

Journals ... , Dorothy Wordsworth, 1897, Literary Criticism, . .

The Letters of Charles Lamb, Volume 3 , Charles Lamb, Jul 1, 2008, Biography & Autobiography, 416 pages. Many of the earliest books, particularly those dating back to the 1900s and before, are now extremely scarce and increasingly expensive. We are republishing these classic works ....


Journals. Edited by William Knight, Volume 1 , Dorothy Wordsworth, Jan 10, 2012, , 288 pages. Unlike some other reproductions of classic texts (1) We have not used OCR(Optical Character Recognition), as this leads to bad quality books with introduced typos. (2) In books ....


The Letters of William Wordsworth A New Selection, William Wordsworth, 1984, Drama, 330 pages. The letters of William Wordsworth provide a unique and vivid portrait of the personality and concerns of the poet, one which belies his reputation as a romantic dreamer ....


Essays in Criticism 1 st et, 2d series, Matthew Arnold, 1910, Criticism, 341 pages. This Elibron Classics title is a reprint of the original edition published by Macmillan and Co., Limited in London, 1913. .


The Letters of William and Dorothy Wordsworth: A supplement of new letters , William Wordsworth, Dorothy Wordsworth, Dec 7, 2000, Literary Criticism, 328 pages. This volume contains more than 150 letters, most previously unpublished, which appeared too late for inclusion in the second edition of The Letters of William and Dorothy ....


English prose writer, the younger sister of poet William Wordsworth, famous for her diaries and 'recollections'. Several of Dorothy Wordsworth's own poems or notes in her journal were included in various editions of her brother's poetical works. She published nothing during her lifetime, and spent the last twenty-five years struggling against physical and mental illness. E. de Sélincourt, who published her journals in 1933, has called her "probably... the most distinguished of English writers who never wrote a line for the general public."

"She did not cultivate the graces which preside over the person and its carriage. But, on the other hand, she was a person of very remarkable endowments intellectually... Her knowledge of literature was irregular, and thoroughly unsystematic. She was content to be ignorant of many things; but what she knew and had really mastered lay where it could not be disturbed - in the temple of her own most fervid heart." (Thomas De Quincey in Reminiscences of the Lake Poets, 1961)

Dorothy Wordsworth was born in Cockermouth, Cumberland. She was the third of five children. Her childhood Dorothy spent with various relatives. Ann Cookson of Penrith, her mother, died when Dorothy was six. "I know," she later wrote, "that I received much good that I can trace back to her". Dorothy's father, John Wordsworth, an attorney, died when she was just twelve. He died intestate, his affairs in chaos, and Dorothy was removed from boarding-school. At the age of 15 she went to her grandparents in Penrith and met her brothers again. However, she was not to see much of them before she was 23. From 17 to 22 she lived at Fornsett Rectory, Norfolk, where her mother's brother, William Cookson, took her in. She enjoyed her life in Norfolk more than at her grandmother's house. She read, wrote, and improved herself in French. After the winter of 1793/4 she continued to stay in various other places.

Wordsworth began writing in about 1795 when she shared a house in Dorset with her brother. At Alfoxden, Somerset, she became friends with the poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge, and traveled with him and William in Germany (1798-99), where they lived in lodgings in Goslar. William and Dorothy stayed in the Hartz Mountains for five months. F.W. Bateson has suggested in Wordsworth: A Re-interpretation (1954) that William tried to repress his intense feelings toward his sister in Lucy poems, which he wrote during this time. Coleridge spent a good deal of time at the University city of Göttingen. For the journey she bought a notebook, which she used for her daily affairs. It contained among others things lists of the clothes, from shirts and nightcaps to fur items, that she would need in the cold winter, and also list of groceries – bread, milk, sugar, and rum. In Alfoxden she started her first journal, and then kept several other journals of travels and expeditions. Her thoughts and writings were an important source of stimulation for Coleridge and William. "Tho we were three persons," Coleridge wrote, "it was but one soul." Sarah Coleridge's role in this artistic circle was not central – she was considered dull, but she raised the children and took care of her opium-addicted husband, who eventually abandoned his patient wife.

