was, he knew, no less fortunate in where he went to school, 'that beloved

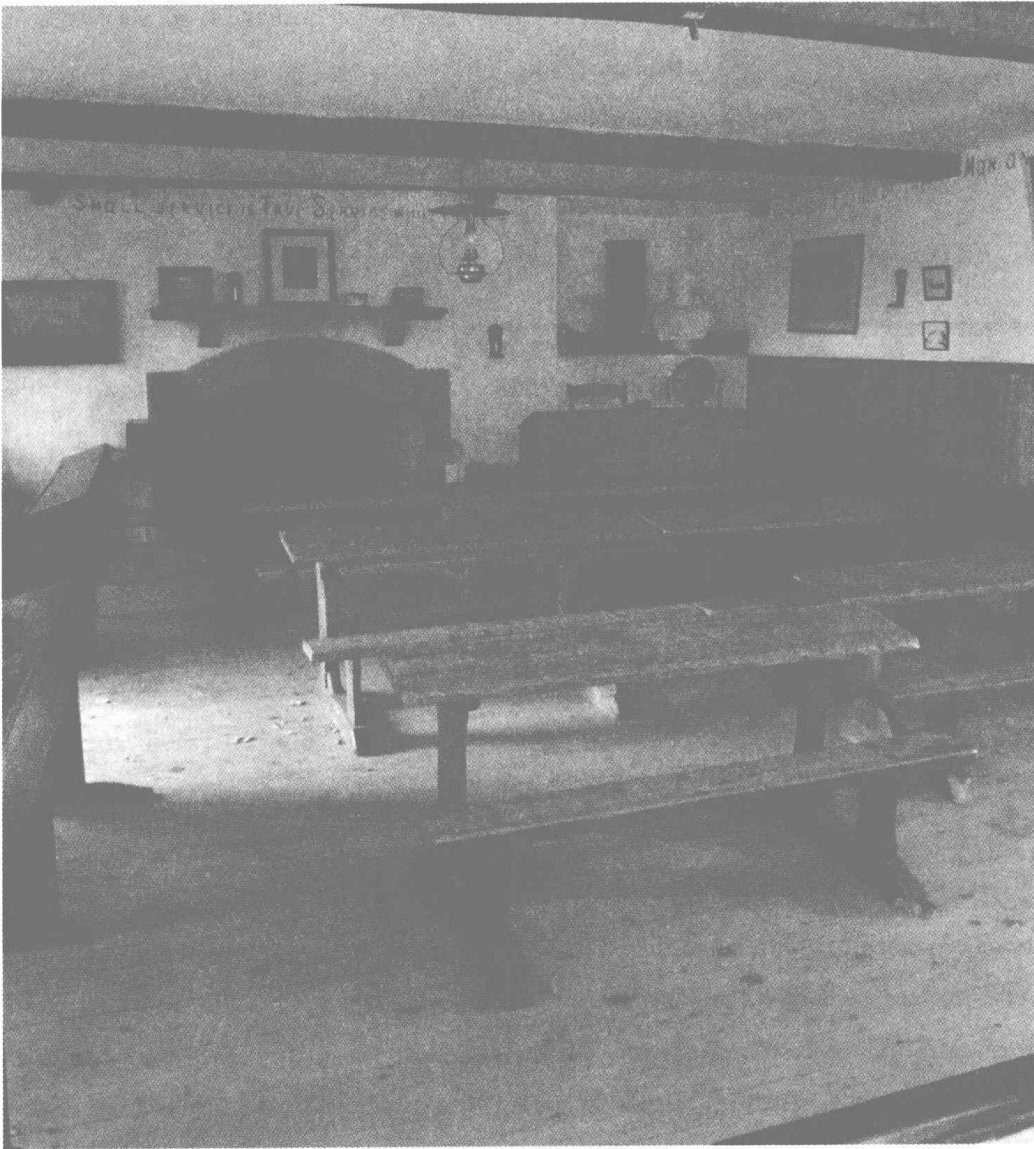


Engraving made in 1816 after an original drawing by Joseph Farington of Esthwaite Water near Hawkshead, where Wordsworth was sent after his mother died.

