

WORDSWORTH: POET OF SOLITARY PEOPLE

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PREFACE

At the beginning of this study of William Wordsworth as a poet of solitary people, I knew him primarily through the poetry found in twentieth century anthologies: as a poet who visited Yarrow and Tintern Abbey, who paused in his travels to hear a girl sing a Gaelic air in a language that he did not understand, who wrote tributes of respect to Milton and Burns, who brought spring to tired classrooms by describing golden daffodils and joy to my heart each time I saw a rainbow. I knew about his happy childhood, his love of Nature, his early views of immortality, and I had met Lucy, Michael, the Leech-Gatherer, and the maiden of "We Are Seven"--four solitaries.

When Dr. Audrey Nell Wiley suggested as a potential thesis, "Wordsworth as a poet of lonely places and solitary people," I was immediately interested in the solitary aspect as related to people, and I chose this to be the subject of my study. Chapter I is devoted to materials evoking my interest in the solitary; Chapter II, to study of the solitary from childhood to old age; Chapter III, to a study of causes of solitude with an interpretation of the contrarities of William Wordsworth; and Chapter IV, to a study in the solitude of endowment, emphasizing the poet's views about endowment as

well as what critics and biographers have said about him and the theme of solitude which runs through his life and his writings. I have retained in my writing the poet's capitalization and, where English and American spelling differ, the English spelling. For my basic text I have used The Poetical Works of Wordsworth, edited by Thomas Hutchinson and revised by Ernest de Selincourt (London: Oxford University Press, 1950). For valuable information in chronology and notes, I have used the Cambridge edition of Wordsworth's Complete Poems (1932); but where the two were at variance, I have adhered faithfully to the Oxford text.

From my research let me suggest the importance of four books for the student of Wordsworth: Strange Seas of Thought, by Newton P. Stallknecht, a penetrating study of Wordsworth's philosophy of Man and Nature; The Egotistical Sublime, by John Jones, a recent study of the history of Wordsworth's imagination; The Critical Opinions of William Wordsworth, by Markham L. Peacock, Jr., which contains the subjects of Wordsworth's poetry, a list of authors and their works about him, and the critical opinions of the poet about his own works; and William Wordsworth, by Mary Moorman, a biography of the poet's early years by an English woman who has access to the Wordsworth papers and assistance in gathering materials from Miss Helen Darbishire, chairman of the Dove Cottage Trustees, Mrs. Rawnsley of Grasmere,

Lady Pinney of Racedown, and others. I regret that the second volume of the Moorman biography is not yet completed since the completed work will be a valuable companion to the earlier biography by George McLean Harper.

In my study of the solitary people in Wordsworth's poetry and of the poet as a solitary, I have found enduring values. It has been a rich and rewarding field of exploration.

For inspiration and guidance in the writing of this thesis I wish to thank Dr. Autrey Nell Wiley, scholarly teacher and Southern gentlewoman. For kindly counsel and encouragement I am grateful to Dr. Constance Beach, whose contagious enthusiasm is a joy to those who study with her. I wish also to express my appreciation to Dr. Gladys Maddocks, whose graciousness and love of literature are an inspiration, and to Mrs. Margie Brantley, reference librarian, who has given me invaluable assistance in research. To my husband and daughter, Ned and Anita Huguelet, I am indebted for the countless ways in which they made this thesis possible.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This study of William Wordsworth as a poet of solitary people is based on numerous short poems--"the little cells, oratories, and sepulchral recesses"--selected from his "Poems Written in Youth," "Poems Referring to the Period of Childhood," "Poems Founded on the Affections," "Poems of the Fancy," as classified in The Poetical Works of Wordsworth,¹ and an occasional single poem met casually in another section and considered too valuable to be omitted from such a study. A different study might have centered upon The Prelude, showing the part that solitude played in the intellectual and emotional development of the poet, or upon The Excursion with its second book named "The Solitary," or even upon the briefer "An Evening Walk." But I chose to meet with many solitary people under many different circumstances in many different poems--some happy, some sad; some young, some old; some solitary by incident or circumstance, some solitary by choice. An intensive study of one of Wordsworth's longer biographical poems would yield primarily a meeting with the monadic soul of the poet, an individual

¹(London: Oxford University Press, 1950). Referred to in this thesis as the Oxford Wordsworth.

being, spiritual in nature, reflecting within himself the whole universe. This approach, appealing to me less than the meeting with many solitary people, I reserve for a future study.

At the beginning of this study I was privileged to examine a copy of an edition of Wordsworth's poems, published in 1858, the property of Christine Woodring Bristow, who received it from her aunt, Lulu Satterfield. It is a royal blue book, embossed in gold and white in the conventional design of a hundred years ago. There is no preface, but a biographical sketch of Wordsworth is signed by W. R. Eight pages are devoted to biography and to an appraisal of Wordsworth as a poet of Nature; no mention is made of Wordsworth as a poet of human nature. The contents are classified according to Wordsworth's suggestion followed in the Oxford edition of 1850, eight years earlier. The name of the printer is given on the last page. For me, the peculiar interest of this book lies in its illustrations, accenting the theme of my study.

The first picture, entitled "White Doe and Emily," shows a solitary maiden, a fawn approaching, and under the title these lines:

Even to her feet the creature came
And laid its head upon her knee.

Bearing the title "Nutting," the second picture portrays a solitary shepherd with his staff and includes the lines:

Perhaps it was a bower beneath whose leaves
 The violets of five seasons reappear
 And fade, unseen by any human eye;
 Where fairy water-breaks do murmur on forever.

Next, a solitary maiden with an urn stands at a stream, a waterfall in the background. She is Wordsworth's "To a Highland Girl." The lines quoted are

As fair before me shall behold,
 As I do now the cabin small,
 The lake, the bay, the waterfall,
 And thee, the spirit of them all.

In the next picture, a little girl, holding a bowl in her tiny hands, sits under a tree in the graveyard. She is pictured saying:

And often after sunset, sir,
 When it is light and fair,
 I take my little porringer,
 And eat my supper there.

She is the solitary maiden of "We Are Seven," and the picture is so named. The final picture, entitled "The Excursion," depicts two seated figures, resting under a tree on a rock wall beside a grave, and a third, "the Solitary," standing near. In the more distant background is a single house. Two quotations follow:

And one bare dwelling; one abode, no more.
 It seemed the house of poverty and toil
 Though not of want.

On that moss-grown wall
 My ancient friend and I together took
 Our seats and thus the Solitary spake
 Standing before us.

Thus solitude so pervades the writings of Wordsworth that illustrations invariably indicate singularity in some way. Illustrators felt it a hundred years ago; they feel it now.

In 1950 N. L. Farbiman, photographer for Life Magazine, took a sequence of pictures in the Lake Country to illustrate "The World of William Wordsworth,"¹ an illustrated article published in Life Magazine. It is significant that in the centennial year the studies which Mr. Farbiman chose for his photographs were Grasmere Lake, Dove Cottage, Tongue Gill, Derwent, London from Westminster, and three single figures--one swan, one Highland lass, and one boy playing along Derwent. In The National Geographic Magazine,² October, 1957, there is an imaginary scene, engraved from a painting by Thomas Faed, of Sir Walter Scott reading to his friends. Here are Henry McKenzie, portly Christopher North, George Crabbe, John J. Lockhart, Francis Jeffrey, Sir Adam Ferguson, painters Allen and Wilkie, Constable, Campbell, and Moore, and a pensive Wordsworth, obviously lost in meditation, his gift of complete detachment from a crowd reflected in his expression.

"If poetry is an art of imitation or representation, and the objects of imitation are 'men doing or experiencing something'--men in action--," says David Daiches, "one can

¹"The World of William Wordsworth," Life, XXIX (July 17, 1950), 82-90.

²Vol. CXII, No. 4, p. 479.

classify poetry according to the kind of people it represents--they are better than they are in real life, or worse, or the same."¹ Wordsworth is a poet of solitary people who are not better nor worse than in real life, but the same--people who for the most part lived simple lives in eighteenth- or nineteenth-century England and who by their aloneness awake in the poet a kindred spirit, deeply and sympathetically moved. He studied the common man, the humble rustic, the winsome child. He wrote of them as he saw them in the setting in which he found them. Solitary people had a particular charm for him since he himself was a solitary, albeit a solitary balancing solitude with society.

According to his biographer, George McLean Harper, Wordsworth is most commonly known as "the poet best fitted to console the afflicted, restore the erring, and comfort the aged."² In his expressed sympathies he provides the key of keenest insight into the lives of the solitary people of his poetry. He writes of solitary children and solitary old people; of solitary souls, isolated from humankind by physical or mental affliction, the latter pitiable state

¹Critical Approaches to Literature (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1956), p. 25.

²William Wordsworth, His Life, Works, and Influence (London: John Murray, 1929), p. 45.

being one about which he knew much; of people solitary by choice or by endowment and of people solitary against their wills; of solitary opposites and of his own profound philosophy as a solitary. These are the ones "who are experiencing something." Some are good; some are bad. Some are weak; some are strong. Some are rational; some are irrational. All are solitary. All lead the poet to run the gamut of human emotions, to incite in his readers fine tenderness of understanding or Aristotelian pity.

The language of his poetry, the words "used by ordinary men," includes with highest frequency love, heart, man, mind, life, eye, nature, power, light, earth, heaven, hope, pleasures, soul, spirit, truth, joy, sun, shadow, death, mountain, time, land, fear, night, happy, friend, flower, deep, child, rock, rest, vale, place, silent, sight, sound, face, free, human, peace, wood, word, wind, cloud, field, bliss, and beauty.¹ Wordsworth did not use dialect or idiom:

It is odd that Wordsworth, with his unexceptionable theory about the suitability of the language of the poor for poetry (he ought to have limited the application to certain types of poetry but did not) never attempted to use the dialect and idiom of the poor, but only the words . . .²

¹Franklin Bliss Snyder, "Wordsworth's Favorite Words," Journal of English and Germanic Philology, XXLL (1923), 253-256.

²Doreen Wallace, English Lakeland (London: B. T. Batsford, 1948), p. 91.

Words suggesting solitude take numerical precedence over the words solitude and solitary, which are themselves not listed by Snyder as among the poet's favorites. A Concordance to the Poems of William Wordsworth¹ shows the word solitary to be used ninety-four times, the possessive solitary's twice, the word solitude ninety-eight times, and the plural solitudes nine times.² Of the most frequently used words, Snyder directs attention to the fact that light, earth, sun, shadow, mountain, night, flower, rock, vale, wood, wind, cloud, and field are from the vocabulary of Nature; that heart, man, mind, soul, spirit, friend, child, happy, human, and free are from the vocabulary of a lover of men; and that love, power, hope, pleasure, truth, joy, rest, peace, bliss, beauty, and silence are the vocabulary of "one whose life among men and in the fields brought him the quiet happiness which others seek in his poetry."³ Wordsworth uses alone in the sense of solitary some 150 times in his poetry; lone, lonely, lonesome, loneliest, and loneliness, approximately 215 times. He employs silent or silence some 350 times.⁴ Wordsworth named an emotion in

¹A Concordance to the Poems of William Wordsworth, ed. Lane Cooper (New York: E. P. Dutton and Co., 1911).

²Snyder, pp. 253-256.

³Ibid.

⁴Ibid.

nine thousand out of fifty-three thousand lines written, or approximately one sixth of the lines. Words that he used twelve hundred times or more are see, sight, live, life, love, and man.¹

Speaking of words and a poet's use of them, Aldous Huxley says:

The poet is born with the capacity of arranging words in such a way that something of the quality of the graces and inspiration he has received can make itself felt to other human beings in the white spaces, so to speak, between the lines of his verse. This is a great and precious gift; . . .²

In the chapters that follow it will be my purpose to show, both in the poet's lines and in the white spaces between the lines, of which Huxley speaks, that William Wordsworth is a poet of solitary people.

The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary³ defines the adjective solitary thus: "Quite alone or unaccompanied; destitute or deprived of the society of others; keeping apart from society, being alone [late M. E.]; standing alone or by itself, not accompanied or paralleled in any way [1633]; single or sole [1742]." A quotation from Wordsworth's "The Old Cumberland Beggar" illustrates the final definition:

¹Josephine Miles, Wordsworth and the Vocabulary of Emotion (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1942), pp. 170-171.

²Aldous Huxley, The Perennial Philosophy (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1945), p. 138.

³The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary, prepared by William Little, H. W. Fowler, and J. Coulson, revised by C. T. Onions (Oxford at Clarendon Press, 1936), II, 1942.

He travels on, a solitary Man;
His age has no companion.

Wordsworth composed this poem in 1797; therefore, the final definition of solitary based on usage in 1742 is the one recognized by Wordsworth in 1797 in, for example, "The Old Cumberland Beggar." The substantive solitary is defined in A New English Dictionary on Historical Principles¹ as "One who lives by himself in seclusion and retirement; one who avoids, or is deprived of, the society of others." Two illustrations are given, the first from Shenstone, dated 1763, and the second from Wordsworth, dated 1795-1814: "The first meditation of a solitary, [sic] is the behaviour of men in active life" and

I noted that the Solitary's cheek
Confessed the power of Nature,

a quotation from The Excursion. In his writings Wordsworth uses both meanings, and in this study the solitaries who are deprived of, as well as those who are purposely avoiding, the society of others receive extended analysis. The noun solitude, according to the same source,² was not in common use in the English language until the seventeenth century. During the life of Wordsworth, solitude meant "The state of being or living alone; loneliness, seclusion, solitariness."

¹A New English Dictionary on Historical Principles, edited by Sir James A. H. Murray, Henry Bradley, W. A. Craigie, and C. T. Onions (Oxford: at the Clarendon Press, 1919), IX, 403-404.

²Ibid.

This meaning is illustrated by a quotation from Byron's Childe Harold's Pilgrimage, dated 1818:

If from society we learn to live,
'Tis solitude which should teach us how to die.

The words solitary and solitude are used in this study as companion nouns to the adjective solitary and may indicate either a cheerful mood or a cheerless one; but a difference is indicated between a solitary (a noun), as one who lives or seeks to live apart or aloof from society, either by choice or against his will, and a solitudinarian as one who purposely avoids the society of others.

In writing about solitary people Wordsworth not only uses words referring to solitude but dwells upon human examples. The purpose of this study is to answer by analysis of his human examples four questions: Who are the solitary in Wordsworth's poetry? Why are they solitary? What is Wordsworth's philosophy concerning the artist, especially the Poet? What do critics say about Wordsworth and the solitary? By answering these questions I seek to prove that Wordsworth is a poet of solitary people.

CHAPTER II

THE SOLITARY FROM CHILDHOOD TO OLD AGE

The solitary people about whom Wordsworth wrote represent three periods of life, referred to by Beatty as the Three Ages of Man:¹ childhood, youth, and age. It is impossible to determine the exact years included in each period, since the poet does not always indicate a specific age; but it is possible to determine with reasonable accuracy the approximate span of each period. Childhood is the period from three to twelve; youth, the period from twelve to twenty; and old age, the period after seventy. In the poems under study Wordsworth's three-year-old daughter Catherine is the youngest child in the first group. The little cottage girl in "We Are Seven" is eight years old; Hartley Coleridge, six; the Westmoreland Girl, ten at the beginning of her story; Alice Fell and the Norman Boy, obviously not over twelve. Lucy, the Solitary Reaper, the Danish boy, and the Highland Girl belong to a group between childhood and early maturity. Speaking of Wordsworth's solitaries, John Jones says, "All of them are placed at the

¹Arthur Beatty, William Wordsworth (Madison, Wisconsin: Mayer Printing Co., 1927), p. 69.

verge of life."¹ Wordsworth rarely gives the age of the elderly person, but by description shows that he is at the extreme verge of life. In "The Fountain" Matthew is seventy-two; Michael is eighty-seven; and the aged man in "The Two Thieves" is ninety-three. The Leech-Gatherer is the "oldest man who ever wore grey hairs."

Childhood

Wordsworth is the poet of childhood. He did not write for children; he wrote about children, with sympathy and understanding, with simplicity and dignity. And, according to his habit of writing about solitary people, he wrote about solitary children.

Unquestionably, in his extended autobiographical recollection we find his best known poetry about childhood, poetry about the child who is to be a poet, William Wordsworth, and about children whom he knew. Of importance also, however, are the children whom he created. Many of them are solitary children: children of the fields, not trained but permitted to grow; children from cottages and huts, accustomed to frugal fare and hearth fires in frosty weather; serious children, who are lonely, pensive, sympathetic. Most frequently, the child is alone, free to be actuated solely by self, surroundings, and situation. Barbara Lewthwaite in "The Pet Lamb"

¹John Jones, The Egotistical Sublime (London: Chatto and Windus, 1954), p. 67.

is typical. In the freedom of a rustic setting she comforts a snow white mountain lamb, lost from its mother.

