

both the *Bible* and the *Spectator*. After the death of his mother in 1778, his father sent him to Hawkshead Grammar School. Wordsworth made his debut as a writer in 1787, in the same year attended St. John's College, in Cambridge; and in 1791 he graduated. Still in 1791 he returned to France and fell in love. The brutal, destructive developments of the Revolution and the declaration of war between England and France in 1793 brought him to the edge of a nervous breakdown. In 1795 he received an inheritance and moved to Dorset with his sister Dorothy, who remained his most faithful friend. She constantly supported his poetry, she copied down his poems and recorded their life in her *Journals*. In the same year he met Coleridge.

Their friendship proved crucial to the development of English Romantic poetry: they produced a collection of poems called *Lyrical Ballads*.

The second edition in 1800 also contained Wordsworth's famous *Preface*. He also wrote a series of five poems, *Lucy Poems*, between 1798 and 1801. In 1805 he finished his masterpiece, *The Prelude*, a long autobiographical poem in 14 books. The last years of his life were marked by the growing conservatism of his political views. He died in 1850.

- THE MANIFESTO OF ENGLISH ROMANTICISM

In the 18th century, English poetry was mainly composed at the highest level of diction. For Wordsworth, poetry was a solitary act, originating not in the extraordinary but in the ordinary.

He belonged to the first generation of Romantic poets, which was characterized by the attempt to theorize about poetry.

While planning the *Lyrical Ballads* with Coleridge, they decided that he would deal with man, nature and everyday things trying to make them interesting for the reader, while Coleridge should write about the supernatural and mystery making them seem real. Wordsworth's strongest objection to 18th-century poetry was its artificial, elevated language, which he called 'poetic diction'.

In his *Preface* he explained that the subject matter should deal with everyday situations or incidents and with ordinary people.

The language should be simple and the objects called by their ordinary names.

The reason for Wordsworth's choice lies in the fact that in humble rural life man is nearer to his own purer passions. Therefore the poet is not a man in an ivory tower, but a man among men, writing about what interests mankind.

- THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MAN AND NATURE

Wordsworth shared Rousseau's faith in the goodness of nature as well as in the excellence of the child. He thought that man could achieve that good through the cultivation of his senses and feelings. He was interested in the relationship between the natural world and the human consciousness. Rather than a precise and objective observation of natural phenomena, his poetry offers a detailed account of the complex interaction between man and nature, of the influences, insights, emotions and sensations which arise from this contact. Wordsworth believed that man and nature are inseparable. In his pantheistic view Wordsworth saw nature as something that includes both inanimate and human nature: each is a part of the same whole. Nature is a source of pleasure and joy, she teaches him how to love and to act in a moral way.