Wordsworth Trust

Vale to which, erelong, / I was transplanted'. Hawkshead village lies at the head of Esthwaite Water, one of the region's smaller lakes. Tourists were just beginning to come to the Lake District in large numbers, but in 1779 Esthwaite remained a secluded spot, overlooked in favour of its more spectacular neighbours, Windermere to the east, and Coniston to the west. Its inhabitants formed a close, industrious community. They were farmers, labourers and shepherds, builders and joiners, blacksmiths, bakers and shopkeepers. The unassuming dignity of these 'plain living people' – 'the quiet woodman in the woods, / The shepherd on the hills' – made a deep impression on the young Wordsworth.

Hawkshead Grammar School had been founded in 1585 by Edwin Sandys, an Archbishop of York. With more than a hundred boarders it was a good sized school, and had a fine reputation. Wordsworth and his brother Richard took lodgings with Hugh Tyson, a joiner, and his wife Ann, a grocer and draper. The Tysons kept a cottage first in Hawkshead, and then, after 1783, in the adjoining



Hawkshead Grammar School, where Wordsworth was a pupil between 1779 and 1787.

Wordsworth Trust

hamlet of Colthouse, and for eight years were to provide Wordsworth with a stable and loving home. He remembered Ann Tyson, his ‘grey-haired Dame’, with particular affection, lovingly recalling her ‘smooth domestic life’, her ‘little daily growth / Of calm enjoyments’, and how, on Sunday afternoons, she would fall asleep over her Bible. ‘The thoughts of gratitude shall fall like dew / Upon thy grave, good creature’, he later wrote, ‘while my heart / Can beat I never will forget thy name’.

Hawkshead gave Wordsworth ample opportunity to indulge his delight in outdoor pursuits. Sometimes these were solitary: he would ‘wander half the night



Sir James Lowther, Wordsworth's father's employer. 'Truly a madman', said one contemporary, 'but too rich to be confined.' Portrait by Thomas Hudson from c.1755.

Wordsworth Trust

among the cliffs' hunting woodcocks, or rise early in the morning, climb the fell and look out over the silent, sleeping valley. At other times he would join his fellow pupils in 'games confederate': in the summer they went boating on Windermere and Coniston; in the winter, they skated on Esthwaite. Occasionally they went further afield, riding out to the ruins of Furness Abbey twenty miles away, then galloping home over Cartmel Sands.

But much of Wordsworth's time was, of course, spent in the classroom. In the summer, lessons began at six or six-thirty in the morning, and lasted until eleven; they recommenced at one o'clock and ran until five. During the winter these hours were slightly shorter. The curriculum concentrated on those subjects essential for future academic success – Latin and Greek, mathematics and science – but Wordsworth was also encouraged to read literature. At

Cockermouth his father had urged him to learn 'large portions of Shakespeare and Milton' by heart. Now, at Hawkshead, he had teachers who could build upon this foundation. His first headmaster, William Taylor, 'loved the poets', and Taylor's successor, the Reverend Thomas Bowman, introduced him to modern literature: James Beattie's *The Minstrel*, William Cowper's *The Task*, Percy's *Reliques*, and Robert Burns's *Poems, Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect*. Wordsworth read all he could; he was, Bowman's son recollected, 'one of the very few boys, who used to read the old books in the school library'.

He was also encouraged to write. Taylor gave him some formal exercises to do – verses on 'the summer vacation', a hundred lines to celebrate the bicentenary of the school's foundation – and before long he was writing of his own accord. It was at this time, Wordsworth later said, that he first became 'open to the charm / Of words in tuneful order, found them sweet / *For their own sakes* – a passion and a power'.

SONNET, on seeing Miss HELEN MARIA WILLIAMS weep at a Tale of Distress.

SHE wept.—Life's purple tide began to flow
In languid streams through every thrilling vein;
Dim were my swimming eyes—my pulse beat slow,
And my full heart was swell'd to dear delicious pain.
Life left my loaded heart, and closing eye:
A sigh recall'd the wanderer to my breast;
Dear was the pause of life, and dear the sigh
That call'd the wanderer home, and home to rest.