In 1942 Calvin T. Ryan wrote an intelligent, though somewhat bombastic, article, "The Child in Wordsworth's Poetry," in which he directed attention to the fact that the Greek child was never an object of great love; that among the Romans the child fared little better; that with the Hebrews, although a wife was disgraced if she had no children, the child was endured rather than loved; and finally, that with Wordsworth, the child arrived in English poetry.¹ Wordsworth defended a theory that the child was close to God because he had more recently come from God. He treasured memories of freedom to enjoy his own childhood and believed that from a child a man can learn. Ryan, deploring the fact that even in 1942 the child had not come into its own in literature, referred to Wordsworth's contention:

But perhaps we shall have another Wordsworth rising soon who will reinstate the child in the arts. If as Conrad Aikin says, 'a wholehearted Romantic revival is overdue,' then we shall expect to find the child occupying his rightful place among the great characters of poetry and drama. We have some promise of it in the use of children in motion pictures.²

¹South Atlantic Quarterly, XLI (April, 1942), 193.

²Ryan, p. 198.

Wordsworth writes in "We Are Seven" of the simple faith by which a little cottage girl gives expression to her natural spiritual instincts--the child's instinctive belief in immortality. In conversation with Wordsworth she will not concede, even upon his insistence, that she is alone. Ostensibly, she is solitary, but of the time when she appears most alone, at the grave, she says:

My stockings there I often knit,
 My kerchief there I hem;
 And there upon the ground I sit,
 And sing a song to them. (ll. 41-44)

Continuance of life to her is not a theory; it is a reality. When, to an observer, she appears lost to physical solitude, actually, she is refusing total solitude. This poem suggests a ballad in the repetition of the number seven, in the simple four-line stanza form, in the refrain, "We are seven," and in the sadness of the story. A pertinent observation about the poem appears in the notes of the Cambridge edition of The Complete Poetical Works of William Wordsworth:

At each of the three critical periods in the world's history mankind has learned its wisest lessons by gazing into the face of a child. In the early days of Christianity the spirit by which the new revelation was to be grasped was that of a child; at the breaking up of the Middle Ages modern life again breathed its highest conception of art in the person of a child; and in our own day, through the influence of this little poem, and others of like nature, Wordsworth flashed the great truths anew and asked, "What intimations of life eternal are here?"¹

¹(Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1932), p. 71. Referred to in this thesis as the Cambridge Wordsworth.

The simple story of "Alice Fell" is written with a fine feeling of warmth and understanding. An orphan girl whose possessions were probably too few for comfort, Alice wept bitterly when her cloak became entangled in the wheel of the chaise, on the back of which she had climbed, and became a "Weatherbeaten rag." Grief over the loss of her coat rendered her capable of but one thought and isolated her, though she was actually in company of the other passengers after she was found. Pity for the lonely child grips the fellow travellers who leave with the innkeeper enough money to buy the disconsolate orphan a new coat of "duffil grey." Alice endures two solitudes: the physical solitude of being orphaned and the mental solitude of suffering from her loss. She must be included among Wordsworth's solitary children.

Contrastable, but still a study in solitude, is "The Westmoreland Girl," about whom Wordsworth wrote for his grandchildren. While the story of Alice Fell is concerned with only a few hours and "We Are Seven" with the time consumed by the conversation at the graves, the story of the Westmoreland Girl bridges the period from the age of ten until she is mature. Early she showed great determination and physical strength when she rescued a lamb that had plunged into the torrent when attempting to follow its mother. Unwatched by maternal love and left "With wild

Nature to run wild," the tender-hearted Girl became the merciful protectress of the wild creatures. Left alone by the death of her father, the "wild Girl of the mountains," filled with a sense of duty, tolled the church bell telling of his death. The poem closes with the poet's tribute to a potential Maid of Arc, who, growing up in solitude, is fearless, meek-hearted, "watchful as a wheeling eagle," and "constant as a soaring lark." The life of a solitary has developed into something magnificent the humane, courageous spirit, which in her childhood caused her to execute the dangerous rescue of the lamb. In solitude she has found strength, both inner strength and external strength, first, as a child, and continuing as an adult.

The subjects of two of Wordsworth's poems about solitaries are real children, his daughter Catherine, in "Characteristics of a Child Three Years Old," and Hartley Coleridge, in "To H. C." To the former poem he affixes a note: "Written at Allanbank, Grasmere. Picture of my daughter Catherine, who died the year after." Of her he writes:

Loving she is, and tractable, though wild
 And Innocence hath privilege in her
 To dignify arch looks and laughing eyes;
 And feats of cunning: . . . (ll. 1-4)

When both young and old sit around the hearth,

. . . this happy Creature of herself
 Is all-sufficient, solitude to her
 Is blithe society, . . . (ll. 11-13)

This is the Wordsworthian solitude of "The Prelude," a solitude that is blithe society. Wordsworth's poetic treatment depicts the happy solitude of a three-year-old and catches the evanescent spirit of the very young.

Notes from the Cambridge edition of Wordsworth's Complete Poems state that the lines of the poem "To H. C." are "the best ever written on a real and visible child":

They are singularly prophetic of that life of dreamy waywardness, of lonely wanderings, of lofty hopes, and deep despair which was to be his.¹

Preoccupied with the problem of catching the secret of Hartley's personality, Wordsworth pictures his friend's son delicately, almost ethereally--the perfect solitary, always apart. He is a "faery voyager" who floats in such clear water that his boat seems to "brood on air":

A dew-drop which the moon brings forth
Ill-fitted to sustain unkindly shocks,
Or to be trailed along the soiling earth.
(ll. 27-29)

And Wordsworth, writing of Hartley Coleridge, who later became his ward, confessed

I think of thee with many fears
Of what may be thy lot in future years.
(ll. 13-14)

For a man must live in a world among men; and the benefactor, whose solitude was tempered into a tower of strength, feared for this solitary, unusual child who was only six.

¹Cambridge Wordsworth, p. 848.

Another solitary child is the Norman Boy, who is the central character in a poem by the same name, and who is in "The Poet's Dream." In "The Norman Boy" the boy shepherd builds a "tiny tenement" for protection; then the young architect twists "some limber twigs into a Cross" to be placed at the top of his tiny hut for the purpose of "supplying all deficiencies." Here is a symbol of the hope, the submission, and the faith of an orphaned shepherd-boy--his "All-sufficing stay." It is interesting to note that while "The Norman Boy," suggested to the poet by an English Dame, is written in wooden manner, "The Poet's Dream," a sequel to "The Norman Boy," seems to flow with ease and grace from the poet's pen. In the former something is lost by the style in which it is written, though it remains a touching little study in solitude. Fewer lines about the source of the story would strengthen the poem, and the trochaic pattern might be better suited to the solemnity of the poem than the iambic.

"All good poetry," the poet once said, "is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings."¹ His feelings overflow and find expression in a dream in which he sees the Norman Boy kneeling alone in prayer during a violent storm, "bowed meekly in submissive fear, before the Lord of All."

¹William Wordsworth, Preface to the Second Edition of Lyrical Ballads, Oxford edition, p. 735.

Of the sight the poet writes, "How beautiful is holiness!" His readers feel reverential awe. In his dream the shepherd boy is

. . . no cherub, not transformed,
 But the poor ragged Thing whose ways
 my human heart had warmed. (ll. 15-18)

The dream continues, and the poet is equipped with wings. Taking the shepherd boy in his arms, he carries him afar to the place of the boy's greatest desire, a "blessed tree" near which his mother was born. On arriving, the child is grave but not depressed; together they enter the chapel, the child in wonder at his surroundings, Wordsworth in wonder at the "accordant thoughts" that come to him. The remainder of the poem is really addressed to the Norman Boy, but it has the air of a monologue, as if the poet were reassuring himself of values--a meditation given utterance:

'Then offer up thy heart to God in
 thankfulness and praise,
 Give to Him prayers, and many thoughts,
 in thy most busy days.
 And in His sight the fragile Cross, on
 thy small hut will be
 Holy as that which long hath crowned
 the Chapel of this tree.' (ll. 56-60)

It must be remembered here that in the original story told to Wordsworth by the English Dame the Norman Boy was kneeling, that in his vision by day the Norman Boy was "kneeling alone in prayer," and that in his dream by night he saw the boy "whose ways my human heart had warmed." The

solitary shepherd boy has no need of urgings to prayer.

In further meditation the poet writes:

'God for His service needeth not proud
 work of human skill;
 They please Him best who labor most
 to do in peace His will:
 So let us strive to live, and to our Spirits
 will be given
 Such things as, when our Savior calls,
 shall bear us up to heaven.' (ll. 65-69)

Wordsworth closes "The Poet's Dream" by wishing that the boy's Country-men could see "his pledge of endless bliss in acts of early piety" and that they would not leave untold "our happy flight in that adventurous dream." Since the Boy knows nothing of the dream, the poet cherishes a hope that "gentle eyes will read," and the hearts of Little Ones be touched, as it is evident his own heart has been.

Youth

Wordsworth is a poet of youth. Significant poems about youth include the exquisite Lucy pentalogy, a poem suggesting the theme of immortality, an unfinished fancy based upon a folk tale, and a poetic experience the poet hopes always to remember. As he wrote poetry about solitary children, Wordsworth also wrote poetry about solitary people in the period of youth.

The "Lucy poems," perhaps his finest poems of solitude, have been the subject of so much literary appraisal that, although they show the poet at his literary zenith,

they are being omitted from this study with these observations: that rarely does the poet reach the perfect simplicity, directness of language, and exquisite delicacy of expression found in this elegiac pentalogy; that the celestial fire which burned brightly for these poems rarely, if ever, rekindles itself to such a degree of intensity in the poet's mind. Wordsworth thinks in concrete pictures rather than in abstract concepts in the Lucy poems. While he created Michael in oils, strong of texture and sure of stroke, "The Borderers" in charcoal, "The Leech-Gatherer" in bas relief, he painted Lucy in the delicacy of pastels. Her backgrounds are a mist, but she herself is the epitome of solitude. And George McLean Harper wrote words of wisdom when he expressed the view that saying too much about the Lucy Poems would be desecrating their tender and exquisite beauty.¹ These Wordsworth wrote with artistry and delicacy, two qualities too frequently missing in many of his writings. It is difficult to imagine that the writer of the Lucy lines also wrote:

And there they did beguile the day
 With love and gentle speeches
 Beneath his budding beeches. ("Ellen Irwin," ll. 6-9)

In 1950 Lionel Trilling, delivering an address at Princeton to commemorate the hundredth anniversary of

¹P. 29.

Wordsworth's death, asked the reasons for the world's opinions of Wordsworth and sought to show how far the opinion is justified. In it he said,

. . . to the ordinary reader he is likely to exist as the very type of poet whom life has passed by, presumably for the very good reason that he passed life by.¹

With this statement I take issue, for life has not passed by a poet who loves a rustic life, who is strongly moved by the mystery of extremes, who pauses to listen to the plaintive note of a Gaelic air, and who is so moved that he continues to hear the singer's music in his heart. "The Solitary Reaper," who along "cuts and binds the grain and sings a melancholy strain," recalls an experience of the poet during his tour of Scotland when he walked two hundred and sixty-three miles and on the journey, burned his shoes while trying to dry them but saw "yon solitary Highland Lass." It is fortunate for lovers of Wordsworthian literature that his was a triumph of mind over pain; had he been less a poet and more of the common clay, an injured foot might have deprived the literary world of the song of the solitary maiden, lovelier than the Nightingale's notes or the Cuckoo-bird's springtime song, and of Wordsworth's response to her plaintive ballad:

The music in my heart I bore,
Long after it was heard no more. (ll. 31-32)

¹"Wordsworth and the Iron Time," Kenyon Review, XII (1950), 478.

Hers was an inner happiness, outwardly expressed by her song. The poet's use of such expressions as "single in the field," "Yon solitary Highland lass," "reaping and singing by herself," and "alone she cuts and binds the grain" serves to establish the physical solitude of the solitary reaper as well as her inner happiness; but the poet's suggestion of eternity and perhaps immortality in her song that she sang "as if it had no ending" seems of much greater importance. Newton P. Stallknecht in Strange Seas of Thought makes this suggestion:

In passing, let us suggest that the noblest expression of the sentiment of Being, both in its spatial and temporal aspects, is Wordsworth's poem, "The Solitary Reaper." The girl singing in the fields becomes for a moment the center of the universe. All history and all geography are seen to exist only as the vast margins of her momentary and yet eternal presence. It seems to the poet that her song and the world it reveals can have no ending. The reaper's song is a symbol of eternity which encompasses her life, of that unity and fullness of Being which "lies far hidden from the reach of words."¹

Solitude is the theme of "The Danish Boy," recorded in the Fenwick Notes as a fragment which is entirely a fancy intended as a prelude to a ballad poem which Wordsworth never wrote. This is one of the few poems by Wordsworth which refer to the folk tales of his own country of West Cumberland,²

¹(Durham: Duke University Press, 1945), p. 97.

²Mary Moorman, William Wordsworth (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1957), p. 429.

where tales of ghostly Danish harpers still hungered among the fells in Wordsworth's time. According to John Jones, "The Danish Boy" is very close to Lucy: "He is a spirit of eternal youth and solitude in a paradisaal setting."¹ Pre-occupied with perfect solitude in perfect harmony with his environment, the Danish boy is the "maker of music too fine for human ear, the expression of his perfect sympathy with life surrounding him."² The last stanza gives the essence of his happy solitude:

There sits he; in his face you spy
 No trace of a ferocious air,
 Nor ever was a cloudless sky
 So steady or so fair.
 The lovely Danish boy is blessed
 And happy in his flowery cove:
 From bloody deeds his thoughts are far;
 And yet he warbles songs of war,
 That seem like songs of love,
 For calm and gentle in his mien;
 Like a dead boy he is serene. (ll. 45-55)

Calmness, happiness, gentleness, serenity--these are the fruits of his solitude suggestive of the Lucy theme.

Among Wordsworth's "Continental Memorials" are two poems about a Scottish girl of "twice seven consenting years," "To a Highland Girl," written in 1803 and published in 1807, and "Three Cottage Girls" (1820), the three being an Italian maid, a Helvetian Girl, and the Highland Girl of the earlier poem. The first poem is descriptive of an unknown Highland

¹Jones, p. 71.

²Ibid.

Girl whom he saw at Inversneyde upon Loch Lomond. He pictures her surrounded by beautiful natural objects-- "grey rocks," "trees, a veil just half withdrawn," "a silent lake," "a quiet road," and says of them and her:

In truth together ye do seem
Like something fashioned in a dream. (ll. 11-12)

In her he sees the attributes of a solitary living close to nature: "benignity and home-bred sense," "the freedom of a mountaineer," "a face with gladness overspread." In simile he suggests a lonely comparison in which the alliterated w accentuates loneliness by sound:

Thou art to me but as a wave
Of the wild sea; . . . (ll. 55-56)

In conclusion he thanks heaven for leading him to this lonely place, where he has had the joy of seeing the solitary girl in solitary setting with attributes developed in solitude and hopes for remembrance of the scene:

For I, methinks, till I grow old,
As fair before me shall behold,
As I do now, the cabin small,
The lake, the bay, the waterfall;
And Thee, the Spirit of them all. (ll. 74-79)

His parting wish, he writes in his notes, was granted: at seventy-three he had vivid remembrance of her and the beautiful objects with which she was surrounded.

The first Lucy poem contains the lover's thought of terror "If Lucy should be dead"; the second, the information that she who had been

Fair as a star when only one
Is shining in the sky

is dead; the third, the lover in a foreign land dreaming of Lucy as she sat by an English fireside; the fourth, the decision of Nature to take Lucy unto herself; and fifth, the reflection of the lover that Lucy has become one "with rocks and stones and trees." Lucy is a solitary; her lover by his thoughts suggests that he, too, is a solitary. The Solitary Reaper with her suggestion of immortality is a symbol of solitude in youth. The shadow of the Danish Boy seems always to have been in his flowery cove, to suggest that he will always be there, solitary but serene. The Highland Girl glorifies the attributes developed by a solitary life. These Wordsworthian solitaries belong to the period of youth.

