

**SELECTIONS FROM THE
POEMS OF WILLIAM
WORDSWORTH**

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Selections from the Poems of William Wordsworth by William Wordsworth & A. Hamilton
Thompson

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WILLIAM WORDSWORTH & A. HAMILTON THOMPSON

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WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

Edited by A. Hamilton Thompson, M.A., F.S.A.

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PREFACE

AS in the previous volumes of this series, the poems have been arranged in their approximately chronological order. The selections from *The Prelude* and *The Excursion*, however, the composition of which extended over a considerable number of years, have been placed at the end of the book. These two poems are the completed portions of a work to which Wordsworth intended his miscellaneous verse to be subsidiary, and it is hoped that the passages which it has been found possible to include will serve to illustrate his design and to manifest the unity of their contents with those of the pieces which precede them. The aim which has guided the editor in the work of selection has been to shew as clearly as possible the spirit which animates Wordsworth's poetry, his perception of an inward presence in all Nature, communicating itself to man's apprehension and acting as a fortifying and restraining influence, at once a source of content and an impulse to right action. A few of the more famous lyrics, e.g. the *Elegiac Stanzas* on Sir

George Beaumont's picture of Peele Castle, and *The Happy Warrior*, which are to be found in almost every anthology, have been omitted to make room for pieces less familiar, but not less striking. The various sources which have been consulted for the purpose of this volume will be found mentioned in the notes: for the chronological sequence of the poems the editor has depended largely upon the one volume editions by Lord Morley of Blackburn and Mr Thomas Hutchinson. As in other volumes of selections, he has been aided greatly by the advice of his wife, who has read and given help with the notes.

A. H. T.

GRETTON,
NORTHANTS
May 1917

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PRINCIPAL DATES IN THE LIFE OF WORDSWORTH

- 1770, 7 April. Born at Cockermouth, Cumberland.
- 1771, 25 Dec. Birth of Dorothy Wordsworth.
1778. Enters Hawkshead grammar school, Westmorland.
1783. Death of his father, John Wordsworth.
1785. Composition of his earliest poem now known to exist, *Lines written as a school exercise at Hawkshead* on the second centenary of the foundation of the school.
1787. Goes into residence at St John's college, Cambridge.
- 1790, summer. Visits France with Robert Jones, walking through France and Switzerland to the lake of Como.
- 1791, Jan. Takes his B.A. degree and leaves Cambridge.
- 1791, Nov.-1792. Residence in France: visits Paris and stays at Orléans and Blois.
- 1792, Oct. Returns to England, and leads a restless and unsettled life, without a permanent home, till 1795.
1793. Publication of *An Evening Walk. An Epistle; in Verse* (written 1787-9), followed by *Descriptive Sketches*, a memorial of the tour of 1790, written in France, 1791-2.
1795. Receives a legacy of £900 from Raisley Calvert.
- 1795, Oct. Settles at Racedown, Dorset, with Dorothy Wordsworth. First meeting with Coleridge at Bristol about this time.
- 1797, June. Coleridge visits Racedown.