With her brother Dorothy occasionally played a curious game – they lay down next to each other outdoors, pretending to be in their graves. Some biographers have speculated about their strong attraction to each other, considering it sexual. William's poems, such as 'Lines' and 'To My Sister', don't give any hint of this, but do express his happiness, when she accompanies him on the walking trips: "My sister! ('tis a wish of mine) / Now that our morning meal is done, / Make haste, your morning task resign; / Come forth and feel the sun." (from 'To My Sister')

In 1799 Dorothy settled with her brother in Dove Cottage, Grasmere, in the Lake District. It was her first real home since her mother died. In 1802 William married Mary Hutchinson, who was Dorothy's best friend. The marriage was happy but Dorothy was too hysterical to attend the wedding. A few days before the marriage she wrote to her friend: "I have long loved Mary Hutchinson as a Sister, and she is equally attached to me this being so, you will guess that I look forward with perfect happiness to the Connection between us, but happy, as I am, I half dread that concentration of all tender feelings, past, present, and future will come up me on the wedding morning."

When Thomas De Quincey met William at Grasmere in 1807, he also made the acquaintance of Dorothy. In the household also lived Mrs. Wordsworth, two children, and at that time one servant. According to De Quincey, Dorothy's face was of Egyptian brown, "rarely, in a woman of English
birth, had I seen a more determinate gypsy tan. Her eyes were not soft, as Mrs. Wordsworth's, nor were they fierce or bold; but they were wild and startling, and hurried in their motion." Quincey was impressed by the Lake District: its small fields, miniature meadows, and solitude. Dorothy's influence on William was, according to Quincey, the way she "humanized him by the gentler charities". Dorothy remained in Grasmere, the Lake District, until 1813, when she moved to nearby Rydal. In 1829 she became ill and was obliged to lead the life of an invalid. From 1835 she developed arteriosclerosis and for the remaining 20 years she suffered from mental problems, possibly originating in thiamin deficiency. She often played with a bowl of soapsuds and hid from visitors. Dorothy Wordsworth died in Rydal Mount on January 25, 1855.

Dorothy Wordsworth (December 25, 1771 – January 25 1855) was an English poet and diarist. She is probably best known, however, as the sister of famous English Romantic poet, William Wordsworth. While she made notes on her brother's writings, and often helped him, she was an accomplished writer in her own right; her works including numerous poems and journals. She did not publish anything during her own lifetime, but much of her work was only discovered and published after her death. Her stature rose after the discovery of her journals, in part due to the growing recognition of women's contributions as a result of the rise of the women's movement and Feminism. Due to her suffering from various mental illnesses, she was something of a recluse in her later years, even hiding from guests and visitors. She died in Rydal Mount on January 25, 1855.

With her brother, Dorothy occasionally played a curious game; they would lie down next to each other outdoors, pretending to be in their graves. Some biographers have speculated about a strong mutual attraction between the two. William's poems, such as "Lines" and "To My Sister," give no hint of any incestuous attraction, but do express his happiness, when she accompanies him on the walking trips. They two of them were very close in spirit and mind.

When Thomas De Quincey met William at Grasmere in 1807, he also made the acquaintance of Dorothy. In the household also lived Mrs. Wordsworth, two children, and one servant. De Quincey was impressed by the Lake District, with its small fields, miniature meadows, and solitude, and noticed Dorothy's strong and maternal influence on William.

Dorothy Wordsworth started to keep her journal in the late 1790s, recording walks, visits, conversations, and above all, the world of nature, in which she was fascinated. The journals were not intended for publication. Suppressing her ambition to become a writer, and devoting herself to domestic duty, she once said: "I should detest the idea of setting myself up as an author."

In the Grasmere Journal Wordsworth's other works revealed how vital she was to her brother's success. William relied on his sister's detailed accounts of nature scenes when writing poems and borrowed freely from her journals. For instance, the lines below compare lines from one of William Wordsworth's most famous poems, I Wandered as Lonely as a Cloud,

When we were in the woods beyond Gowbarrow park we saw a few daffodils close to the water side. We fancied that the lake had floated the seeds ashore and that the little colony had so sprung up. But as we went along there were more and yet more and at last under the boughs of the trees, we saw that there was a long belt of them along the shore, about the breadth of a country turnpike road. I never saw daffodils so beautiful they grew among the mossy stones about and about them, some rested their heads upon these stones as on a pillow for weariness and the rest tossed and reeled and danced and seemed as if they verily laughed with the wind that blew upon them over the lake, they looked so gay ever glancing ever changing. This wind blew directly over the lake to them. There was here and there a little knot and a few stragglers a few yards higher up but they were so few as not to disturb the simplicity and unity and life of that one busy highway.