Old Age

Wordsworth is a poet of old age. Early in his long writing career he evolved a philosophy of solitude and the aged. His early beliefs did not remain constant, for maturity and sympathy, the humanization of his soul recorded in the Peele Castle sonnet, gave him insight which caused him to depart from his early beliefs.

Never widely read but eminently characteristic of Wordsworth's mind is "The Farmer of Tilsbury Vale," written

in 1803. Mrs. Moorman¹ suggests that "The Farmer" is a masculine counterpart of "Poor Susan," written in 1797, and Wordsworth himself wrote in his notes that the latter part of the poem perhaps requires some apology as being too much of an echo to the "Reverie of Poor Susan." Wordsworth heard the story of the farmer from Thomas Poole at Nether Stowey; he tells it with the quick movement of anapestic rhythm which connotes a happy solitude. The old farmer lost his fortune, begged or borrowed from his unsuspecting friends, and went to London where by casual labor he lived, made happy by familiar things which suggest his prosperous days in Tilsbury Vale. The flowers in Covent Garden, the smell of hay at Haymarket Hill, the cows at Smithfield--all these arouse memories and

"His heart all the while is in Tilsbury Vale."
(l. 88)

When the farmer "turned his back on the country--and off like a bird," Wordsworth says of him:

And there [in the city] with small wealth but
his legs and his hands,
As lonely he stood as a crow on the sands. (ll. 47-48)

In the city his mind grows weaker, his worries fewer, his heart younger. Actually, he is a disreputable character--a solitary old man who roams at will in a little world made all his own by mental isolation; but Wordsworth's poem does

¹Moorman, p. 481.

not make him despicable or unhappy. The reader thinks charitably of him, despite his wrongdoing. Wordsworth says of the poem and of Mr. Poole:

If I seem in these verses to have treated the weakness of the farmer, and his transgressions, too tenderly, it may be in part ascribed to my having received the story from one so averse to all harsh judgment.¹

Most poets would feel no need of defending a poetic attitude, such as the kindly treatment of the Farmer's weakness, but Wordsworth's heavily moralistic inclination asserts itself, and he accounts for his position in regard to the aged solitary.

Another of Wordsworth's solitaires is an

. . . . aged man constrained to dwell
In a large house of public charity,
Where he abides, as in a Prisoner's cell,
With numbers near, alas! no company. (ll. 1-4)

This poem of Wordsworth's later days (1846) is typical of his departure from his early beliefs about solitude. Formerly, the aged man, though forced to live on alms, fed a redbreast. "Dear intercourse was theirs," and a tie of friendship so strong grew between "the solitary pair" that when the bird's benefactor was housed in the place of public charity, he refused "all converse proffered there." Having lost wife, children, and kindred by death, he suffered a miserable solitude in being separated from those he loved.

¹Cambridge Wordsworth, p. 308.

He refused all companionship, save that of the redbreast who brought him gladness and peace. Separated from the redbreast, his "one living Stay," he lost his sole recompense and lived in a total solitude.

Better known than the two elderly solitaries described, one from the poet's early years and one from his later years, are "The Old Cumberland Beggar," "Simon Lee," "Resolution and Independence," and "Michael"; for these are among the most famous studies in solitude. Lone individuals call forth Wordsworth's imaginative power.¹ John Jones states that Wordsworth learned from his failure in "The Borderers."

All his solitaries for the next few years are in different ways at peace with their environment; and although they live on the other side of tragedy, there is no attempt to derive their situation from tragic conflict [as is the case of Oswald and Marmaduke]--they have always been where Wordsworth finds them, and they remain there after he has gone.²

This characteristic stands out in the elderly solitaries of this group.

Certainly one of Wordsworth's finest studies in solitude, at peace with his environment, is the Leech-Gatherer, of whom Jones writes:

He does not need to do or say anything--he is.
Like all great solitaries, he has a primordial quality

¹Raymond Dexter Havens, The Mind of a Poet. A Study of Wordsworth's Thought with Particular Reference to The Prelude. (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1941), p. 55.

²Jones, p. 61.

by virtue of which he stands anterior, in time or in logic to a divorce in human understanding. Saying and doing, with all of them [the solitaries], are contained in what they are.¹

After many readings of "Resolution and Independence," I find my final judgment at this writing to be that regardless of his physical appearance--"the oldest man he seemed that ever wore grey hairs," "bent double, feet and head coming together in life's pilgrimage," "propped, limbs, body and pale face, Upon a long grey staff of shaven wood," the Leech-Gatherer lends an unfathomable dignity to the solitary himself and thus to the state of solitude. While the heart of the poem lies in the poet's feeling contrasted with the firmness of mind of this "decrepit Man," the contrast dignifies the state that the two men share. Two illustrations accentuate immeasurably the atmosphere of solitude captured by the poet: first, the lone hare which the poet observed on the ridge of the Fell the day he met the old man near his cottage; and second, the sea-beast on the huge single stone "couched on the bald top of an eminence" with which the Leech-Gatherer is compared:

. . . . it seems a thing endued with sense:
Like a sea-beast crawled forth, that on a shelf
Of rock or sand reposes, there to sun itself;

Such seemed this man, . . . (ll. 60-64)

Wordsworth rarely accents evil; frequently, he finds good in what appears to be evil. In the study of The Old

¹Ibid., p. 63.

Cumberland Beggar, a lonely mendicant whose "eyes move along the ground," this fact is aptly illustrated: the Beggar is a blessing to others though he "sees only a span of dust." While the poet does not condone begging any more than he condones the acts of the Farmer, he does stress with moralistic tone the value of the kindly and tolerant feelings aroused in others by the solitary wanderer. As the Beggar eats his scraps with "baffled" hand, a Horseman pauses to lodge a coin within his ragged hat. As the Beggar approaches the toll gate, the gate-keeper lifts the latch. As the Beggar walks down the woody lane, the post-boy shouts a warning or turns to pass him gently, "without a curse upon his lips or anger in his heart." And a neighbor, pressed by her own wants, takes from her scant store and hopes that he will pass. Hearts are touched by the Beggar's solitary plight, and Wordsworth shares their pity with his readers and makes an appeal:

. . . 'Tis Nature's law
 That none, the meanest of created things
 should exist
 Divorced from good . . . (ll. 73-75)

While the Beggar creeps from door to door, he is a common tie between villagers, the author of their common sympathy. Jones states that the Beggar binds together the society through which he moves as recipient of elementary charities, his maintenance being accepted as a common duty.¹ The

¹Jones, p. 79.

solitude of the Beggar is emphasized by the fact that his existence seems a limitless thing; he seems always to have been in the valley, to promise always to be there. From this poem come some of the most famous quotations about solitude:

He was so old, he seems not older now;
He travels on, a solitary Man. (ll. 23-24)

He travels on, a solitary Man;
His age has no companion. (ll. 43-45)

In childhood, from this solitary Being,
Or from like wanderer, haply have received
(A thing more precious far than all that books
Or the solitude of love can do!)
That first mild touch of sympathy and thought
(ll. 110-115)

And while in that vast solitude to which
The tide of things has borne him, he appears
To breathe and live but for himself alone,
Unblamed, uninjured, let him bear about
The good thing which the benignant law of
Heaven
Has hung around him: and, while life is his,
Still let him prompt the unlettered villagers
To tender offices and pensive thoughts.
(ll. 163-169)

Be his the natural silence of old age!
Let him be free of mountain solitudes.
(ll. 182-183)

Of the Beggar and the Leech-Gatherer Jones makes these significant statements:

The Cumberland Beggar, in his vast solitude, still pursues the endless circuit of houses, in search of alms; and the Leech-Gatherer will always pace "about the weary moors," plying his trade from pool to pool. . . They [the solitaries] have a stillness which does not deny movement, and movement which contains stillness; . . .

. . . Just as they [the solitaries] are wanderers through space, so are they wanderers up of time. The Cumberland Beggar, "in that vast solitude to which the tide of things had borne him," seems no older than he did when Wordsworth first met him; his solitude is no less temporal than spatial.¹

In Michael, who is solitary both by nature and by incident, Wordsworth depicts a man who has been alone "among the heart of many thousand mists" in a lonely setting, "in truth an utter solitude." The fields and hills the rustic shepherd loves. He has a helpmate, a woman whose heart is in her house, not in the hills. A son is born to them, the child of their old age, as was John, the son of Elisabeth and Zacharias. Endless industry and thrift mark the days of the three of them until Luke goes to the city--a place "of false solitude or isolation, of meaningless difference and meaningless identity, loveless and unintelligible."² Life has not equipped Luke for the rigors of the city. He becomes dissolute, and in disgrace he is forced "to seek a hiding place beyond the seas." Because

There is a comfort in the strength of love;
 'Twill make a thing endurable, which else
 Would overset the brain or break the heart
 (ll. 447-450)

Michael lives on, at his death the land which he had sought to save for Luke passes into other hands. From a happy

¹Jones, pp. 67-68.

²Ibid., p. 133.

solitude of contentment Michael passes into a solitude of grief; and the sheepfold for which Luke laid a single stone--a stone which seemed to imply promise of return--may yet be seen unfinished.

. . . 'Tis not forgotten yet
 The pity which was then in every heart
 For the old Man--and 'tis believed by all
 That many and many a day he thither went, [to the
 sheepfold]
 And never lifted up a single stone. (ll. 461-465)

Early, Michael found strength in the solitude of Nature; eventually, he found such consolation in solitude as there could be when one has sustained a loss so great. One suspects that he continued to perform his labors like an automaton and that his feeling was one of numbness rather than one of solitude. Michael is a "solitary in relationship," who lived close to the land, not a wandering solitary such as the Leech-Gatherer or the Cumberland Beggar.

For thirty-five years Simon Lee was a huntsman--carefree, proud, merry. His fortune changed; he lost "health, strength, friends, and kindred" and became the "poorest of the poor." Wordsworth presents him when few days are left for him. Ill fortune has made him solitary. Wordsworth chanced to see the old man trying to unearth the root of an old tree, offered help, and with one blow severed the gnarled root. Tears welled in the eyes of Simon Lee. And Wordsworth closes his account of this experience thus:

--I've heard of hearts unkind, kind deeds
 With coldness still returning;
 Alas! the gratitude of men
 Has oftener left me mourning. (ll. 93-97)

It is obvious that in better days when Simon Lee had no need, neither had he gratitude. Gratitude welling within him is a product of his solitude.

Wordsworth wrote two sonnets about old age, one in 1797 or 1798 and the other in 1846. Both are studies in solitude; but the passing of almost half a century alters the Wordsworthian concept of solitude, the change being nowhere more graphically illustrated than in the early "Animal Tranquillity and Decay" and the much later "Sonnet to an Octogenarian." Note the meditative solitude of the early poem:

The little hedgerow birds,
 That peck along the road, regard him not.
 He travels on, and in his face, his step,
 His gait, is one expression: every limb,
 His look and the bending figure, all bespeak
 A man who does not move with pain, but moves
 With thought.--He is insensibly subdued
 To settled quiet: he is one by whom
 All effort seems forgotten; one to whom
 Long patience hath such mild composure given,
 That patience now doth seem a thing of which
 He hath no need. He is by nature led
 To peace so perfect that the young behold
 With envy, what the Old Man hardly feels.

Here is Wordsworth's descriptive power at its best. Much of the strength of this poem lies in the effect of singleness gained by the poet in describing the physical appearance of the "Old Man Travelling," which is the alternate title.

Here is a solitude so perfect that it is envied by the young but hardly felt by the aged--a solitude of composure, patience, and peace. Here solitude is serenity.

On the other hand, note the negative side of solitude shown in the 1846 sonnet:

Affections lose their object; Time brings forth
 No successors; and, lodged in memory,
 If love exist no longer, it must die,--
 Wanting accustomed food, must pass from earth,
 Or never hope to reach a second birth.
 'Tis sad belief, the happiest that is left
 To thousands, share not Thou; howe'er bereft,
 Scorned, or neglected, fear not such a dearth.
 Though poor and destitute of friends thou art,
 Perhaps the sole survivor of thy race,
 One to whom Heaven assigns that mournful part
 The utmost solitude of age to face,
 Still shall be left some corner of the heart
 Where Love for living Thing can find a place.

Endowed with sympathy for every human sorrow, Wordsworth here expresses tenderness toward the octogenarian four years his senior--the One to whom Heaven assigns that mournful part, "the utmost solitude of age to face." Wordsworth is seventy-six; he seems to be projecting his own consciousness into that of the older man, realizing how soon such solitude may be his, if it is not already. This solitude bears no resemblance to the "peace so perfect that the young behold with envy," a peace or solitude of which he wrote forty-nine years before.

"To a Young Lady Who Had Been Reproached for Taking Long Walks in the Country," written four years after "Animal Tranquillity and Decay," Wordsworth counsels the subject upon

the value of solitary walks and pictures old age as a period of serenity. In 1801 he counsels the young lady thus:

Thy thoughts [gained from solitary walks but
 meaningful through life] and feelings shall
 not die;
 Nor leave thee when grey hairs are nigh,
 A melancholy slave;
 But an old age serene and bright
 As lovely as a Lapland night,
 Shall lead thee to thy grave. (ll. 12-16)

In the eventide of his life, the poet could not have written this poem, for his "Sonnet to an Octogenarian" refutes the philosophy of an old age "serene and bright." In later life he knows that one needs more companionship than his own thoughts and feelings, and I sense that, where he once wrote "as lovely as a Lapland night," he might later have written "as lonely as a Lapland night."

Because the poet did not remain eternally young, his ideas about old age did not remain static. As the fire, the zeal, and the conflict of the young Wordsworth resolved themselves into qualities natural to the human aging process, Wordsworth's philosophy changed; and tolerance, even mellowness, and understanding, gave to his readers fine poetry reflecting breadth and depth of human sympathy.

CHAPTER III

CAUSES OF SOLITUDE

The solitary state occurs too often in the poetry of Wordsworth for it to be either accidental or incidental. Solitude is an integral part of the fabric that Wordsworth weaves. Certain causes characterize his studies in solitude. This chapter deals with four of them: the solitude caused by mental isolation, the solitude caused by physical isolation, the solitude caused by incident or circumstance, and the solitude intensified by contrariety. The mental isolation under study is not the self-imposed isolation of the contemplative, but the isolation of affliction. Similarly, the physical isolation is not the isolation of environment, but the separation born of being physically unlike one's fellow man. The isolation of incident or of circumstance deals with single happenings resulting in solitude and with continuing circumstances wherein the solitary finds his situation inescapable, the latter solitude sometimes being a result of the former. The last division of this chapter shows how being diametric opposites intensifies the solitary aspect.

Mental Isolation

Mental illness is a cause of solitude of two types--blankness and madness. The deranged person of either type has not the power to respond to mental stimulus; consequently, he can share no emotion, no intellectual pursuit, no decision, and he is thus set apart. Wordsworth wrote numerous poems concerning people who are solitary because of mental isolation. The solitude of mental affliction in his poems is not always unhappy: the Idiot Boy is happy in his temporary freedom; the Farmer of Tilsbury Vale is as "happy as if the rich freight [hay] were his own"; and the Widow of Windermere Side sees a vision, and "in earthly ecstasies Her own angelic glory seems begun." But the Forsaken Indian Woman cleaves in miserable solitude to life and society; Vaudracour completes his lamentable days, "shunning even the light of common day"; and Martha, wretched and alone, cries repeatedly, "Oh misery! Oh misery!" The poet's seeming preoccupation with madness may be associated with his stream of consciousness concerning solitude; however, it may be that the poetry that he wrote in 1795 when "intensely absorbed in a struggle to avoid complete mental chaos"¹ indicates that he feared a mental breakdown, that writing about mental isolation purged such fears. Succeeding years were to bring him so much sadness in association with mental derangement that he never ceased to write

¹Moorman, p. 286.

about it. As early as 1795 he wrote "Her Eyes Are Wild"; as late as 1842 he wrote "The Widow of Windermere Side" and published "To a Redbreast."