That tear proclaims—in thee each virtue dwells,
And bright will shine in misery's midnight hour;
As the soft star of dewy evening tells
What radiant fires were drown'd by day's malignant pow'r,
That only wait the darkness of the night
To cheer the wand'ring wretch with hospitable light.

AXIOLOGUS.

WOMAN: an EFFUSION.

THO' each gift the learned prize,
At my wish were bade to rise;
Tho' Peru her treasures pour'd;
Tho' Great Britain hail'd me lord;
'Midst them all my soul, forlorn,
Justly would the baubles scorn,
If not woman's kisser, sighs,
Fir'd my breast, and clos'd my eyes;
Clos'd them to the paltry things,
Fit for wretches—fit for kings.
Years by countless thousands told,
'Midst ambition, pow'r, and gold,
Not one pleasure could excite,
Woman only gives delight!
O the music of her voice,
How it makes one's soul rejoice!
O the bliss her eyes inspire,
Melting sweet with soft desire!
O the joys her lips impart,
Thrilling rapture to the heart!
Woman! source of every joy,
Every moment should employ!
Life without thee were no more
Than a far and desert shore
Is to the wretch the waves have left,
Of joy, peace, comfort, hope bereft!

RUSTICUS.

SONNET, written in WALDESHAM WILDERNESS.

MY Daphne's lovely image here
In Fancy's eye each scene shall cheer;

Improve the floweret's glossy hues,
And people all the lawny views;
And beat into the woodland's gloom,
And all its mazy walks illumine!
The liquid notes that float around,
Shall breathe the most enchanting sound:
And if a captive bird I see,
Be mine to set the trembler free.
No branch shall fade—no flower die,
But this touch'd bosom heaves a sigh;
And all this tenderness of soul
Shall owe its source to love's controul:
To her, who every thought employs,
To Daphne! mistress of my joys!
Tho' not a human voice be near,
Her image shall each scene endear.

RUSTICUS.

LINE S written on a Retired COTTAGE.

THOU Genius of this vale serene,
Who dwell'st amidst its shades, unseen,
Shall care this beauteous seat annoy,
And damp the reign of tranquil joy!
No!—Peace, sweet nymph! inhabits here,
And leads around the happy year;
And Health, too, is a constant guest,
Delighted with the frugal feast.
O surely this retreat was giv'n,
To bliss below, and lead to heav'n!
Thou reader, as thou wander'st here,
Will Fancy whisper to thy ear,
Ah heed not what the syren says—
Step in, and round the cottage gaze.
Well, thou hast seen the tenant's nose,
How large 'tis grown, how fierce it glows!
Its spots mid of various hue,
Like Parian marble to the view:
And thou hast seen his deaden'd eyes,
Whence rheums in gummy streamlets rise;
And thou hast seen the palsied hand,
The faltering voice, the soul unman'd,
These thou hast seen—and now declare,
If peace or health inhabits here?
Alas! alas! that Holland's gin
Should flow into so fair a scene.

Dover.

RUSTICUS.

TRANSLATION of the ODE

Diffugere nives redeunt jam graminis campi.
Hox. Lib. IV.

By Dr. JOHNSON, in Nov. 1784.

THE snow, dissolv'd, no more is seen:
The fields and woods, behold, are green;
The changing year renews the plain;
The rivers know their banks again;
The sprightly nymph and naked grace
The mazy dance together trace:
The changing year's successive plan
Proclaims mortality to Man.

Rough

Wordsworth's first published poem, 'Sonnet, on seeing Miss Helen Maria Williams weep at a Tale of Distress', appeared in the *European Magazine* in March 1787. The signature, 'Axiologus', is a Latin rendering of his own name.

The British Library,
PP5459 z

In the middle of Wordsworth's fourth year at Hawkshead his life was again hit by domestic tragedy. In 1783, he returned to Cockermouth as usual for Christmas, only to find his father seriously ill. John Wordsworth had got lost one evening on his way back home, and been forced to spend the night in the open. Less than a fortnight later he was dead, and Wordsworth and his brothers, now