For nearly a century, Dorothy Wordsworth was relegated to a footnote in her brother's life. Then, in 1931, Dove Cottage, the Lake District home where Dorothy and William lived for several years, was bought by Beatrix Potter, author of Peter Rabbit, and other children's books. In the barn, Potter found a bundle of old papers and realized that they were Dorothy's journals. Potter's discovery was published in 1933 as The Grasmere Journal. The journal eloquently described Dorothy's day-to-day
life in the Lake District, long walks she and her brother took through the countryside, and detailed portraits of literary lights of the early 19th century, including Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Sir Walter Scott, Charles Lamb and Robert Southey, a close friend who popularized the fairytale Goldilocks and the Three Bears.

Dorothy Wordsworth's works came to light just as literary critics were beginning to re-examine women's role in literature. The success of the Grasmere Journal led to a renewed interest in Wordsworth, and several other journals and collections of her letters have since been published. Although she did not care to be during her lifetime, Dorothy Wordsworth has now become somewhat of a literary icon, not just for her influence over her brother's work, but for her own as well.

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Wordsworth's poetry has been able to animate critical writing, relevantly, from several different points of view. Narratologists have discussed the gaps in his storytelling and the vulnerability of the selves that do the relating; historically-minded criticism has unearthed the contemporary writings with which Wordsworth's interact, and also shown how far he was involved not only in the politics of poetry but in the politics of public affairs; textual criticism has uncovered an exceptionally rich store of newly published texts and variants, many of them representing his first and arguably best thoughts; deconstructionists have homed in on the paradox of a poetic mission which aims to realise the sad incompetence of human speech, while both deconstruction and psychoanalysis have been attuned to Wordsworth's sense that crucial human insights are founded, not on achieved knowledge, but on moments of loss, absence and negation the 'Fallings from us, vanishings;/Blank misgivings' of the 'Immortality Ode'. This hospitality to critical approaches is in part a sign of the real amplitude of Wordsworth's achievement. Though he was never the kind of philosophical poet Coleridge asked him to be, Wordsworth's subject was no less than the whole of human society; as with such holist contemporaries as Coleridge and Hegel, his views on different topics lead into each other, presenting comparable vocabularies and linked concerns whether his immediate subject is the developing self or the revolutions of society.

Geoffrey Hartman has been probably the most eminent commentator on Wordsworth since the publication in 1964 of his important and influential Wordsworth Poetry 1787-1814. The Unremarkable Wordsworth collects 14 essays written since then; 11 of these have appeared in print already, but in diverse and sometimes out-of-the-way places. Hartman has interested himself in the theory of literary criticism, and many of the essays in this collection see what kind of dialogue can be established between Wordsworth's poetry and various contemporary critical approaches. There are pieces invoking literary history, psychoanalysis, structuralism, deconstruction, phenomenology and Biblical prophecy, and Hartman has serious insights about all these, as well as a constantly intent and searching focus on Wordsworth.

The book is too diverse to lend itself to summary, but one of its continuities centres on the possibilities for a sacred dimension in poetry. When Hartman's introduction considers the end of poetry in our climate, and fears that despite rare auroras, poetry as well as nature is going out, we are reminded that his first book The Unmediated Vision (1954) was contemporary with the late poetry of Wallace Stevens and with such critical works as Erich Heller's The Disinherited Mind: his alertness to critical fashions never removes him from a romantic tradition lamenting the disenchantment of the external world, and seeking restoration for this in the possibilities of art. Several of the essays, both early and late, turn to Wordsworth's fears about the evanescence of the supernatural both in himself and in the perceived world. Hartman focuses, for instance, on Wordsworth's re-deployment of the under-fuelled mythological machinery of
previous 18th-century poets, on his efforts to ground personification in the animating powers of the mind, and on his straining towards a prophetic trust in the old language, its pathos, its animism, its fallacious figures. In his most recent essays, which turn explicitly to Biblical hermeneutics and poet-prophet connections, the power of words to give substance to the sacred is still the central issue.

It is characteristic of a Hartman essay that you leave it feeling there was even more to the subject than you had realised, but not sure quite what. This is partly because he writes a compressed prose: often his phrasing is eloquent but obscure. In his call to save nature, he writes in his introduction, Wordsworth expresses not only a residual agrarian sensibility but a response to apocalyptic stirrings which institutionalised religions cannot always bind or subdue. But where does Wordsworth call to save nature, and what would it be to do this? (Hopkins wrote some proto-ecological poems about a ravished countryside, such as Binsey Poplars, but Wordsworth, poet of nature, quite strikingly didn’t.) And isn’t the emphasis on the repressive functions of religion only partially Wordsworthian?


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