"The Idiot Boy" is a solitary, set apart by mental isolation. His story is simple, unadorned, pathetic. Of it Wordsworth said, "I never wrote anything with so much glee." This was in 1798, and whether he could have many years later written "with glee" of a person whose mind is not normal is doubtful; for in 1832 Dorothy Wordsworth became mentally ill. I see no humor in the poem, save perhaps the lines which Wordsworth says the Idiot Boy spoke about the owl and the moon:

"The cocks did crow to-who, to-who,
And the sun did shine so cold." (ll. 450-451)

Poor Susan's unexpected recovery is a reversal which might be considered humorous. The poem is more touching than humorous. Old Susan who dwells alone is sick. Betty Foy, Susan's neighbor, sends "him whom she loves, her Idiot Boy" to get a doctor while she stays with Susan. When Johnny does not return, Betty leaves Susan and goes to search for him. The poem recounts her imaginary fears. Eventually, Betty finds her son and his horse, and as the three return home, they meet Susan Gale, miraculously recovered. It is well that "her body--it grew better," for Betty went to the doctor's house looking for her Idiot Boy, but forgot to send

the doctor to Susan. All this escapes Johnny; he does not share the world of normal thinking, never having known empathy with normalcy. He is not unhappy in his solitude of abnormality.

In "The Widow of Windermere Side," the prayer, "Oh, gracious Heaven, in pity make her thine!" is completely understandable. She is left solitary by death:

But, one by one, the hand of death assailed
Her children from her inmost heart bewept.
(ll. 12-13)

The mother mourned until one day she beheld "the last child of many gone" transfigured. This spiritual presence gained power over material forms. Bereft of reason, she is not a maniac who "kisses the air" or "laughs upon a precipice"; instead she smiles as if a martyr's crown is won. Her solitude, though caused by grief, is not the madness of Ruth; instead it is the vacuous solitude of the Farmer of Tilsbury Vale, not unpleasant to the Widow but pathetic to those who must see her.

From "Poems of the Imagination" come tragic stories of two women, solitary by reason of mental condition--"Ruth" and Martha of "The Thorn." They resemble "Her Eyes Are Wild" in "Poems Founded on The Affections."

After the death of Ruth's mother, Ruth's father marries again. Ruth is a slighted child who at her own will "went wandering."

Beneath her father's roof, alone
 She seemed to live; her thoughts her own;
 Herself her own delight. . . (ll. 12-15)

There comes a dashing youth, filled with romance and tales
 of faraway places, who loves and marries her but ere long
 deserts her.

. . . Such pains she had
 That she in half a year was mad
 And in a prison housed. . . (ll. 192-195)

Three years go by, and when Ruth flees from the prison, no
 one gives her thought. She returns to the Banks of Tone,
 where in winter she sleeps in a barn; in summer, under a
 greenwood tree. That which she once loved in Nature, she
 loves still. In her childhood she could draw music from a
 pipe of straw; in age and madness, she cheers her loneliness
 with a flute made of a hemlock stalk. She was once a soli-
 tary by nature; she is now a solitary by mental isolation.

An interesting contrast in comment on "Ruth" appears
 in the separate studies of Stallknecht, Moorman, and Havens:
 Stallknecht associates Ruth's madness with the landscape;
 Moorman, with her tragedy of desertion; Havens, with un-
 controlled passion.

. . . Thus in "Ruth", he [Wordsworth] mentions the
 role which the very landscape itself may play in
 undermining an individual's morale. This works
 through what we might today call an empathetic rap-
 port with the sensuous aspects of the world around
 us.¹

¹Stallknecht, p. 8.

. . . "Ruth" is a story of desertion, though there is no child to enhance the tragedy or comfort her in solitude, as in "The Thorn" and "Her Eyes Are Wild," And in the poem we hear a good deal about the deserting husband . . . in soul he is a gay and attractive Peter Bell.¹

. . . The last verse, visualizing a Christian funeral 'in hallowed mold' for the poor vagrant, strikes a new note in Wordsworth's poetry. The dead Lucy had been consigned, without apparent concern for her 'immortal part', to be

Rolled round in earth's diurnal course
With rocks and stones and trees.

Perhaps the solitude and wretchedness of Ruth created in him [Wordsworth] a reaction toward the comfort and kindness which Christian humanity can offer even to a poor dead body.²

The obvious dangers of uncontrolled or misdirected passion are illustrated and discussed at length in "The Excursion" and "Peter Bell," and mentioned in "Ruth," "Laodamia," and other short pieces.³

Of "The Thorn", Margaret, and "The Mad Mother" Legouis writes:

. . . "he [Wordsworth] found some comfort in using the famous Goethean recipe. He purged off his melancholy, his feelings of pity and remorse, by writing a number of poems of poor forsaken wives [like Ruth] or unwedded mothers.⁴

In this, our therapy-conscious generation, we would refer to this Aristotelian 'Katharsis' as an aesthetic value of creative writing.

¹Moorman, p. 426.

²Ibid., p. 428.

³Havens, p. 31.

⁴Emile Legouis, Wordsworth in a New Light (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1923), p. 27.

"The Thorn" is a story of derangement caused by grief. It has no foundation in fact, as do many of Wordsworth's poems, but is truly a story of the poet's own "invention." It is a poem better left unwritten, a morbid, fantastic tale which adds nothing to--indeed subtracts from--his stature as an author. It is devoid of beauty, either of diction, of pictorial quality, or of philosophy. The story is ugliness in the essence, but it does depict a solitary character set apart by both mental and physical isolation. As such, it deserves mention. It could have been an attempt on Wordsworth's part to handle the supernatural in somewhat the manner of Coleridge, the mad Martha's mental and physical isolation being a part of this unholy scene. The scene of "The Thorn" inspired Sir George Beaumont to paint a picture of "the eminence." Wordsworth thought the sky in the painting "nobly done" but pointed out one fault: in the picture the solitary female figure is "too old and decrepit for one likely to frequent an eminence on such a call."¹

Physical Affliction

Physical affliction sometimes causes a person to be solitary. Loss of a sense which separates a person from a full life may be a cause of solitude. A physical affliction,

¹Cambridge Wordsworth, p. 75.

especially one which makes the afflicted a subject of ridicule, sometimes causes the person to become remote, withdrawn from society, a solitary by introversion. While Wordsworth did not dwell upon those solitary by reason of physical affliction as he did upon those solitary by reason of mental affliction, he did write three works concerned with blindness and one concerned with a travelling cripple.

A blind person is an island. He suffers isolation, because, bereft of sight, he cannot share with his fellowman that part of life which depends upon his being able to see. This is an isolation or solitude of denial. I cite three solitary blind people: the musician in "Power of Music," the Blind Highland Boy, and Idonea's father in "The Borderers."

The "Power of Music" is a happy poem. The blind Musician in eager anapests sways with merry harmony all who come to hear. He is like Orpheus, Thracian poet and musician, son of Apollo and Calliope, whose lyre could charm beasts and make rocks and trees move, but his instrument is a "fiddle." He is a solitary only in that he cannot see his audience. He feels their presence, "twenty souls happy as souls in a dream." The poem is so merry and the hearts are so light that the reader hopes the Musician finds a weariness that lets him rest at nightfall without wondering about the faces of an audience that he could not see. His is a partial solitude.

The Blind Highland Boy from "Memorials of a Tour in Scotland" is probably the best illustration of the solitude of blindness:

He ne'er had seen one earthly sight;
The sun, the day; the stars, the night;
Or tree or butterfly or flower,
Or fish in stream, or bird in bower,
Or woman, man, or child.

And yet he neither drooped nor pined,
Nor had a melancholy mind;
For God took pity on the Boy
And was his friend; and gave him joy
Of which we nothing know. (ll. 16-26)

"Yet he had many a restless dream," brought by eagles screaming, torrents roaring, and water beating the shore near where his cottage stood. With the tide came boats bringing seafaring men who told strange tales of distant lands; these, too, made him restless. Here, again, is the solitude of denial, for he should never handle a sail, mount the mast, row nor float upon the waves. There came a day when the repression of his blindness was too great; he "launched" his vessel, "a turtle shell," and stepped into it--

. . . --his thoughts all free
As the light breezes that with glee
Sang through the adventurer's hair. (ll. 148-150)

This is release, a type of Katharsis; it resembles the glee of "happy, happy, happy John," the glee of the Idiot Boy as he mounts his horse to be, for a limited time at least, as free as a breeze. As the tide retreated and "sucked him in,"

the Blind Boy was transported, so great was his joy. For the boy, this was triumph; but for those who saw him in his frail vessel, it was catastrophe. Cautious pursuit by a silent crew brought about his rescue; but when he was aware of their nearness, he cried out, 'Lei-gha--Lei¹gha,' which is interpreted, 'Keep away and leave me to myself.' Momentarily, he wished to continue his solitude, but once he was rescued, he was pleased and reconciled to live on shore. In the limited solitude that blindness brings, the separation, he must have yearned for complete solitude. His adventure-- a quest for solitude, a breaking loose from chains that bind-- gave him joy but also brought him reconciliation to his lot in life. The temporary exhilaration of complete solitude brought him serenity.

In "The Borderers" the baron Herbert is a solitary. Briefly, "The Borderers" is about the doings of a band of philanthropic outlaws in the reign of Henry III. Marmaduke, their leader, is in love with Idonea, who is the joy and sole support of her father, the baron Herbert. Herbert, who has been cheated of his estates while crusading in Palestine, wanders, old, blind, and helpless through the play. Deceived by Oswald, a member of his band, Marmaduke causes the death of Herbert, and loses Idonea.¹ In his youth Herbert "rushed into the murderous flames" and returned "blind as the grave,"

¹Jones, p. 55.

clasping his infant daughter to his heart. In his old age, cast down by weakness, blindness, and infirmity, Herbert says: "Here do I stand alone to helplessness," (l. 1344) and later,

"Like a mendicant,
Whom no one comes to meet, I stood alone."
(ll. 1350-1351)

One pities the once proud Herbert, a pathetic old man set apart by physical isolation. As Marmaduke eventually leaves Herbert upon the moor, he pauses and looks at the inscription on Herbert's staff, carved there by Idonea, and reads aloud:

"'I am eyes to the blind, saith the Lord.
He that puts his trust in me shall not fail.'"
(ll. 1413-1414)

Leaving Herbert to an eternal solitude for his earthly existence Marmaduke adds:

"Yes, be it so;--repent and be forgiven--
God and that staff are now thy only guides."
(ll. 1415-1416)

This is Wordsworth's reactionary play. Into it critics have read more symbolism than possibly into any other of his works. The suggestions of solitude running through "The Borderers" are a study in themselves, for at this point the philosophy seems obscure and confused to me. That Herbert is a solitary by reason of blindness is, however, clear; that he is left to suffer an 'unhallowed' solitude of circumstance is also clear.

Wordsworth's sympathy extends not only to the blind but also to the cripples, for they, too, are solitaries. Brief reference is made to a cripple in "Power of Music," for one was among those who listened to the blind Musician:

Mark that cripple who leans on his crutch; like
 a tower
 That long has leaned forward, leans hour after
 hour!-- (ll. 36-37)

The poet's sympathy for cripples is reiterated by his outburst against Andrew Jones.

I hate that Andrew Jones: he'll breed
 His children up to waste and pillage.

He does not hate Jones because he "swears and tipples"; he hates him because of the "foul deed" committed against a friendless man, "a travelling Cripple," a solitary. When "the poor crawling helpless wretch" strives to pick up pennies tossed him by a passing Horseman, Andrew Jones snatches the money, saying,

. . . 'Under half-a-crown
 What a man finds is all his own,
 And so, my Friend, good-day to you."

The helpless Cripple, abused by Andrew Jones, is another of Wordsworth's wandering solitaries, a type made famous by the Leech-Gatherer and the Cumberland Beggar, all wanderers "in that vast solitude to which the tide of things has borne"¹ them.

¹"The Cumberland Beggar," ll. 103-104.

Incident or Circumstance

A third cause of solitude in Wordsworth's poetry is incident or circumstance. Incident and circumstance are frequently interdependent; consequently, I correlate them and treat them together. Solitude of incident is the result of a happening; solitude of circumstance is a result of a condition environing and affecting a person. An incident placed the Forsaken Indian Woman in the isolation that she was forced to endure. Royal birth, or circumstance, placed Mary Queen of Scots in her position of isolation. The solitary people of incident or circumstance in the poems under study fall naturally into three classes: poetry about solitary women, poetry concerned with the social order, and poetry related to domestic incident.

"The Complaint of the Forsaken Indian Woman" (1798) is a study in the natural grief of a mother, a solitude of desperation and consuming loneliness. In his notes Wordsworth writes:

When a Northern Indian, from sickness, is unable to continue his journey with his companions, he is left behind, covered over with deer-skins, and is supplied with water, food, and fuel, if the situation of the place will afford it. He is informed of the track which his companions intend to pursue, and if he is unable to follow or overtake them, he perishes alone in the desert; unless he should have the good fortune to fall in with some other tribes of Indians. The females are equally, or still more, exposed to the same fate.¹

¹Oxford Wordsworth, p. 90.

Forsaken by her tribe after the birth of her baby, the Indian Woman clings in miserable solitude to what is left of life for her, reassuring herself by saying,

Forever left alone am I;
Then wherefore should I fear to die? (ll. 58-60)

She wishes to see her child but feels that as a person she died when he was taken from her and "given to another, a woman who was not thy mother."¹ Alone, she must soon go into the solitude of the Infinite. Hers is a solitude bleak, excruciating, malignant.

Margaret is a solitary who touches a responsive chord, causing the reader to become aware of the suffering around him. "The Affliction of Margaret" (1801?) is a monologue, directed chiefly to the son from whom she has not heard in seven years. Remembrance of him as a child and apprehensions about him as an adult are poignant, and her final plea,

Then come to me, my Son, or send
Some tidings that my woes may end;
I have no other earthly friend! (ll. 75-78)

is a touching example of the continuing solitude of circumstance. Similarly, "The Sailor's Mother" (1802) clings to remembrance of her son. Knowing, however, that he is dead, she goes to his lodgings to see if "aught which he had owned might still remain" and there finds her Son's

¹L. 32.

bird, left to a fellow lodger's care. Her solitary grief is softened by the presence of the singing-bird which her son had taken on many voyages, but because of "bodings . . . that hang upon his mind" left behind on his final voyage.

An imposed solitude is the fate of "The Emigrant Mother" (1802), a fugitive from France whose aloneness was intensified by the language barrier. Having seen her "clasp with fond embrace" an English child from a poor neighboring cottage, Wordsworth endeavored, in the English tongue, to trace such things as she might say in a song, and in his song "the workings of her heart expressed." The poem is his song: the story of loneliness and heartbreak in a strange land, the yearnings in her heart for the babe she was forced to leave in France, the game she plays pretending the English child is her own, and the promise that when once more she returns to her homeland she will tell her own son "many tales of Thee." The Emigrant Mother, like the Indian Mother, is a victim of inflicted solitude, but the French Mother is solitary with hope while the Indian Mother is a solitary without hope.

Always concerned with the social order, Wordsworth wrote numerous poems showing his veneration for the simple, the humble, the poor, and his intolerance toward life in the city, unjust prison practices, and the world's neglect of worthiness. Generally, these poems have a moral tone;

although they may not moralize directly, they have certain underlying ideational values.

In his later years, 1839 and 1840, Wordsworth wrote a series of fourteen sonnets, called "Sonnets upon the Punishment of Death". They were no doubt inspired by the general discussion in England in 1836-37 in regard to abolishing the death penalty in all cases except murder and treason. The eleventh sonnet of the group considers what happens to a man when he is forced to spend his life in a solitary dungeon:

Ah, think how one compelled for life to abide
 Locked in a dungeon needs must eat the heart
 Out of his own humanity, and part
 With every hope that mutual cares provide;
 And, should a less unnatural doom confide
 In life-long exile on a savage coast,
 Soon the relapsing penitent may boast
 Of yet more heinous guilt, with fiercer
 pride.

Hence thoughtful Mercy, Mercy sage and pure,
 Sanctions the forfeiture that Law demands,
 Leaving the final issue in His hands
 Whose goodness knows no change, whose
 love is sure,
 Who sees, foresees; who cannot judge amiss,
 And wafts at will the contrite soul to
 bliss.¹

"The Convict", written before 1798, describes Wordsworth's visit to a dungeon. The graphic picture of the convict he visits cries out against solitary confinement from which a man, Wordsworth thinks, can scarcely be rehabilitated. When the convict becomes conscious of his visitor's presence,

¹Oxford Wordsworth, p. 407.

. . . he half raises his deep sunken eye,
 And the motion un^usettles a tear;
 The silence of sorrow it seems to supply
 And asks me why I am here. (ll. 41-44)

The poet answers:

' . . . one whose first wish is the wish to
 be good,
 Is come as a brother thy sorrows to share.

'At thy name though compassion her nature
 resign,
 Though in virtue's proud mouth thy report
 be a stain,
 My care, if the arm of the mighty were
 mine,
 Would plant thee where yet thou might'st
 blossom again.' (ll. 48-52)

Though a conservative, Wordsworth was not in sympathy with solitary confinement, a solitude occasioned by incident and continuing in circumstance. Two writing devices used in this poem merit attention: (1) the use of sibilants to suggest the unholy quiet of the prison and (2) the unexpected anapestic rhythm in a poem that anticipates the solemnity of trochees or dactyls.

Wordsworth felt solitude in the royal state of Mary Queen of Scots. In "Lament", he causes her to say:

Born all too high, by wedlock raised
 Still higher--to be cast thus low!
 Would that mine eyes had never gazed
 On aught of more ambitious show
 Than the sweet flowerets of the fields!
 ---It is my royal state that yields
 This bitterness of woe. (ll. 29-35)

Set apart by nobility of birth, the solitary Mary later endures another solitude, that of solitary confinement.

"By friends deceived, by foes betrayed", held captive by a sister Queen, she acknowledges that

Nought but the world-redeeming Cross
Is able to supply my loss,
My burthen to support. (ll. 61-64)

In the last stanza of "Lament of Mary Queen of Scots" (1817) the poet adapts a line which originally appeared in "The Convict," which he published in 1798 but never reprinted:

From her sunk eyes a stagnant tear
Stole forth, unsettled by the shock:

Note again the use of sibilants. Here again is Wordsworth's quiet sympathy for one isolated by a social order out of harmony with his ideals.

A third example of solitude inflicted by a social order occurs in "Lines Left upon a Seat in a Yew Tree," frequently referred to by its opening lines, "Nay, Traveller! rest." The solitary about whom Wordsworth wrote was a man of talent and of learning who returned to pass his time in seclusion on his own estate. "He was one who owned no common soul," Wordsworth wrote. He went forth, "knowing no desire that genius did not hallow" and prepared against all enemies, "all but neglect."

. . . The world, for so it thought,
Owed him no service; wherefore he
 at once
With indignation turned himself
 away,
And with the food of pride sustained
 his soul
In solitude. . . . (ll. 19-24)

A victim of the world's neglect, he sought solace in solitude. There under the yew tree he spent many an hour in the "morbid pleasure" of embitterment. Wordsworth concludes the poem with a sermon to one who in solitude becomes selfish--a "man whose eye is ever on himself." (ll. 55)

Another aspect of Wordsworth's conception of solitude is illustrated in his poetry of domestic incident. A man grieves for his sheep in "The Last of the Flock." Barbara Lewthwaite cares for a lamb lost from its mother and found by her father. A poet sees a caged turtle-dove, a colored drawing of a bird of paradise in an album, a labourer returning to his home at noon. A bird flies into the house and comforts Dorothy. These incidents, and many similar ones, inspire Wordsworth to write poetry and, as is his habit, poetry suggesting singleness. Most interesting of this group is "The Redbreast," written at Rydal Mount in 1834 and previously mentioned in the discussion of mental solitaries. Dorothy, of whom he had earlier written

She gave me eyes, she gave me ears;
And humble care and delicate fears;
A heart, the fountain of sweet tears;
And love and thought and joy!

("The Sparrow's Nest," ll. 17-20)

fell ill. As she sank farther into the blankness which would eventually encompass her, her daily pleasures diminished. So small were they that the coming of the redbreast who "cheats her of too busy cares, eases her pain, and helps her prayers"

is of major importance to the Wordsworths. Wordsworth describes the incident of the coming of the redbreast to cheer the solitary thus:

All our cats having been banished the house, it was soon frequented by redbreasts. Two or three of them, when the window was open would come in, particularly when Mrs. Wordsworth was breakfasting alone, and hop about the table picking up crumbs. My sister being then confined to her room by sickness, as, dear creature, she still is, had one that, without being caged, took up its abode with her, and at night used to perch on a nail from which a picture had hung. It used to sing and fan her face with its wings in a manner that was very touching.¹

His notes and his poem combined depict him, in his home as in his natural surroundings, a contemplator, warm and sensitive; but the theme of solitude is here evident as is his inner rebellion toward bonds:

Free entrance to this cot has he [the redbreast],
Entrance and exit both yet free; (ll. 60-61)

Contrarities

An interesting aspect of Wordsworth's art is his skill in bringing together paired opposites. This is perhaps an extension of the contrarities, ably discussed by Charles J. Smith in "The Contrarities: Wordsworth's Dualistic Imagery."² As his title indicates, he deals with objects and ideas, not with people. He writes:

¹Cambridge Wordsworth, p. 727.

²Publications of the Modern Language Association, LXIX (December, 1954), 1181.

The "many movements" of a poet's mind are so various, the hiding places of his power are so obscured, even to the poet himself, that any attempt to

. . . parcel out
His intellect by geometric rules,
Split like a province into round and square

is very dangerous. Nevertheless it is sometimes possible to generalize about a poet's mental or temperamental habits, and if such habits are basic enough, an understanding of them may throw new light on his work. In Wordsworth, a pattern of basic habits of thinking and feeling unfolds itself into a kind of dualism: Wordsworth has a very strong habit of thinking in terms of paired opposites or contrarities. Everywhere, in nature, in individual man, and in society, he saw a constant interplay of opposing forces. These contrarities were a characteristic manifestation of his mind.¹

Mr. Smith continues by grouping these forces or qualities in two opposing categories, adding that the members of either one of the groups have considerable kinship with one another:

Permanence and Mutability
Rest and Motion; Tranquillity and Emotion
Harmony and Discord; Law and Impulse; Order and Disorder
Unity and Variety; Similitude and Dissimilitude
Spirituality and Physicality; the Ideal and the Real;
Form and Substance; the Other World and This World²

These are the usual Platonic contrarities.

Smith cites examples as proof of his thesis:

This fall of water that doth make
A murmur near the silent lake;
"To a Highland Girl"

¹Ibid.

²Ibid.

Calm is all nature as a resting wheel,
 "Lines Written in Early Youth"

We Poets in our youth begin in gladness;
 But thereof in the end comes despondency and
 madness.

"Resolution and Independence"

I could have laughed myself to scorn to find
 In that decrepit man so firm a mind.

"Resolution and Independence"

The reader will note in discussion and in illustration the exclusion of people. A murmur and a silence, motion and rest, gladness and despondency, decrepit and firm: these are diametric opposites, but they are states or qualities, rather than people.

My point of departure from the idea developed by Charles J. Smith is that in this study I show that Wordsworth had a very strong habit of thinking in paired opposites, the opposites being not qualities or objects but people, each of whom is a solitary in the world that he represents, the solitude of each accenting that of the other. He brings together from their solitary worlds mother and child, high-born and plebeian, poverty and plenty, good and evil, wanderer and priest, nature and books, youth and old age, guilt and sorrow, gayety and moroseness.

In "Maternal Grief" the solitary opposites are a mother and her young son, whose twin sister is the "Departed Child" of the poem. After the death of her daughter, the mother withdrew into the solitude of grief, seeking calm submission to the will of God; while

. . . the Boy
 Now first acquainted with distress and grief,
 Shrunk from his Mother's presence, shunned with fear
 Her sad approach, and stole away to find
 In his known haunts of joy where'er he might
 A more congenial object. (ll. 48-53)

While the Mother sought consolation in solitude, the Boy sought amusement in solitude. Remaining withdrawn until "time softened her pangs," the Boy gradually returned "like a scared bird" to his Mother. In temporary solitude each found solace and now

. . . readily they join
 In walks whose boundary is the lost One's grave,
 Which he with flowers has planted, . . . (ll. 67-69)

His "haunt of joy" had been his sister's grave; his amusement, planting the flowers which the Mother found growing there.

In "Vaudracour and Julia" the highborn Vaudracour is a solitary in that he alienates himself from his tyrannical father by his love for the plebeian Maid, Julia; in that he is a victim of inflicted solitude when imprisoned where he occupies "his days in solitude under privation and restraint"; in that he goes into voluntary retreat "where in forgotten quiet he might dwell" after Julia is doomed to a convent; and finally in that

. . . in those solitary shades
 His days he wasted, an imbecile mind! (ll. 305-306)

Much must be presumed, however, about Julia's solitude.

While Wordsworth carefully analyzes every mood, every solitary

thought, of the once aristocratic Vaudracour, he elaborates far less upon the state of mind of plebeian Julia. Julia was forced to withdraw into religious walls, where she would spend her life in solitude to atone for her sin. No splendored isolation lies herein, only harsh, unhappy solitude, both of body and mind for the two born at opposite ends of the caste system of society.

Goody Blake and Harry Gill arise out of poverty and wealth in the poem which bears their names. Goody Blake was old and poor, ill-fed and thinly clad; she spun all day and sometimes at night in her poor hut where "she, poor Woman!" was "housed alone." Harry Gill was lusty and stout. His cheeks were red, and his voice was loud. A man of plenty, he was resentful of Goody Blake's "trespass" to secure "turf or stick" from his hedge when "her old bones were cold and chill." Catching her in her "trespass," he grabbed her and shook her violently, whereupon she pronounced upon him this curse:

'God, who art never out of hearing,
O may he never more be warm!' (ll. 99-100)

Therefore,

. . . evermore his teeth they chatter,
Chatter, chatter, chatter still. (ll. 11-12)

Destitute Goody continues her solitary way, and of wealthy Harry Gill it is said that

No word to any man he utters,
 A-bed or up, to young or old;
 But ever to himself he mutters,
 'Poor Harry Gill is very cold.' (ll. 120-124)

Again, the poet constructs a story around two solitary opposites, an elderly woman of no means and no scruples against stealing and a younger man of plenty whose life is dominated by selfishness and lack of concern for his fellow man.

Wordsworth's only drama, "The Borderers," shows the tragic contamination of a noble mind in Marmaduke, by an evil one in Oswald¹--opposites, each of which progresses toward and eventually reaches a type of solitude. In the last two acts of the play, Wordsworth dwells upon the contrasted solitudes of Oswald and Marmaduke. Set against the world by his individualistic rationalism, Oswald has no successors, because Wordsworth's concern with the solitude of reason does not survive his loss of interest in Godwin. Marmaduke, on the other hand, accepts his solitude as a condition imposed by the natural order of things, uncontrived and inescapable.² His sentence is self-imposed: solitude until expiation. Solitude is his Albatross. As he sets out on his lonely course, Marmaduke asks why men should ever seek each other, even in extremity:

¹Lascelles Abercrombie, The Art of Wordsworth (London: Oxford University Press, 1952), p. 71.

²Jones, pp. 59-60.

Give me reason why the wisest thing
 That the earth owns should never choose to die
 But someone must be near to count his groans.
 The wounded deer retires to solitude,
 And dies in solitude: all things but man,
 All die in solitude. (ll. 2149-2155)

"The Brothers" is another example of Wordsworth's studies in opposites. His two opposites are the Stranger who went to sea and the Priest who stayed in the valley. Each has known solitude--the Stranger, the solitude of the sea and the solitude of remembrance; the Priest, the solitude of a peaceful valley where he has lived out his life among his own people, in quietude and serenity. Neither is by nature a solitudinarian. Leonard's love for his brother and the Priest's devotion to his family indicate love of companionship. The life of a seafaring man forced solitude upon Leonard, who "in the bosom of the deep" saw mountains and sheep grazing among verdant hills. The vicar describes with such clarity a solitude that I am inclined to think it his own.

'Tis one of those who needs must leave the path
 Of the world's business to go wild alone. (ll. 104-105)

 The happy man will creep about the fields
 Following his fancies by the hour, . . . (ll. 107-108)

It is an incidental solitude, not a perpetual one, for the vicar loves those who talk around his fire-side. This poem has two unusual features: it is one of the rare poems in which Nature is unpleasant, and the shepherd's staff which

caught midway on a Pillar of rock as James Ewbank fell to his death suggests the similar position of the Thorn.

A less than perfect example of solitary paired opposites may be found in "The Armenian Lady's Love." The solitary Christian slave is isolated by his captive state. The Armenian Lady isolates herself from her family and leaves "her narrow world" because

. . . she shrunk from trust
In a sensual creed that trampled
Woman's birthright into dust. (ll. 80-83)

An interesting reversal comes when the Armenian Lady frees the Christian slave, who in his own country is a Lord. His deliverer, separated from her countrymen, holds no position of honor. Although she learns that he already is wed, she continues to live among his people, greatly beloved by them but suffering an inner solitude because of her love for him. The solitary atmosphere of the poem lies in the inflicted solitude of the Christian slave in the early part of the poem and the independent thinking of a timid maiden made bold by her convictions. In this poem the solitude is not a tone, but an undertone; it does not dominate the poem.

In "Expostulation and Reply" William and Matthew represent two separate worlds, the world of nature and the world of books. One believes in "the light bequeathed," the other in "wise passiveness." Here is contrariety of ideas as represented by people who do not appear to be

opposites in age, occupation, or station of birth. Although no mention is made of solitude, William, sitting on an old grey stone feeding his mind in "wise passiveness," and Matthew, urging him to "drink the spirit breathed from dead men to their kind," suggest solitariness rather than gregariousness.

There is a similar quality in "Resolution and Independence." It is one of the many instances in Wordsworth's poetry where he, a solitary, is a character in his story. At a time when the poet was oppressed with a sense of instability and insecurity (1802), his meeting with the Leech-Gatherer helped to dispel his dejection and despair:

The old Man stood talking by my side;
 But now his voice to me was like a stream
 Scarce heard; nor word from word could I divide;
 And the whole body of the Man did seem
 Like one whom I had met with in a dream;
 Or like a man from some region sent,
 To give me strength, by apt admonishment. (ll. 106-112)

In Memoirs of Wordsworth¹ the poet's own words about the poem are recorded:

. . . : but this I can confidently affirm, that though I believe God has given me a strong imagination, I cannot conceive a figure more impressive than that of an old man [at this time Wordsworth was thirty-two] like this, the survivor of a wife and ten children, travelling alone among the mountains and all lonely places, carrying with him his own fortitude, and the necessities which an unjust state of society has laid upon him.

¹Quoted from Memoirs; I, 172, 173, in the Oxford Wordsworth, p. 701.

Wordsworth and the Leech-Gatherer are unquestionably solitaries, and they are paired opposites in that Wordsworth is in a state of dejection while the Leech-Gatherer bears his infirmity with dignity and fortitude. Through the Leech Gatherer Wordsworth sees that sharp suffering is to be borne stoically, not rejected nor permitted to destroy. Like Coleridge's wedding guest, Wordsworth goes forth from his encounter with the lonely figure, "a wiser man."

"The Two Thieves" in Wordsworth's solitary opposites is problematical. In the poem youth and old age meet. The grandfather and the grandson commit their daily crimes, reminding those who see to make allowance for immaturity and decay. But are they solitaries? The phrases, "Through the lost look of dotage" and "'Tis a look which at this time is hardly his own," may indicate mental isolation of the grandfather. A boy of three ordinarily would be playing with another boy of three, while a man of ninety-three would normally seek the companionship of another nonagenarian. On this fact I base my belief that the two are solitary opposites.

Another poem for consideration in a study of contrarities is "Lines Composed a Few Miles Above Tintern Abbey," though the study of solitary opposites is a study of Wordsworth himself at different periods of his life. Of the early period he writes, "I cannot paint what then I was," indicating that when he returns to a scene which he had

visited five years before, he himself is vastly changed. Considered separately, the "thoughtless youth" of the "wild ecstasies" and the mature Wordsworth of "sober pleasure" appear to be solitary opposites in both attitude and thought, though not of the types previously discussed.

Aloneness is the underlying theme of "Guilt and Sorrow," though primarily this overlong poem is a study of a social order and the calamities of war as they affect the poor. The solitude of guilt is exemplified by the Sailor, the solitude of sorrow by the Soldier's Widow and the Sailor's Wife. All three are solitary by incident; there is nothing to indicate that either of the three is a solitary by nature. The poem is written in three parts: the Sailor's story, the Soldier's Widow's story, and the Sailor's Wife's story. Each story overlaps just enough to preserve continuity but not enough for companionship to replace solitude. There is no beauty in the Nature which forms the background for the story; here Nature is harsh and unkind, contributing to the distress and misery of the people and accentuating their loneliness. The first eight stanzas describe a Sailor's fruitless search to end his wretched solitude. The feeling of his eternal lonely wandering recalls other "wanderers through space."¹ Because on his

¹Jones, p. 68.

return from captive service at sea "fraud took all that he had earned," a mood overcame him, and in rebellion against an unjust society he murdered a traveller, the first person whom he met. Later viewing a human body upon a gibbet, he fell into a trance which "left his mind as a deep evening stream." Through the space of ten more stanzas, the poet emphasizes negatives: no "friendly sound," no "swinging sign-board," no "gypsy near a fire," no "labourer watching a kiln." Eventually, the Sailor's solitude was broken when he heard within a shelter where he sought to sleep

. . . a deep sigh that seemed to come
From one who mourned in sleep, . . . (ll. 164-165)

Recovered from fright occasioned by the Sailor's presence, the Woman told her story: how her happy childhood ended when "through mischance and cruel wrong" her father's substance "fell into decay"; how she and her father turned for help to a Youth whom she had loved and whom she married; how an evil time came when "war reduced the children's meal" and the young husband joined "those miserable men," taking his wife and children from their homeland. Neglect, sorrow, and the ravage of pestilence took their toll, and within a year the young wife was left alone. She waked aboard a British ship. In time she could bring herself to say,

The very ocean hath its hour of rest.
I too forgot the heavings of my breast. (ll. 336-337)

.

Some mighty gulf of separation passed, (ll. 352)

and from all thoughts of home and "from all hope hurled," she says to the Sailor:

. . . --farthest from earthly port to roam
Was best, could I but shun the spot where
man might come. (ll. 359-360)

Back in England, she reached a ruined fort. Exhaustion and hunger reduced her to a state of "shattered memory," but food and care restored her memory and her strength. She roamed the fields, trusting her life to "what chance bounty yields." Her lengthy story of a miserable solitude, arising from the unjust state of society, consumes space much too great to sustain intensified interest. The Sailor, his own heart heavy with regret for his misdeed, pondered the social Order and "Time's sure help to calm and reconcile," and spoke words of comfort to the Soldier's Widow. Her story finished, the two solitaries pass on until they reach a rustic cottage. Their breakfast done, the wanderers part for a time. Erelong the Soldier's Widow finds a pale-faced Woman, "in disease far gone," lying in a wagon, bare straw beneath her. Touched by the sight, the wandering solitary returns to the inn for help. A housewife sees the ill Woman and says

. . . --God be praised,
I have a house that I call my own;
Nor shall she perish there, untended and alone!
(ll. 565-568)

There, to those who came from the inn to help, the Sailor's Widow tells her story, a story the Sailor knows well. He

speaks, and she forgives and blesses him before she does. "She slept in peace," but no peace was his. He thanked the Soldier's Widow, thanked the pair who had shared their cottage with strangers, and straightway journeyed to the city and declared his crime. He welcomed his sentence, acknowledged trust in his Saviour, and accepted the fate of one, the sight of which once caused him to fall into a trance. The story of seventy-four stanzas grows long and tedious to the reader; but Wordsworth here so portrays the solitude of incident and the anxieties of the solitudes of the Sailor, the Soldier's Widow, and the Sailor's Wife--his, the solitude of guilt, and theirs the solitude of sorrow--that it must be included among the studies of contrariety. That the poem is an indictment against society must not, however, be overlooked. The intertwined stories of the soldier's destitute widow and of a discharged sailor driven by penury to crime expose the miseries of war, the injustices of the penal code, and the wrongs inflicted by the privileged upon the defenseless poor.¹

Dorothy Wordsworth recorded in her Journal the visit of the Wordsworths and Scott to Jedborough in 1803:

We were received with hearty welcome by a good woman who though above seventy years old moved about as if she were only seventeen. . . . Her husband was deaf and infirm, and sat in a chair with scarcely

¹Albert C. Baugh, A Literary History of England (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1948), p. 1139.

the power to move a limb,--an affecting contrast!
 . . . William long afterward thought it worth while
 to express in verse the sensations which she had
 excited.¹

Inspired by the experience which Dorothy recounted, Wordsworth wrote another study in contrariety, "The Matron of Jedborough and Her Husband." A Matron, he writes, dwells under Jedborough Tower. Though more than seventy, she "lives in the light of youthful glee." Her deaf husband, "him who is rooted to his chair," has "legs that move not," "useless arms," and a vacant stare. The poet contrasts the two by saying:

He breathes a subterraneous damp;
 But bright as Vesper shines her lamp;
 He is as mute as Jedborough Tower:
 She jocund as it was of yore, (ll. 27-30)

Her buoyant spirit prevails upon "her helpless Charge" and gives him the only pleasure his infirmity permits. To the reader, the Husband is a solitary, his solitude inflicted by physical debility. On the other hand, the Matron appears to be just the opposite until in the last few lines of the poem the reader discovers the truth:

Some inward trouble suddenly
 Broke from the Matron's strong black eye--
 A remnant of uneasy light,
 A flash of something overbright! (ll. 66-70)

This mystery does not detain Wordsworth's thoughts long: the Matron forthwith tells him that she has been stricken

¹Cambridge Wordsworth, p. 851.

by a two-fold stroke--"ill health of body" and "worse ailments of the mind." Wordsworth closes the poem by praising Him who has recalled her from suffering, permitting her to live in a blissful state which cheers her melancholy husband. The woman whose state appears to be the antithesis of her husband's has in truth been a victim of mental isolation. The latter lines are obscure; whether her solitude was temporary or whether it still exists as a happy solitude is not clear. Plainly, however, "The Matron of Jedborough and Her Husband" is a study in solitary opposites, one morose and silent with only momentary pleasure, the other blissful and gay with only transitory flashes "of something overbright."

Solitariness because of mental isolation, solitariness because of physical affliction, solitariness because of incident or circumstance--the solitude of forsaken women, of an unjust social order, of domestic incident--and the solitary by contrariety are all Wordsworthian. Solitude, the theme of Wordsworth's long life, is also the pre-occupation of his poetry.¹

¹Jones, p. 31.

CHAPTER IV

THE SOLITARY BY ENDOWMENT

Wordsworth on the Endowed

Artists, and especially poets, must be solitary at work. Their loneliness is central to their calling, and in their moments of dedication they yearn, as did one who wrote in his notebook: "Give me the humility and the judgment to live alone with the deep and rich satisfaction of my own creating."¹ The poet is a solitary, intellectually and emotionally, deriving his power from the solitude of genius. He is forever set apart by his own creative power.

Wordsworth, himself a solitary by endowment, recognized endowed individuals of four types: the sculptor, the musician, the painter, the poet. Yet the work more than the workman impressed him, if frequency of reference is an index. Sculpture, as an artist's medium, he mentions twice in his writings, and sculptor, not at all. Music he uses one hundred and five times, but musician, only three times. Painting and pictures he uses twenty-eight times, but painter, only six times; art, ninety-nine times, eighty-seven of these being as a noun, but artist, only five times.

¹Stephen Spender, "The Making of a Poem," Criticism, ed. Mark Schorer and others (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1948), p. 194.

His concentration is with the Poet, of whom he writes in both prose and poetry, the words poet, poet's, and poets being used a total of one hundred and four times in his poetical words.¹

Frequent reference to the music of nature and infrequent reference to the musician as an individual indicate in Wordsworth a lack of interest in or a lack of experience with the musician as a creative artist, a person of endowment. In "Power of Music" he tells of a blind street musician. In "The Excursion" he writes that shapes and phantoms form from mists and rain "as fast as a musician scatters sounds"² from an instrument, and in the same work he says of an aged man

"What titles will he keep? will he remain
Musician, gardener, builder, mechanist,
A planter and a rearer from seed?
A man of hope and forward-looking mind
Even to the last!"³

That he places the musician first in the list of titles may have some import, but the fact that in his voluminous writings he mentions a musician so seldom, never attributing to him divine authority, suggests that he considers him less endowed than the artist or the Poet.

¹A Concordance to the Poems of William Wordsworth, ed. Lane Cooper.

²Book IV, l. 524.

³Book VII, ll. 274-278.

Following a group of sonnets inspired by Raphael and Michael Angelo, Wordsworth writes these lines:

As indignation mastered grief, my tongue
 spoke better words; words that did
 ill agree
 With those rich stores of Nature's imagery,
 And divine Art, that fast to memory clung---¹

In his tours of Italy while the poet saw "rich stores of Nature's imagery" in Venice, in the Apennines, in Florence, and in various other places, he also saw rich stores of "divine Art". The Art of which he writes--"the Art divine that both creates and fixes"--is the creative handiwork of the artist; if the Art be divine, is not then the artist a person endowed, a person set apart by his endowment, a person second only to the Poet?

"What then is a Poet?" Wordsworth answers in his

Prefaces:

He is a man speaking to men: a man, it is true, endowed with more lively sensibility, more enthusiasm and tenderness, who has a greater knowledge of human nature, and a more comprehensive soul, than are supposed to be common among mankind; a man pleased with his own passions and volitions, and who rejoices more than other men in the spirit of life that is in him; delighting to contemplate similar volitions and passions as manifested in the goings-on of the Universe, and habitually impelled to create them where he does not find them. To these qualities he has added a disposition to be affected more than other men by absent things as if they were present; an ability of conjuring up in himself passions, which are indeed far from being the same as those produced by real events, yet

¹ Sonnet XXVI, ll. 1-4, Oxford Wordsworth, p. 289.

(especially in those parts of the general sympathy which are pleasing and delightful) do more nearly resemble the passions produced by real events, than anything which, from the motions of their own minds merely, other men are accustomed to feel in themselves: --whence, and from practice, he has acquired a greater readiness and power in expressing what he thinks and feels, and especially those thoughts and feelings which, by his own choice, or from the structure of his own mind, arise in him without immediate external excitement.¹

He is distinguished from other men:

. . . the Poet is chiefly distinguished from other men by a greater promptness to think and feel without immediate external excitement, and a greater power in expressing such thoughts and feelings as are produced in him in that manner. But these passions and thoughts and feelings are the general passions and thoughts and feelings of men. . . .²

He views man in certain ways:

What then does the Poet? He considers man and the objects that surround him as acting and re-acting upon each other, so as to produce an infinite complexity of pain and pleasure; he considers man in his own nature and in his ordinary life as contemplating this with a certain quantity of immediate knowledge, with certain convictions, intuitions, and deductions, which from habit acquire the quality of intuitions; he considers him as looking upon this complex scene of ideas and sensations, and finding everywhere objects that immediately excite in him sympathies which, from the necessities of his nature, are accompanied by an overbalance of enjoyment.³

He writes under a certain restriction:

¹Preface to the Second Edition of Lyrical Ballads, 1801, Oxford Wordsworth, p. 737.

²Preface to Lyrical Ballads, 1800. Reprinted in Wordsworth and the Vocabulary of Emotion (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1941), p. 31.

³Ibid., p. 33.

. . . The Poet writes under one restriction only, namely, the necessity of giving immediate pleasure to a human Being possessed of that information which may be expected from him, not as a lawyer, a physician, a mariner, an astronomer, or a natural philosopher, but as a Man. Except this one restriction, there is no object standing between the Poet and the image of things; between this, and the Biographer and Historian, there are a thousand.

Nor let this necessity of producing immediate pleasure be considered as a degradation of the Poet's art. It is far otherwise. It is an acknowledgment the more sincere, because not formal, but indirect; it is a task light and easy to him who looks at the world in the spirit of love. . .¹

What then is poetry?

. . . all good poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings: and though this be true, Poems to which any value can be attached were never produced on any variety of subjects but by a man who, being possessed of more than usual organic sensibility, had also thought long and deeply.²

Poetry is the breath and finer spirit of all knowledge; it is the impassioned expression which is in the countenance of all Science. Emphatically may it be said of the Poet, as Shakespeare hath said of man, 'that he looks before and after.' He is the rock of defence for human nature; an upholder and preserver, carrying everywhere with him relationship and love. In spite of difference of soil and climate, of language and manners, of laws and customs: in spite of things silently gone out of mind, and things violently destroyed; the Poet binds together by passion and knowledge the vast empire of human society, as it is spread over the whole earth, and over all time. The objects of the Poet's thoughts are everywhere; though the eyes and senses of men are, it is true, his favourite guides, yet he will follow wheresoever he can find an atmosphere of sensation in which to move his wings. Poetry is the first and last of all knowledge--it is as immortal as the heart of man.³

¹Preface to Lyrical Ballads, 1801, Oxford Wordsworth, p. 737.

²Ibid., p. 735.

³Ibid., p. 738.

I have said that Poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings: it takes its origin from emotion recollected in tranquillity: the emotion is contemplated till by a species of reaction the tranquillity gradually disappears, and an emotion, kindred to that which was before the subject of contemplation, is gradually produced, and does itself actually exist in the mind. In this mood successful composition generally begins, and in a mood similar to this it is carried on.¹

The idea of tranquillity as an outgrowth of solitude did not originate with Wordsworth. Sixteen centuries before Wordsworth was born, Marcus Aurelius wrote concerning tranquillity in his Meditations:

Men seek retreats for themselves, houses in the country, seashores, and mountains; But this is altogether a mark of the most common sort of man, for it is in thy power whenever thou shalt choose to retire into thyself. For nowhere, either with more quiet or more freedom from trouble, does a man retire than into his own soul, particularly when he has within him such thoughts that by looking into them he is immediately in perfect tranquillity; and I affirm that tranquillity is nothing else than good ordering of the mind. Constantly then give to thyself this retreat, and renew thyself; This then remains: Remember to retire into this little territory of thy own.²

While the personal solitude of Wordsworth, which is only one of the many types of solitude about which he wrote, and the philosophy of Marcus Aurelius resemble each other, there is one point of wide divergence: Marcus Aurelius urged that man's duty is to obey the divine law of his

¹Beatty, p. 169, quoting William Wordsworth, Preface of 1800.

²Marcus Aurelius Antonius, The Meditations of Marcus Aurelius in the translation of George Long (Mount Vernon, N.Y.: The Peter Pauper Press, N.D.), p. 32.

reason; Wordsworth discarded the philosophy of rationalism with "The Borderers," and it never reappeared. In maturity Wordsworth became a man who "lifts up his eyes unto the hills"--alone; who listens to the urging of the psalmist, "Be still and know. . . ."

Wordsworth not only wrote prose about Poets, as in his Prefaces, but also wrote poetry about Poets. Among his poems illustrative of this tendency are "Resolution and Independence," in which a young poet is overwhelmed by thoughts of the miserable reverses which have befallen the happiest of all men, poets;¹ "To the Sons of Burns," written after he had visited the grave of their father, and "At the Grave of Burns," a tribute to the genius of Burns written during the poet's tour of Scotland seven years after the death of Burns; "Illustrated Books and Newspapers," in which he cries out against printing as a cause of a "backward movement" in the literary taste of "this once-intellectual land"; "The Poet and the Caged Turtle dove," a poem suggested, the poet says, by the habit of the bird "to begin cooing and murmuring whenever it heard me making my verses"; and "Lines," inscribed in a copy of his poems and sent to the Queen when he was poet laureate of England, suggesting the solitude of royalty:

¹Oxford Wordsworth, p. 701.

And now by duty urged, I lay this Book
 Before thy Majesty, in humble trust
 That on its simplest pages thou wilt look
 With a benign indulgence more than just.

Nor wilt thou blame an aged Poet's prayer,
 That issuing hence may steal into thy mind
 Some solace under weight of royal care,
 Or grief--the inheritance of humankind.
 (11. 16-24)

Wordsworth wrote numerous sonnets about poets. Probably the most famous of these is the one beginning, "Milton! thou shouldst be living at this hour," in which he writes of the solitude of genius: "Thy soul was like a star and dwelt apart." In "Scorn not the Sonnet" he pays tribute to Shakespeare, Petrarch, Tasso, Camoens, Dante, Spenser, and Milton, in whose hand "The Thing [the sonnet] became a trumpet" from which blew "Soul-animating strains-- alas, too few!" "A Poet!--He hath put his heart to school," is a defense against Critics who would kill the Poet who is a solitary endowed with the power to interpret Nature. In a sonnet "To the Memory of Raisley Calvert" Wordsworth praises Calvert for the freedom making it possible for the poet to array "My temples with the Muse's diadem." "There is pleasure in poetic pains" tells not only how a single luckless word may haunt a Poet, but, "if his thought stand clear," how he is fresh as "a single star," one "softly-moulded tear," or a "rain-drop lingering on a pointed thorn." Perhaps the greatest sonnet on the theme of solitude is

Wordsworth concludes his autobiographical poem, The Prelude; or, Growth of a Poet's Mind (1850), with the idea that poets leave

A lasting inspiration, sanctified
 By reason, blest by faith: what we have loved
 Others will love, and we will teach them how;
 Instruct them how the mind of man becomes
 A thousand times more beautiful than the earth
 On which he dwells, above this frame of things

 In beauty exalted, as it is itself
 Of quality and fabric more divine. (ll. 445-455)

Wordsworth extended the Platonic conception of the poet as one distinguished from other men.

Concerned with the ideal always, Wordsworth described the ideal poet as a man speaking to men and found in him qualities similar to those of the ideal man and the ideal woman as knowing the self-discipline of solitude. His ideal man, according to Bernbaum, was

. . . not a dull-witted sportsman, or a hustling business man, or a roystering adventurer, or an ambitious seeker after fame, or a blase worldling, or a milksop, or a self-righteous reformer of others; but studious and thoughtful, firm in character and of high purpose, self-forgetful, and ambitious only to help good prevail, --a gentleman rather than a shrewd man of the world.¹

Though the ideal man is a composite from many poems, he is probably best depicted in the "Character of the Happy Warrior." Bernbaum describes Wordsworth's ideal woman thus:

¹Ernest Bernbaum, Guide Through the Romantic Movement (New York: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1951), p. 145.

Wordsworth's ideal woman was not a social butterfly or a social leader, or a masterful clubwoman, or a political campaigner, or a clinging vine, or a useless angel; but an incarnation of spirituality, benignity, sympathy, home-bred sense, foresight, and patience, womanly rather than feminine.¹

She, too, is a composite, but "She Was a Phantom of Delight," "To a Highland Girl," and the less familiar "Grace Darling" suggest many of her attributes, which are peculiar to the meditative individual. Even the figures of speech and the comparisons emphasize the theme, as in the familiar lines:

A violet by a mossy stone
Half hidden from the eye!
--Fair as a star when only one
Is shining in the sky.

She lived unknown and few could know
When Lucy ceased to be;
But she is in her grave, and oh,
The difference to me! (ll. 5-12)

In "A Poet's Epitaph," his sarcastic poem which belittles the Statist, the Lawyer, the Doctor, the Soldier, the Philosopher, the Moralist--"the intellectual All-in-all!" and the poem for which Charles Lamb criticized him, he gives a scathing appraisal of the men of science, then pictures in the latter part of the poem the ideal poet, clearly marking characteristics which are his own. The poet is a plainly dressed man of modest looks, a solitary whose deeper impulses have come to him when he is alone, a teacher of truth who is content to enjoy "The things which others understand." There is something of bitterness in the

¹Ibid., p. 144.

conclusion that the men of science consider the poet an idler, not an instrument of divinity. T. V. Smith once said in a lecture, "Poets over All," that the life of the imagination is represented magnificently in science, more magnificently in art, and most magnificently in literature. He further stated that literature is "the treasure house of the human race," "the granary of human truth."¹ While Wordsworth holds a different evaluation of science as is shown in "The Poet's Epitaph," the poems under discussion show that Wordsworth ranked the importance of art and literature, specifically, poetry, as Smith does.

The Critics on Wordsworth

What Wordsworth himself said about solitaries and solitude is most important; however, what critics and biographers said about Wordsworth and solitude must not be overlooked. In 1829, twenty-one years before he died, An Essay on the Theory and Writings of Wordsworth² was published in four parts in Blackwood's Magazine. It contains no analysis of Wordsworth as a poet of solitary people but gives this comment concerning the solitary subjects of his poetry:

¹Recorded lecture given at Texas Woman's University, July, 1951.

²Blackwood's Magazine, XXVI (1829), 453.

A true poet finds the same passions in every sphere of life, and makes them speak a plain and emphatic language by his own art. Love and hatred, hope and fear, joy and sorrow lay bare the human heart beneath the ermined robe, not less than beneath the shepherd's frock: . . .¹

It is significant that at this early date even small note is taken of the poet's people. In 1850, the year of his death, an elaborate but touching tribute by George Gilfillan, "Wordsworth--His Character and Genius,"² was published in the first volume of Harper's New Monthly Magazine. Recognition of Wordsworth as a solitary genius dominates the essay:

In a late article on Southey, we alluded to the solitary position of Wordsworth in that lake country where he once shone the brightest star in a large galaxy. Since then, the star of Jove, so beautiful and large, has gone out in darkness--the greatest laureate of England has expired--the intensest, most unique [sic], and most pure-minded of our poets, with the single exceptions of Milton and Cowper, is departed. And it were lese majesty against his mighty shade not to pay it our tribute while yet his, [sic] memory, and the grass of his grave, are green.

There are three methods of contemplating nature. These are the material, the shadowy, and the mediatorial. The materialist looks upon it as the great and only reality. . . . The idealist, on the contrary, regards it as a shadow--a mode of mind--the infinite projection of his own thought. The man who stands between the two extremes, looks on nature as a great, but not ultimate or everlasting scheme of mediation, or compromise, between pure and absolute spirit and humanity--adumbrating God to man, and bringing man near to God. To the

¹Ibid.

²Harper's New Monthly Magazine, I (October, 1850), 577.

materialist, there is an altar star-lighted heaven-high, but no God. To the idealist, there is a God, but no altar. He [Wordsworth] who holds the theory of mediation, [sic] has the Great Spirit as his God, and the universe as the altar on which he presents the gift of his poetical . . . adoration.¹

After the discussion of Wordsworth's genius, Gilfillan considers his works, his life, his character, his death, and poses the question: Who is worthy to be his successor? He lists the poet's faults: the fragmentary aspect of his works, the lack of dramatic power, his waving lights and shadows, his varied loopholes of view, his shifting fluctuating feeling, the gigantic stiffness which makes his smaller poems remind one of the "dancing of an elephant or of the hills leaping like lambs." After the listing he concludes his tribute to the Great Solitary and makes a suggestion concerning the laureateship:

But, having subtracted such faults, how much remains--of truth--of tenderness--of sober, eve-like grandeur--of purged beauties, white and clean as the lilies of Eden--of calm, deep reflections, contained in lines and sentences which have become proverbs--of mild enthusiasm--of strong but unostentatious sympathy with man--and of devout and breathless communion with the Great Author of all!

.
 We have a notion of our own . . . The laureateship was too long a sop for parasites . . . It seems now to have become the late reward of veteran merit--the Popedom of poetry. Why not, rather, hang it up as a crown, to be worn by our rising bards. . . ? Why not delay for a reason the bestowal of the laurel, and give thus a national importance to its decision?

¹Ibid.

The death of this eminent man took few by surprise. Many anxious eyes have for a while been turned on Rydal mount, where this hermit stream was nearly sinking into the ocean of the Infinite. And now, to use his own grand word, used at the death of Scott, a "trouble" hangs over Helvellyn's brow, and over the waters of Windermere.¹

On another page in the same magazine is this sentence in a column called "Literary and Scientific Miscellany":

Attached to his mountain home, and loving solitude as the muse of his genius, he was no recluse and keenly enjoyed the pleasures of social intercourse.²

As early as 1850, then, his critics noted that he had lived his life in essential balance between society and solitude and recognized that he was a solitary by endowment.

In 1880 The Atlantic Monthly published an article entitled "Wordsworth," in which Christopher Cranch wrote:

In his sympathetic portrayal of the hard, homely peasant life of shepherds or plowmen, surrounded by bare, rugged rocks and exposed to bleak winds and burning suns, and in the earnestness and sincerity with which he tells their humble stories, we are reminded of the noble pictures of Francois Millet and Jules Breton.³

Cranch in his criticism places the poet amid the "solitudes of nature" among solitary people, though the emphasis is on the lonely places rather than the solitary people.

In the twentieth century critics and scholars have placed greater emphasis on Wordsworth as a poet of human

¹Ibid., p. 583.

²Harper's New Monthly Magazine, VI, 559.

³XLV (February, 1880), 252.

nature than in the nineteenth century when he was regarded chiefly as a poet of Nature. In 1912 E. Hershey Sneath said of the poet:

. . . --if he sees in men what others fail to see--may it not be because, through his genius, he is gifted with a superior vision and insight by which he sees into the life of Man as he sees into the life of things?¹

Sneath recognized the solitary by endowment. In 1928 Walter Raleigh published his widely quoted book on Wordsworth, the final quotation being used on the cover of the Oxford Wordsworth from which this study is made:

But solitary man, under the spreading sky, in living contact with the earth, and governed by the simple, stern necessities of his daily out-door existence, was conceived by Wordsworth with a depth of insight and sympathy that no other poet has achieved.²

. . . he paid the price of this great happiness in a great and incurable solitude of spirit. The seer is always solitary; and, for good or evil, it remains true that to reach Wordsworth's height of contemplation, to taste the pure sources of the solace that he found, and to be glad with his gladness, a man must cut himself off from not a few of the pleasures that come to the dusty, kindly traffickers in the valley.³

Here was a poet who faced the fact, and against whom the fact did not prevail. To know him is to learn courage; to walk with him is to feel the visitings of a larger, purer air, and the peace of an unfathomable sky.⁴

¹Wordsworth: Poet of Nature and Poet of Man (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1912), p. 100.

²Wordsworth (London: Edward Arnold, 1928), p. 187.

³Ibid., p. 226.

⁴Ibid., p. 228.

Three years later Bernbaum in his Guide Through the Romantic Movement wrote:

From his [Wordsworth's] youthful period he retained his religious (not ecclesiastical) feelings and his sympathy for human suffering. From his period of storm and stress, he retained his belief that too little attention had bestowed upon Man's relation with Nature, upon sense-impressions, upon actual experience, and upon human life as a development rather than a status.¹

In 1941 The Mind of a Poet by Raymond Dexter Havens, a profound contribution to Wordsworth research, was published, one chapter being named "Solitude, Silence, Loneliness" from which I quote:

In Wordsworth's temple of Nature the ministring [sic] spirits are Solitude, Silence, and Loneliness. The three are sisters and the function of each is the same: to give the devotee the fullness of what is offered. Wordsworth was no hermit but an affectionate, family man, who was keenly interested in the affairs of his country, one who condemned "the heart that lives alone. . . at distance from the kind," and who made the Solitary not the hero of The Excursion but an example of "self-indulging spleen." Yet, as it is recorded of the great Friend of Man that when by force they would make him king "he departed again into a mountain himself alone," so Wordsworth filled the hidden springs of his being from lonely places, in solitude and silence.²

He further cites lone individuals who call forth Wordsworth's imaginative power: the discharged soldier of the Excursion," the shepherd "alone amid the heart of many thousand mists" ("Michael," ll. 58-59), the Solitary Reaper, the Solitary, the Wanderer, Margaret, the Forsaken Indian Woman, the Old Cumberland Beggar whose days pass in

¹Bernbaum, p. 131.

²Havens, p. 54.

a "vast solitude," Lucy Gray, the Sailor's Mother, Martha of "The Thorn," the Highland Girl; Peter Bell whose crisis comes in a lonely spot, and Newton whose mind is "forever boyaging through strange stea of Thought, alone."¹ A final statement from the chapter is impressive:

Clouds and mist, wind and rain . . . reinforced and concentrated what lonely places had to offer, just as loneliness and silence made more potent the ministry of solitude.²

Just before the Wordsworth centennial, Doreen Wallace added to the growing number of commentaries on the poet a book called English Lakeland, too well-written to be a tourist guide, too informal and geographical to be a literary criticism. Pleasantly evaluating the poet, she gave him the title of a solitary, the Great High Priest of the Lakes,³ and showed how after 1799 Wordsworth settled down to be, like his "ethereal minstrel" of "To a Skylark," one who soars but never roams far from his own dwelling place.

In 1950 a group of Wordsworth scholars in England and in America took note of April 23, 1850. Lionel Trilling, in a paper delivered at Princeton to commemorate the hundredth anniversary of Wordsworth's death, stated that it was his intention to ask the reasons for the world's present opinion of Wordsworth and in how far the opinion is justified

¹Ibid., p. 55.

²Ibid., p. 61.

³(London: B. T. Batsford, Ltd., 1948), p. 8.

and reminded his listeners that a wide discrepancy exists between the opinion of Wordsworth that is held by the modern world and the opinion that is expressed in universities.¹ At Cornell John Crowe Ransom analyzed Wordsworth's style of writing in a lecture, "Notes toward an Understanding of Poetry."² He urged the study of the "little cells, oratories, and sepulchral recesses"; they are, he says, the "fundamental earth . . . on which if there is to be a religious edifice it must rise." On April 16, 1950, the New York Times printed an announcement of the centenary of Grasmere, announced a lecture at Ambleside by G. W. Meyer of Tulane University, and quoted a telegram from King George to residents of Grasmere: "For a century the poetry of Wordsworth has been an inspiration to many over the world and I have heard with pleasure of the celebration." The newspaper noted the similar observance of the three-day Wordsworth centennial to be held by one hundred scholars at Princeton, a lecture to be given by Professor Ifor B. Evans, President of Queen Mary College, University of London on the subject, "Wordsworth and the European Problem of the Twentieth Century." The New York Public Library, one of the world's richest sources of Wordsworth rarities, drew from its Berg collection choice

¹Kenyon Review, XII (1950), 477-497.

²Kenyon Review, XII (1950), 498-519.

volumes, autographed letters and manuscripts, and one hundred and five items which provide a continuity of story in the life of the poet. The collection was prepared for exhibit by Dr. John D. Gordan, curator of the Berg collection. Two articles of peculiar interest were a copy of Browning's "The Lost Leader" assailing Wordsworth's change of policy and a copy of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's poems, inscribed to Wordsworth in 1844 and presented "With affectionate reverence." Wordsworth's letter of acknowledgment states that he "hadn't gotten around to reading her poems, being exceedingly engaged at this season" but promises himself the great pleasure when he is at leisure.¹

According to Beatrice White,² the Wordsworth Centenary produced a generous harvest of books on both sides of the Atlantic. Reading them, she further states, emphasizes the debt of scholars to Ernest de Selincourt. The brilliant achievement of Miss Helen Darbishire in The Poet Wordsworth she calls "a model of brilliant and discriminating writing"--at once wise, witty, and profound. As significant also to the Wordsworth scholar Miss White lists Tribute to Wordsworth (A Miscellany of Opinion for the Centenary of the Poet's Death); especially for the

¹"New York Public Library Opens Centenary Exhibit," New York Times (April 23, 1950), p. 74.

²The English Association, The Year's Work in English Studies, XXXI (1950), 222-224, Ed. Frederick S. Boas and Beatrice White (London: Oxford University Press, 1950).

Centenary, a book on Wordsworth in the Great Lives series; a new and handsome impression of Sir Herbert Grierson's Northcliff Lectures; an unpretentious little book, The Cumberland Wordsworth, which attempts the 'regional' assessment of Wordsworth; a searching study of The Excursion by J. S. Lyons; a book on English mystics, by Gerald Bullett, which contains a chapter on Wordsworth; a book in the Poets on Poets series with selection and arrangement done by Norman Nicholson; a comprehensive work by Markham L. Peacock, who "collected every remark Wordsworth wrote or dictated, or was heard to utter on literary subjects"; and the Record of the Commemoration held at St. John's College, Cambridge, in April, 1950, which Miss White says is a pleasant memorial of the Wordsworth Centenary, containing a useful catalog of Wordsworth portraits. Elizabeth Brockhurst¹ cites other Centenary works: two articles by C. Clark, "Landscape in the Poetry of Wordsworth," the detached attitude of the Augustan poets toward the landscape contrasted with "Wordsworth's interest in man--often a solitary human being against a romantic background," and "Loss and Consolation in the Poetry of Wordsworth"; "Radiance in the 'White Doe of Rylstone'," a study of the symbolical use of light, by Ellen D. Leyburn; a study of "'Tintern Abbey' Revisited" by James Benziger; and two contributions by Charles N. Coe--

¹Ibid., pp. 240-242.

"A Source for Wordsworth's 'Squalid Creature,'" a study of the savage in The Excursion, and "Did Wordsworth Read Coxe's 'Travels in Switzerland' before Making the Tour of 1790?"

Since 1950 Robert L. Schneider has analyzed Wordsworth's philosophy of solitude in an essay, "The Failure of Solitude: Wordsworth's Immortality Ode," John Jones has completed The Egotistical Sublime: A History of Wordsworth's Imagination, and Mary Moorman has completed William Wordsworth: Early Years. Each writer, whether critic or biographer, discusses Wordsworth as a solitary and as related to the solitary. Schneider stresses the fact that "any discussion of his philosophy, if it is to be accurate, must confine itself to a particular time of his life."¹ Much disagreement about Wordsworth's meanings, he says, is due to the critics' confusing the poet's desires with his convictions or his intentions. And the "failure of solitude," Schneider states, is recorded in "Elegiac Stanzas, Suggested by a Picture of Peele Castle" when the poet says "a deep distress [the death of his brother John by shipwreck] hath humanised my soul."²

Farewell, farewell the heart that lies alone,
Housed in a dream at distance from the kind!
Such happiness, wherever it be known,
Is to be pitied; for 'tis surely blind.
(ll. 53-56)

¹Journal of English and Germanic Philology, LIV (January to October, 1955), 625.

²Oxford Wordsworth, l. 35.

These lines show how much Wordsworth in his grief longed for human fellowship. Soon after he wrote this, he sought for the repose of Christianity, for a faith that lives through death. Such alterations of view, though a distinct reversal, seem normal, for the conflict of youth is replaced by the decision of maturity. Since Wordsworth could not remain eternally young, should he be expected to remain the proponent of the influences of his youthful thinking?

Midway in this study, I found in The Egotistical Sublime by John Jones, Fellow of Merton College, Oxford, a chapter called "Solitude and Relationship"¹ in which the critic made significant analysis:

Solitude is the theme of Wordsworth's long life. It is also the preoccupation of his poetry. Long before he reached old age, he came to accept his solitude as a condition imposed upon him in the natural course of things, an appointed burden to be borne uncomplainingly. But it has not always been thus. In his youth he sought solitude with his whole heart, and he makes it quite clear, in The Prelude and elsewhere, that he sought it as a means of poetic grace. The power to write poetry, he says many times, depended for him upon the power to be alone. This points to a truth that is everywhere recognized: Wordsworth's best poetry deals with lonely places and solitary people, whereas he was easily daunted into silence by crowds.²

Wordsworth was not primarily concerned with solitude as physical isolation. Solitude in this

¹Jones, pp. 54-110.

²Ibid., p. 31.

limited sense is not unimportant, but its significance lies in his use of it as a token of a peculiarly Wordsworthian seriousness, an outward sign of a state of mind casting its shadow over a whole poem.

On Man on Nature, and on Human Life,
Musing in solitude. . . .¹

Having introduced himself as "musing in solitude", Wordsworth at once reveals his deeper purpose. He is writing, he says

Of the individual Mind that keeps her
own

Inviolatè retirement. . . .

The solitude of which he is speaking issues from an attitude towards personality; from an eagerness to accept the fact that I am myself just because I am not anything else: to be me is to be always apart.²

Jones arrives at this conclusion: "Thus in striving for a final synthesis, the great movement of his life toward solitude, then away, seems less a defeat than a discovery."³ Although his discussion is largely negative since he attempts "to minister to truths that lie too often unregarded, bedridden in the outhouse of the soul" Jones's observation states a truth on which understanding Wordsworth depends--a discovery, not a defeat.

While her book is largely biographical, Mary Moorman frequently pauses to appraise a thought, interpret a line, or illustrate a point with a clarity born of great knowledge. She concludes her first volume with an

¹Ibid.

²Ibid., p. 32.

³Ibid., p. ix.

interpretation of Wordsworth as a solitary with which, as a result of this study, I concur:

He [Wordsworth] lived in happy comradeship with his family and chosen friends; his children, his neighbours, and the floating population of the roads were sources of inspiration and delight to him. His house was often overflowing with visitors. There was, indeed, a sense in which he was a 'recluse'; though always hospitable, he was glad enough to have his fireside to himself again. As he said:

I am not one who much or oft
 delight
 To season my fireside with personal
 talk--
 Of friends who live within an
 easy walk,
 Or neighbours, daily, weekly,
 in my sight . . .
 Better than such discourse doth
 silence long,
 Long, barren, silence square with
 my desire;
 To sit without emotion, hope,
 or aim
 In the loved presence of my
 cottage-fire,
 And listen to the flapping of
 the flame,
 Or kettle whispering its faint
 undersong.

But enough has been said to show that the balance between solitude and society in Wordsworth's life was well maintained; that the 'rock with torrents roaring' which he felt his 'soul' essentially to be had had its crevices well planted with flowers; . . .¹

In conclusion, let me say that certain truths about the poet and solitary people seem evident: that solitary human beings attracted William Wordsworth; that he found

¹Moorman, p. 615.

poetic inspiration in the "Three Ages of Man"--childhood, youth, and age; that he was a poet of human sympathy, suffering with the solitary people who were sad and rejoicing with those who were happy; that the poet himself was a solitary by endowment who loved both solitude and society, one whose philosophy of solitude was not a static concept but a development. Further, Wordsworth recognized human values. It was never his purpose to condone the avarice of Harry Gill, the deception of the Farmer of Tilsbury Vale, or the habitual stealing of the Two Thieves, the little care "for husbandry or tillage" of Simon Lee, the illicit love of Vaudracour and Julia, the cruelty of Peter Bell, the daily pursuit of the old Cumberland Beggar. But in the story of each of these solitaries the poet saw a value beyond that eclipsed the weakness of the offender. Herein lies the transcendent value of his poetry, the final test of his genius.

APPENDIX

The enterprise of a concordance to the poems of William Wordsworth was announced at a meeting of The Modern Language Association in America in December, 1907. The plan was elaborated by the editor, Lane Cooper, the following October.

For A Concordance to the Poems of William Wordsworth the basic Oxford text bearing the imprint of the year 1907 was used. Each collaborator was given from one-fortieth to one-eightieth for his share of the text and the plan and execution were done with great care. Delay was encountered in finding a publisher. This obstacle was overcome in part through the kindness of Mr. Gordon Wordsworth. William Claves and Sons, Limited, of London, who set to work in May, 1910, and E. P. Dutton and Company of New York brought the volume out in 1911.

In the preface the purpose of the work is stated:

The labour of compiling this index to the language of Wordsworth was begun, and has been finished, in the well-considered belief that, after Chaucer, Spenser, Shakespeare, and Milton, he is the fifth of the great English poets; . . .

The main function of the Concordance is to aid the attentive reader. . . . in discovering the vital relation between the longer poems, which are likened to the antechapel and the body of a Gothic Church, and the 'minor pieces' which correspond 'to the little cells, oratories, and sepulchral recesses, ordinarily included in those edifices.'

Listings from A Concordance to the Poems of William Wordsworth for the words solitary, solitary's, solitude, and solitudes follow:

	<u>Source</u>	<u>Line</u>
<u>Solitary</u>		
The solitary heifer's deepened low	Desc. Sk.	360
That solitary man disturb their reign	Desc. Sk.	509
To solitary meditation;--now	Bord.	562
Or on some vast and solitary plain	Bord.	1012
And therefore chose this soli- tary Moor,	Bord.	1209
Pressing upon this solitary heart	Bord.	1262
As we approached, a solitary crow	Bord.	2102
The solitary child	Gray Lucy	4
And sings a solitary song	Gray Lucy	63
He to the solitary church- yard turned;	Brothers	80
Tears down his cheek, or solitary smiles	Brothers	110
To some remote and solitary place	V. and J.	108
Rouse him: but in those solitary shades	V. and J.	305
In the broad open eye of solitary sky,	Pleasures Stray	16
Strikes a solitary sound	Kitten	84
That solitary bird	Waggoner	14

	<u>Source</u>	<u>Line</u>
By solitary Benjamin;	Waggoner	181
This solitary Tree! a living thing	Yew Trees	10
A solitary tear:	Ruth	99
Shine on thee in thy solitary walk;	Tintern	135
Solitary, clear, profound,	*Yes, it. . . .	2
And to the solitary fawn	Enterprise	140
Come to regions solitary,	Triad	38
Which solitary Nature feeds	P. B.	207
In many a solitary place,	P. B.	319
A solitary ass	P. B.	385
In solitary ward or cell,	P. B.	514
Along this solitary dell	P. B.	687
Upon that solitary waste	P. B.	705
Aerial Rock--whose solitary brow	Aerial Rock	1
Where solitary nature condescends	*Mark the	13
That solitary word--to separate	Gravestone	4
Yon solitary Highland Lass!	Sol. Reap.	2
Two solitary greetings have I heard,	Jones! As	10
Pent in, a Tyrant's solitary thrall:	*There is a bondage	3
Looks down--the bright and solitary moon	Tell	11
A solitary Wolf-dog, ranging on	Gemmi	9
Lost Youth! a solitary Mother;	*Lulled by	74

	<u>Source</u>	<u>Line</u>
A solitary Doe!	White Doe	58
It was a solitary mound;	White Doe	170
In his wanderings solitary:	White Doe	269
And a solitary maid	White Doe	339
And treads in solitary ways.	White Doe	756
This solitary course maintain;	White Doe	1217
Where is the solitary One?	White Doe	1538
Or where the solitary shepherd roves	Ecc. Sonn.	1.5.3
Our tainted Nature's solitary boast,	Ecc. Sonn.	2.25.4
By striking out a solitary spark	Ecc. Sonn.	2.14.4
Though doomed to tread in solitary ways,	Ecc. Sonn	3.4.7
Loves it, while there in solitary peace	F. Stone	68
Was formed between the solitary pair,	I Know	22
Their solitary way;	Russ. Fug.	124
He travels on, a solitary man,	Cumb. Beg.	24
Among the farms and solitary huts,	Cumb. Beg.	44
In childhood from this solitary Being	Cumb. Beg.	110
--She solitary through the desert drear	Desc. Sk. Quarto	199
Where solitary forms illumin'd stray	Desc. Sk. Quarto	273
I heard among the solitary hills	Prelude	1.322

	<u>Source</u>	<u>Line</u>
Stopped short; yet still the solitary cliffs	Prelude	1.458
By solitary study to uphold	Prelude	4.305
Crowd seems it, solitary hill! to thee,	Prelude	8.6
A solitary, who with vain con- ceits	Prelude	8.652
Thy solitary steps; and on the brinks	Prelude	11.464
Pipe solitary anguish; or must hang	Recluse	1.1830
In solitude and solitary thought	Excursion	1.354
Her solitary infant cried aloud;	Excursion	1.736
The solitary, with a faint sar- castic smile	Excursion	594
Was silent; save the solitary clock	Excursion	2.645
Who to the Solitary turned, and said,	Excursion	3.77
The solitary lifted toward the hills	Excursion	4.505
The Solitary by these words was touched	Excursion	4.1078
Our voice--the solitary raven, flying	Excursion	4.1178
Our seats; and thus the Solitary spoke,	Excursion	5.232
The Solitary, "In the life of man,	Excursion	5.391
Alone within her solitary hut;	Excursion	5.704
"Yes!" said the Solitary with a smile	Excursion	5.838

	<u>Source</u>	<u>Line</u>
Then to the Solitary, turned and spake	Excursion	6.94
The Solitary answered: "Such a Form	Excursion	6.102
Of pain and grief?" The Solitary asked,	Excursion	6.116
"'Tis strange," observed the Solitary, "strange	Excursion	6.376
"True," said the Solitary, "be it far	Excursion	6.589
The last hath ceased its solitary knoll	Excursion	6.784
(Full eight years past) the solitary prop	Excursion	6.116
When he had passed, the Solitary spake	Excursion	7.556
By a brook-side or solitary tarn,	Excursion	7.719
The pining Solitary turned aside;	Excursion	7.903
And there--"At this the Solitary shrunk	Excursion	8.30
Dropping from every mind, the Solitary	Excursion	8.526
Of that wild spot, the Solitary said	Excursion	9.548
Was reached, the Solitary checked his steps;	Excursion	9.770
The Fancies of a solitary man	I will	105
And we a solitary pair like them	Recluse	1.1.255

	<u>Source</u>	<u>Line</u>
<u>Solitary's</u>		
Herewith he grasped the Solitary's hand	Excursion	4.1016
--I noted that the Solitary's cheek	Excursion	6.1062
<u>Solitude</u>		
And solitude prepare the soul for heaven;	Desc. Sk.	3
To soothe and cheer the poor man's solitude	Desc. Sk.	142
And there are those fond thoughts which Solitude	Desc. Sk.	248
In solitude--Stranger! those gloomy boughs	Yew Tree	24
About you still; you talk of solitude	Bord.	1477
And you walk in solitude among them	Bord.	1510
Shall prey upon the tallest. Solitude!	Bord.	1515
The Eagle lives in Solitude! Even so,	Bord.	1516
The wounded deer retires to solitude	Bord.	2152
And dies in solitude: all things but man,	Bord.	2153
All die in solitude, Mysterious God,	Bord.	2154
Is all-sufficient; solitude to her	*Loving she	12
We leave you here in solitude to dwell	Farewell	19

	<u>Source</u>	<u>Line</u>
That occupied his days in soli- tude	V. and J.	180
It is in truth an utter solitude;	Michael	13
Can ever be a solitude to me,	*There is an	16
A silent Poet; from the solitude	When to	80
The solitude of Binnorie!	Binnorie	11
The solitude of Binnorie!	Binnorie	22
The solitude of Binnorie!	Binnorie	33
The solitude of Binnorie!	Binnorie	44
The solitude of Binnorie!	Binnorie	55
The solitude of Binnorie!	Binnorie	66
Upon the pensive solitude	Waggoner	4.27
Stillness, solitude, and calm	Waggoner	4.239
Which is the bliss of solitude	I wandered	22
The self-suffering power of Solitude	Prelude	2.77
Hence life, and change, and beauty, solitude	Prelude	2.294
Society made as sweet as solitude	Prelude	2.296
Yet slumbering, lay in utter solitude	Prelude	2.345
The truth in solitude, and, since the days	Prelude	2.461
Yet could I only cleave to solitude	Prelude	3.230
I smile, in many a mountain solitude	Prelude	3.568

	<u>Source</u>	<u>Line</u>
For otherwise) amid the rural solitude	Prelude	4.198
How gracious, how benign, is Solitude;	Prelude	4.357
Rested within an awful solitude:	Prelude	6.419
Of soul-affecting solitude appeared	Prelude	6.421
I mused, and thought, and felt, in solitude	Prelude	7.485
Presiding; and severest solitude	Prelude	8.260
Ere I forsook the crowded soli- tude	Prelude	9.29
That was delightful. Oft in solitude	Prelude	9.321
Of solitude, and at the sight of my friend	Prelude	9.51
Lengthening in solitude their dreary line,	Prelude	13.317
Musing in solitude, I oft per- ceive	Recluse	1.755
In solitude returning, saw the hills	Excursion	1.127
Busy in solitude and poverty	Excursion	1.257
In solitude and solitary thought	Excursion	1.354
Some other tenant of the solitude	Excursion	2.402
What stuff the Dwellers in a solitude	Excursion	2.662
Is garrulous; and solitude is apt	Excursion	3.326
In solitude: and mutually addressed	Excursion	3.441

	<u>Source</u>	<u>Line</u>
Our solitude. It soothes me to perceive,	Excursion	3.598
And, in the blank and solitude of things,	Excursion	3.848
And solitude, they that do favor most,	Excursion	4.366
The plaintive spirit of solitude	Excursion	4.412
Alone or mated, solitude was not	Excursion	4.633
Of destitution; --solitude was not	Excursion	4.650
Spread like a sea, in boundless solitude	Excursion	4.696
The face which rural solitude might wear	Excursion	4.849
Affronts the eye of Solitude, shall learn	Excursion	4.1031
A wedded pair in childless solitude	Excursion	5.692
In life, in death, what soli- tude can breed	Excursion	5.888
Flows on in solitude. But where the gloom	Excursion	6.1173
A solitude, unchosen, unpro- fessed;	Excursion	7.309
From their shy solitude, to face the world;	Excursion	7.774
While solitude permits the mind to feel;	Excursion	8.55
No chasm, no solitude; from link to link	Excursion	9.14
To breathe in solitude, above the host	Excursion	9.72

	<u>Source</u>	<u>Line</u>
Of solitude, and silence in the sky?	Recluse	1.1.133
They came, to sojourn here in solitude	Recluse	1.1.241
Say boldly then that solitude is not	Recluse	1.1.592

Solitudes

Unfruitful solitudes, that seemed to upbraid	Duddon	5.4
Let him be free of mountain solitudes;	Cum. Beg.	.183
Protracted among endless soli- tudes;	Prelude	5.147
Gathered among those soli- tudes sublime	Prelude	6.544
Companionless your awful soli- tudes!	Prelude	8.222
Yet--compassed round by moun- tain solitudes	Prelude	14.139
Or Cambrian solitudes. A youth (he bore	Prelude	14.354
Hovering above these inland solitudes	Excursion	4.452
Dispensed indeed to other solitudes,	Recluse	1.1.378

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